

# ***Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update July 30, 2020*** ***(9<sup>th</sup> Av, 5780)***

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The image shows two items side-by-side. On the left is a CD cover for 'The Power of His Arm' by Yachad Ministries. The cover features a blue and white striped background with a white Star of David and the text 'TOUCHING THE POWER IN GOD'S WORD'. On the right is a white prayer shawl (tallit) with blue and gold stripes and a gold tassel (tzitzit).

## ***For the Yachad Report Newsletter For August 2020***

***Twitter Accounts with Star of David Profiles Locked by Twitter;*** The Campaign Against Antisemitism has reported that several Twitter users have contacted them in recent days to report that their accounts had been locked by the social media platform. According to messages they received from Twitter, the images “violated our rules against posting hateful imagery.” The images in question ranged from a white Star of David in a graffiti style to a superimposition of the modern blue star on the flag of Israel spliced with the yellow star Jews were forced to wear by the Nazis, to a montage of yellow stars. Stephen Silverman, Director of Investigations and Enforcement at Campaign Against Antisemitism, said: “So often social media companies claim that they lack the resources to tackle hate on their platforms, but Twitter... chooses to target the benign symbol of a victimized minority instead of the countless racists who use its platform with impunity”.

***Dutch Civil Servants Tied to Palestinian Terrorists;*** Dutch civil servants took a picture with one of the terrorists charged with killing 17-year-old Rina Schnerb, The Jerusalem Post has learned, despite their government’s denial of any known connection between organizations they fund and terrorist groups. The photograph from 2017, which can be found on the Netherlands Representative Office in Ramallah’s Facebook page, features Dutch officials, including Head of Cooperation in Ramallah Henny de Vries, and leaders of the Palestinian-run organization Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC), to which the Dutch representative in Ramallah pledged nearly \$20 million in 2013-2021. Palestinian terrorists killed Shnerb on August 23, 2019, in a bombing attack at a spring near Dolev, injuring her father Rabbi Eitan Shnerb as well as her brother Dvir. The commander of the PFLP terror cell that prepared and detonated the bomb was Samer Arbid, an accountant for UAWC at the time of his 2019 arrest.

***Outrage in Germany Over Adviser Linked to Turkish Nationalists;*** Politicians in Germany have expressed their misgivings over the appointment of a Foreign Ministry adviser whose role with the country’s Central Council of Muslims links her to a far-right Turkish group. Figures from the center-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU) of Germany and the left-wing group in the Bundestag have raised concerns over the appointment of Nurhan Soykan, a deputy chairwoman of the central council. Their warnings relate to the

council's failure to dissociate itself from the Turkish nationalist group, the Grey Wolves. The far-right extremist organization has been identified by Germany's Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution as having members within the Turkish-Islamic Cultural Associations in Europe (Atib), the largest member association in Ms. Soykan's Muslim council. "An organization that tolerates anti-constitutional forces in its ranks cannot be a partner of our state, and its top officials cannot be in the service of our state," Christoph de Vries, the CDU rapporteur for religious communities, said according to Die Welt. "This carelessness in dealing with Islamism and nationalism worries me," he added.

***Israel Set to Receive 4 Million Doses of Coronavirus Vaccine Candidate;*** Israel signed the first part of an agreement with California-based Arcturus to have first access to its novel coronavirus vaccine. "The health minister and the staff of his office, in cooperation with the National Security Council, are continually striving to ensure there will be vaccinations available for the residents of Israel," the Health Ministry said in a statement Friday morning. The deal signed with Arcturus Therapeutics Holdings Inc. – one of America's leading clinical-stage messenger RNA medicines companies – is to receive some four million doses of the company's COVID-19 vaccine candidate, LUNAR-COV-19. For now, the ministry has signed a binding term sheet. The parties intend to finalize a comprehensive supply agreement within 30 days. Israel media reported that Israel is meant to receive 4 million doses. "We are very pleased to support Israel's vaccination strategy," said Arcturus president and CEO Joseph Payne.

***IDF Ups Alert in North over Concerns of Hezbollah Terror Attack;*** IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Aviv Kochavi toured northern Israel on Saturday, less than a day after the military upped its alert in the northern command out of concern of an attack by Hezbollah following threats by the terrorist group over the death of one of its fighters. Defense Minister and Alternate Prime Minister Benny Gantz, who also took part in the situation assessment, instructed the IDF to continue to increase readiness in the north and to use the necessary measures in order to prevent any violation of Israeli sovereignty. According to a statement released by his office, Gantz warned that Lebanon and Syria would "bear direct responsibility for any action taken from their territory." The military also moved some troops deeper into Israel out of their positions directly along the border, so that they would not be a target for Hezbollah.

***Israeli Scientists to Collaborate with India for Rapid COVID Tests;*** A senior delegation from Israel's Directorate of Defense Research and Development (DDRDC) is set to depart for India on Sunday to develop new and rapid coronavirus tests in cooperation with their Indian counterparts while treating Indian patients with coronavirus. The Israeli team plans to bring new technologies, on which they had recently worked and tested to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to complete their research and to help India fight the novel coronavirus. Israeli and Indian scientific cooperation in this matter has been going on over several months. The Foreign Ministry also plans to send aid packages to India on the flight, including sanitizing and disinfection equipment to protect medical staff, along with ventilators, which received special authorization to be sent out of Israel. The delegation plans to test four different technologies for detecting coronavirus: sound waves, breathalyzers based on terahertz waves, isothermic identification, and checking polyamino acids. The sound wave testing is based on findings that coronavirus patients' voices change in the early stages of the illness.

***Fast-Track Coronavirus Testing to Open at Ben-Gurion Airport;*** Representatives of the Airports Authority, the National Security Council, and the Health and Transportation ministries met on Thursday to begin the preliminary work on a tender to hire a private company to establish fast coronavirus testing labs on behalf of Ben-Gurion Airport. An initial notice about the meeting was published in a Beit Shemesh bulletin, which The Jerusalem Post independently confirmed with the Airports Authority. "The only way to open the skies for Israel is to establish coronavirus testing labs at the airport," a spokesperson for the Airports Authority stated. For foreigners looking to enter Israel, the spokesperson told the Post that visitors would arrive at the airport and be immediately screened. They would then enter isolation for around 24 hours while

awaiting their results. If the test results are negative they will be able to continue with their vacation. If the test is positive, the visitor would have to remain in quarantine.

***Foreign Students Allowed to Enter Israel Next School Year*** Interior Minister Aryeh Deri announced in a statement on Wednesday that his ministry will approve the entry into Israel of foreign students who were planning to begin their studies in Israel this coming October. Following professional discussions led by Jewish Agency Chairman Isaac Herzog, which were held between experts in the Population and Immigration Authority, the Health Ministry and the Foreign Ministry, it was determined that the entry of foreign students would be approved in accordance with those students meeting the isolation requirements as determined by the Health Ministry. The approval applies to foreign students in academic institutions, yeshiva students, Masa students, seminary students, Naale students, high school students, and pre-army program (mechina) students.

***Israeli Nurses: Without Reinforcements by Winter, More Will Die;*** Every morning, Yehudit Isaacs leaves her home in the Shomron before 6 a.m. and drives to Laniado Medical Center in Netanya, where she serves as head nurse of the hospital's emergency room. She said she doesn't even see her six children, who range in age between one-and-a-half and 14, until 6 p.m., and sometimes not until after 9 p.m. or 10 p.m. The phone rings 24/7 – on Shabbat and holidays, during vacation days – with staff calling for professional advice or assistance, she explained. And since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, “it all got much worse – much, much more intense,” she said. During the first wave, Isaacs caught coronavirus, along with her husband and four of her children. She stayed in isolation for three weeks. When she recovered, she returned to the ER frontlines immediately – leaving her sick kids at home.

***Israel Reimposes Restrictions Amid Explosion of New Cases;*** Israeli officials hoping to halt a rise in coronavirus cases announced sweeping new restrictions Friday, including who can use gyms and which businesses can stay open on weekends. The measures being imposed by the Israeli government come amid 1,900 new reported infections Thursday. By late May, Israel had largely contained its coronavirus outbreak following a two-month lockdown — but cases are now on the rise again as the restrictions lifted. Under new measures, gyms and exercise studios will be closed except for use by competitive athletes. Beaches will be closed on weekends, beginning later this month. Stores, malls, barbershops, beauty salons, and tourist sites will close on weekends, starting Friday. And public gatherings will be limited to 10 people indoors or 20 outside. In a statement released Friday afternoon, the government also said restaurants would have until early Tuesday to switch to takeout and delivery only. Any violations are to be considered a criminal offense.

***Israeli Doctors Aided by Robots During Coronavirus Outbreak*** Orthopedic surgeons at Jerusalem's Hadassah Medical Center on Mount Scopus recently welcomed a newcomer to their team. She's incredibly efficient, never needs a coffee break, doesn't complain about the long hours, and isn't worried about catching COVID-19. That's because she's a robot. Called ROSA, short for Robotic Surgical Assistant, the diminutive white-and-blue robot already has proved her value in the operating room. Since ROSA's arrival last year, thanks to a grant from USAID's Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad, she has helped Hadassah replace the knees of 20 patients. “ROSA doesn't do the work instead of me, but brings me to the right position,” said Liebergall, whose department performs more than 300 knee replacements annually. “It guides me where to cut the bone and at which angle — and it gets that information from the patient's anatomy.”

***Iran Report: Up to 25 Million Covid-19 Cases Since Outbreak;*** Iran's President Hassan Rouhani estimated that up to 25 million people in the country have been infected with coronavirus - nearly double the official worldwide tally. Despite his estimate as well as urging citizens to take precautions, the country will not reimpose lockdown restrictions. Rouhani also said he believes an additional 30 to 35 million people could be infected in the coming months. Iran's population is around 81 million people. He also said more than 200,000 people have been hospitalized, and the report predicts that that number will soon be "twice as many as we have seen in the last 150 days." Faced with a spike of 2,166 cases on Saturday and 188 deaths in 24

hours, authorities in Tehran have closed some public spaces such as coffee shops, zoos, amusement parks, boarding schools, and indoor swimming pools and banned religious and cultural gatherings for one week. It remains the hardest-hit country in the Middle East.

***Hamas Admits Naval Officer Spied for Israel;*** After denying such reports, Hamas has now confirmed that one of its naval commanders fled to Israel after providing it with intelligence. Abu Mohammed, a Hamas military spokesman, told The Media Line that the defector was a junior officer in the organization's highly regarded naval unit. The daring escape was first reported on Saturday by the Saudi news channel Al Arabiya, which said the officer and his brother escaped with a laptop and surveillance equipment as part of a 72-hour operation led by Israel's Mossad spy agency. Hamas immediately issued a statement calling the report "fake news" benefitting Israel, and harshly criticized the news outlet. Hamas is an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, which Saudi Arabia has been trying to quash. The kingdom has also drawn closer to Israel in recent years although the countries do not maintain official ties.

***Russia Steps Up Saber Rattling with Massive Military Drill;*** Russia completed a massive combat readiness check after the snap drill was called for by President Vladimir Putin. The drills began on July 17 with the surprise decision. Units from the Southern and Western military districts, including marine infantry and Northern and Pacific fleets were all involved. Airborne forces were also deployed. This looks like it was a massive exercise and Russia's TASS news agency says 56 separate drills took place at 52 training ranges. In total, some 150,000 troops, 400 aircraft, and 26,000 vehicles and equipment, as well as 100 warships and support vessels participated. Russia says the surprise inspection came in relation to various terrorist threats and the Kavkaz 2020 exercise. It also came amid Azerbaijan-Armenia clashes that began in mid-July. Deputy Defense Minister Alexander Fomin said that the drill was not aimed at other countries. However, the reality is that Russia and the US have been having increased tensions with several incidents involving aircraft interceptions in both the Mediterranean and Pacific.

***World Jewish Population Over 14M, 80% Unconnected;*** The Jewish population of the world is 14,410,700, Diaspora Affairs Minister Omer Yankelevitch told the Knesset Absorption, Immigration and Diaspora Affairs Committee in her ministry's annual report to the committee. The Jewish community in Israel is the largest, at 6,740,000, followed by North America, with 6,088,000. Europe is estimated to have 1,072,400 Jews, South America has 324,000, Asia (excluding Israel) has 300,000, Australia and New Zealand have 120,000 and Africa has 74,000. Eighty percent of Diaspora Jews do not feel connected to Judaism and their Jewishness, Diaspora Affairs Ministry director-general Dvir Kahana told the committee. Committee chairman David Bitan (Likud) said he was most concerned about small Jewish communities that cannot sustain themselves. He said he had received a commitment from Finance Minister Israel Katz to allocate NIS 20 million in the next state budget for such communities and that he had asked the Jewish Agency to pledge a similar amount. "If we don't strengthen the communities in the Diaspora, there will not be potential immigrants left to bring," Bitan said.

***Key Site from Biblical Kings' Era Discovered Near US Embassy in Jerusalem;*** A major archaeological site from the time of biblical kings was unveiled near the US embassy in Jerusalem. An impressive structure built of concentric walls was uncovered during the preparation works for building a new residential area in the neighborhood of Arnona. The size and design of the ancient facility support the public nature of its purpose. Moreover, the archaeologists found over 100 stamped jar handles, featuring the inscription "to the king" in ancient Hebrew script and mentioning several names of cities in the Kingdom of Judah, including Hebron, Ziph, and Socho. The stamped jars were generally used for tax collection. The researchers believe that the site dates back to the time of King Hezekiah and Menashe, between the 8th and the middle of the 7th century BCE. "This is one of the most significant discoveries from the period of the Kings in Jerusalem made in recent years," IAA archaeologist and directors of the excavation Neria Sapir and Nathan Ben-Ari commented in a press release.

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