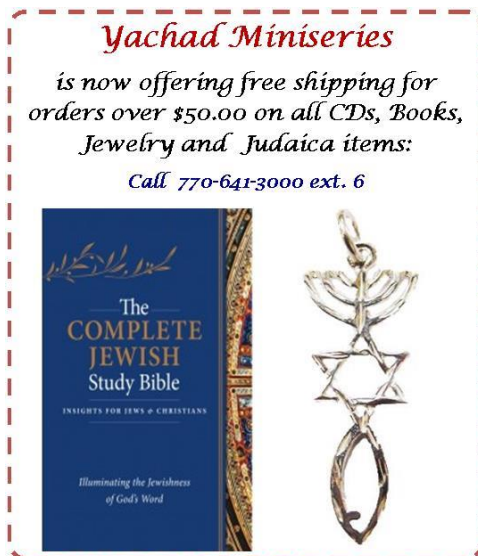


Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update September 24, 2020 (6th Tishrei, 5781)



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Top UAE and Bahraini Officials Wish Jews Happy New Year; A senior adviser to the king of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan both tweeted out Rosh Hashanah greetings just days after their countries signed historic normalization agreements with the Jewish state. "Wishing my Yehudi (Jewish) friends in Bahrain and around the world a prosperous Shana Tovah," wrote Khalid al-Khalifa, a diplomatic adviser to Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. Bahrain is home to a tiny Jewish community and has long been tolerant of all religions, but until recently there was no public Jewish life in the kingdom. Jews, mostly of Iraqi origin, have been living in the kingdom since the 1880s. The community welcomed Bahrain's normalization with Israel, calling it "a historic moment that we have never expected to see in our lifetime." Al Nahyan followed up his Bahraini colleague's post with a Hebrew tweet of his own, in which he wished his followers a "happy new year."

First Kosher Restaurant in UAE at Armani Hotel Dubai; Armani/Kaf, the first kosher certified dining destination in the United Arab Emirates, located within Burj Khalifa and Armani Hotel Dubai, officially opened its doors on Thursday. The 40-seat pop-up dinner venue is located on the ground floor of the award-winning luxury hotel, adjacent to Armani/Hashi, and will deliver a standalone culinary experience that celebrates the very best in kosher cuisine, as well as paying homage to classic flavors from around the world. Armani/Kaf will specialize in serving kosher cuisine that complies with Jewish dietary laws (kashrut) and will be operated under the rabbinical supervision of Rabbi Levi Y Duchman, Rabbi of the UAE, who has certified the venue with Glatt Kosher and Pas Yisroel certifications from Emirates Kosher Supervising Agency, the only UAE based kosher certifier.

Another Irani Revolt May Come after Wrestler Execution; The Islamic Republic of Iran's execution of a champion wrestler for his role in peaceful protests against regime corruption may trigger new nationwide demonstrations against the country's rulers, according to a Thursday statement from 150 Iranian political and civil rights activists. The US government news outlet Radio Farda first reported on Friday that the activists issued the statement to protest the regime's execution of Navid Afkari, writing that they made "parallels between his hanging and the brutal massacre of protesters during the November 2019 uprising against Iran's clergy-dominated establishment." Radio Farda reported that the Iranian leaders responsible for Afkari's death

are so hated that another revolt may be on the horizon. Iranian authorities hastily executed Afkari on September 12 for allegedly killing a member of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps. Afkari said he was brutally tortured to confess to a crime he did not commit. "If I am executed, people should know that in the 21st century, Iran still executes innocent people," he said.

US Reimposes Sanctions on Iran; The US announced on Saturday night that UN sanctions are being reimposed on Iran. The snapback of sanctions was triggered 30 days ago, following the Security Council's vote not to extend the arms embargo on the Islamic Republic. It was not immediately clear if other members of the Security Council would comply with the new sanctions. Russia and China opposed the American move to extend the arms embargo, and the UK, France, and Germany raised objections as well. The sanctions were suspended following the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran. "History shows appeasement only emboldens such regimes. Thus today, the United States welcomes the return of virtually all previously terminated UN sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran, the world's leading state sponsor of terror and antisemitism," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Saturday night. Pompeo added in his statement that the US expects all UN Member States "to fully comply with their obligations to implement these measures."

Israeli Portable COVID-19 Test Gets FDA Approval; Medical equipment startup Visby Medical has received Emergency Use Authorization by the US Food and Drug Administration for a portable PCR COVID-19 test kit, the first company to do so, the FDA on Thursday, according to Reuters. PCR, or polymerase chain reaction, rapidly replicates DNA or RNA and is considered an accurate diagnostic tool used in labs for infectious diseases. Traditionally, PCR testing uses a machine the size of a large microwave and can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Visby founder and CEO, Israeli entrepreneur Adam de la Zerda, started working at shrinking that machine to a portable size that fits in the palm over seven years ago, initially to use on diagnosing sexually transmitted diseases. But with COVID-19 the company pivoted. The EUA allows Visby's kit to be used in clinical labs. A sample taken via a nasal swab is inserted into the kit and produces results in 30 minutes. The company said the goal is to eventually get the test kit sold to consumers to use at home.

Belgium's First Female, First Jewish PM; Sophie Wilmes is Belgium's first female and first Jewish prime minister. She is also the only Jewish prime minister in Europe, at a time when antisemitism is rising both in her country and on the continent itself. She has spoken out on antisemitism and, in particular, has issued the harshest rebuke by a high-level government official against the annual carnival of Aalst. The controversial parade in that carnival often includes antisemitic caricatures, that has featured Jews with hooked noses or SS officers. As someone who lost family members in the Holocaust, she participated in the World Jewish Congress Twitter event to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day. She wrote, "these actions damage our values and the reputation of our country." Israel and Jewish groups have called on Belgium to halt that parade.

Israel's Population Reaches 9.2 Million; A statistics report published on the eve of Rosh Hashanah estimated the population of Israel to be about 9.246 million, meaning that the population grew by 150,000 people over the course of this year – a growth rate of 1.6%. Breaking the numbers down: 170,000 new babies were born, 44,000 people passed away and 25,000 people immigrated to Israel, with 20,000 being new olim. Israel's population is expected to reach 10 million people by 2024, 15 million by 2048, and 20 million by 2065. The Jewish population is estimated at 6.841 million citizens (74%). Israel's Arab population is 1.946 million citizens (21%) and 459,000 people (5%) were classified as belonging to other groups.

El Al Airline Bought by Yeshiva Student; Eli Rozenberg, a 27-year-old New York-born yeshiva student who lives in Jerusalem, became the owner of the company after he placed the only bid at the public offering at the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange. Kanfei Nesharim, a company owned by Rozenberg, bought a controlling 42.85% of El Al's shares. The purchase was part of a \$400 million rescue package formulated by the Israeli

Finance Ministry to bail out El Al, which had fallen \$2 billion in debt. "The results of the offering express investors' trust in the company's business plan and state assistance. For the money the state has invested, it will receive full capital rights to ensure a full return for the general public whose money has been invested, through the state budget, in the company's shares," the Finance Ministry said.

UAE, Bahrain, Israel Peace Treaties are Signed; Marking the "dawn of a new Middle East," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu signed on Tuesday historic and groundbreaking normalization agreements with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, the third and fourth ever between Israel and Arab states. The text of the peace accord with the UAE and the declaration of peace with Bahrain was not made available to the public before the signing. Among the details, Israeli officials divulged before the signing ceremony were that the agreements would not go into effect until the Israeli cabinet ratified them. UAE officials said there would be references to a two-state solution. The agreement opens the door for Muslims from around the world to visit the holy sites in Israel, including the Al Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Netanyahu reminded the audience that the Jews have prayed for peace for thousands of years and the citizens of Israel have for decades. The day "brings hope to all of the children of Abraham," he said.

Netanyahu: 'A Dawn of New Peace'; The following is an excerpt from Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's speech at the signing of the peace agreement between Israel, UAE, and Bahrain. "This day is a pivot of history. It heralds a new dawn of peace. For thousands of years, the Jewish people have prayed for peace. For decades, the Jewish state has prayed for peace. And this is why today we're filled with such profound gratitude. I am grateful to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed of the United Arab Emirates and to you, Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed. I thank you both for your wise leadership and for working with the United States and Israel to expand the circle of peace. I am grateful to King Hamad of Bahrain and to you, Foreign Minister Abdullatif Al Zayani, for joining us in bringing hope to all the children of Abraham. This week is Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, and what a blessing we bring to this new year, a blessing of friendship, a blessing of hope, a blessing of peace."

13 Injured—Rockets Fired at Southern Israel; Thirteen people were injured after two rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip towards Ashkelon and Ashdod in southern Israel on Tuesday. Rocket sirens sounded as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu signed normalization deals with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. One of the rockets was intercepted by the IDF. Police sappers handled a rocket that fell in Ashdod. Magen David Adom (MDA) reported that its paramedics were treating a man in his 60's hit by shrapnel who was moderately injured upon admittance but whose condition has since worsened to serious. A man in his 20's was lightly injured by shards of glass and four people were treated for shock. Asuta Medical Center in Ashdod received 13 patients, including one person in moderate to serious condition, four people lightly injured by shrapnel, and eight people suffering from shock. Palestinian factions have expressed outrage at the normalization deals, protesting against them at multiple demonstrations in the West Bank on Tuesday in a "day of rage."

Palestinians Warn of Third Intifada Amid Normalization; Palestinian protests against the normalization agreements between Israel and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain could lead to an intifada, Palestinian activists warned on Tuesday. The warning came as Palestinians held protests against the "treacherous" agreements in some parts of the West Bank. The protests, organized by several Palestinian factions that are part of a new group called the Unified Leadership of the Popular Resistance, were held under the banner: "Normalization is a crime." "We are on the brink of a third intifada," a Fatah activist said. "The Palestinian people feel betrayed by the Arabs and will show the world that the Palestinian issue remains the central issue of all Arabs and Muslims." Other activists belonging to various Palestinian factions expressed hope that the Palestinian "day of rage" on the day of the signing ceremony of the normalization agreements at the White House would spark an intifada against Israel.

AIPAC Praises Israel-UAE-Bahrain Agreement; The American-Israel Public Affairs Council (AIPAC) today praised the agreement signed by Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and the United States. In a statement, AIPAC said: "We applaud the leadership of the United States, Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain for achieving this momentous agreement. "Today's ceremony sends a clear message that it's a new era for Israeli-Arab relations. Peace in the region is possible through diplomacy, mutual recognition, and negotiation. "We hope other nations in the Middle East and the Palestinian leadership will follow this inspiring example to bring conflicts in the region to an end and promote prosperity and cooperation," AIPAC said.

Bahraini King Congratulates FM on Israel Deal; King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa was congratulated by Foreign Minister Dr. Abdellatif bin Rashid Al Zayani on the signing of the Declaration supporting the normalization of ties between Bahrain and Israel. According to Bahrain News Agency, The FM thanked the monarch for "fostering peace, stability, and prosperity in the region."

UAE to Begin Administering Coronavirus Vaccines; The United Arab Emirates Health Ministry announced an "emergency permit" to use a coronavirus vaccine, to be administered in the coming days to health system workers and anyone at high risk of contracting the virus. UAE Health Minister Abdul Rahman al-Oueis said study findings in the final stages of clinical trials in the third phase of the vaccine have shown the vaccine effective and provides a strong response by generating antibodies to the virus. "The safety of the vaccine has been tested and the results show it is safe to use," the Health Minister claimed in a press briefing. National Clinical Committee for Coronavirus and lead researcher on the third phase of clinical trials on the coronavirus vaccine Dr. Nawal al-Kaabi also spoke in detail about the new vaccine. She said 31,000 people from 125 countries took part in the clinical trials of the vaccine for six weeks, but the vaccine has been successfully tested on 1,000 volunteers suffering from various chronic diseases. "Preliminary results are encouraging, but studies will continue. The side effects are relatively simple and come as expected just like any other vaccine. No side effects or dangerous symptoms have been reported," al-Kaabi said.

Merkel: "Never Remain Silent" on Anti-Semitism; Chancellor Angela Merkel on Tuesday spoke of her "shame" over rising anti-Semitism in Germany as the Jewish community warned the coronavirus was acting as a "catalyst" stirring up anti-Jewish hatred. "It is true that racism and anti-Semitism never disappeared. But for some time now they have been more visible and uninhibited," Merkel said "It is a disgrace and a source of deep shame for me to see the expressions of racism and anti-Semitism in our country in these times," Merkel said, calling on German citizens to "never remain silent" over the phenomenon. The German government's anti-Semitism commissioner Felix Klein had warned in April that hatred against Jews was spreading in Germany along with the new coronavirus. He cited conspiracy theories circulating online such as false claims that the pandemic was the result of a failed bioweapon test by the Israeli secret service. Anti-Semitic crimes have increased steadily in Germany in recent years with 2,032 anti-Semitic offenses recorded in 2019, up 13 percent on the previous year.

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Robert I. Solomon: Messianic Rabbi, rabbisolomon@yachad.com

Jeffery Blalock: Ministries Coordinator, jeffery@yachad.com

Yachad Ministries, 950 Pine Grove Road, Roswell, Georgia 30075

E-mail: info@yachad.com, Web Page: www.yachad.com

Phone: 770-641-3000 (ext. 6)

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