

# ***Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update October 1, 2020 (13<sup>th</sup> Tishrei, 5781)***

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The image shows two items: on the left, a book cover with a purple background and gold text that reads 'GOD'S APPOINTED TIMES' and 'A Practical Guide for Understanding and Observing the Biblical Holidays' by BARNEY KASDAN; on the right, a glass bottle of 'Anointing Oil' with a gold cap and a label that says 'Jerusalem of Gold Anointing Oil'.

## **[For the Yachad Report Newsletter For October 2020](#)**

***Netanyahu: We're at the Height of a War;*** Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu issued a special statement to the nation Thursday night in preparation for the tightening of the lockdown restrictions tomorrow afternoon. After expressing appreciation for the dedication of health personnel and citizens who lend a hand to others in need, he said: "These lockdown measures are not easy, but saving lives comes first. This is a national emergency. We are at the height of an ongoing war - the Corona War. The entire world is in the throes of the pandemic. The plague is also expected, unfortunately, to take an additional heavy toll in human lives. I am sorry but this is the truth," Netanyahu said. "There is one simple rule - when you open up the economy, the morbidity goes up. Unfortunately, with the removal of the restrictions, there is a gradual slackening in adherence to health regulations. Those who led this have been populist politicians," he attacked. "There is a limit to every trick, this is about human life," Netanyahu stated.

***Gantz: We are Fighting for Our Lives;*** Defense Minister Benny Gantz issued a statement to the citizens of Israel Thursday evening ahead of the expansion of the lockdown restrictions tomorrow. "We are in one of the most difficult crises we have ever known. We are fighting for the lives of the citizens of Israel. I refuse to be drawn into populism, obsessions, or cynicism, but instead to focus on saving lives and saving society," Gantz said. "The decision to open the economy was too early, the decision to transfer the responsibility for cutting off the chain of infection to the IDF came too late," the defense minister added. "This is not a struggle between protesters and worshipers, this is not a virus that only affects the Haredim or secular. This is a war for our lives, the incitement encouraged by certain parties interested in schisms between parts of the people must not prevail."

***Airborne COVID-19 Particle Filter Under Development;*** Laser-induced graphene (LIG) technology, developed by a partnership between Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) and Houston-based Rice University, is to be commercialized to make filtration systems that can filter out airborne COVID-19 particles. The commercialization will be done by LIGC Application Ltd., a leader in the field of graphene commercialization, which focuses on adapting the massive and diverse potential of graphene for the commercial sector. "For the past five years, our lab at the BGU Zuckerberg Institute for Water Research has focused on the development of LIG, specifically in antimicrobial filtration and environmental applications,"

BGU's Dr. Chris Arnusch said in a statement. "We are excited to be commercializing our technology in a number of air filtration products for COVID-19 and other specialized filtration applications."

***Iran, Turkey, Palestinians Speaking Against Peace;*** Gulf Arab countries are moving toward normalization with Israel, but Iran, Turkey, and the Palestinians are "speaking against peace," Intelligence Minister Eli Cohen said on Thursday. "In the previous week, we saw a new Middle East, new peace agreements, and I am sure there will be more to follow after," he said via videoconference. "We see a dramatic change in the Middle East. We see a coalition of peace – with Israel, the UAE, with Bahrain, with Egypt and more countries that will come under the umbrella of the US." "On the other end, we see Iran, Turkey and the Palestinians" publicly condemning the normalization trend, he said. Nevertheless, Cohen said the deals foreshadowed a new era. Prior peace deals were with Egypt and Jordan, with which Israel has borders and had fought wars, he said.

***Saudis Urged UAE and Bahrain to Normalize with Israel;*** As the UAE and Bahrain prepared to sign a deal to normalize diplomatic relations with Israel this summer, Saudi Arabia was quietly urging them on. For several months before the deals were signed at the White House, the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, had been laying out his rationale for a pact that would overturn regional policies towards long-term foe Iran. While a pact between Israel and Saudi Arabia is growing closer, Prince Mohammed is unlikely to agree to anything this year, three sources close to the royal court said. Instead, the Kingdom is likely to continue its role of urging regional allies across the line – effectively in its name. Sudan and Oman are firm favorites to strike a deal before the year is out, but Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are likely to bide their time and hold out for bigger prizes.

***Women's Names to Be Censored on Israeli Neighborhood Street Signs;*** The Beit Shemesh city council decided on Wednesday to leave women's first names off new street signs in the new neighborhood of Neveh Shamir as part of a deal between secular and Haredi council members, according to Israel Hayom. Originally, the plan for the new neighborhood was to name the streets after Haredi figures and subjects, but the plan later changed to include Sarah Aaronsohn and Anne Frank, although their first names will only be written in small print on the signs. The new neighborhood is being built for the general public, not just the Haredi public, but Haredi representatives make up a majority on the city council leading to the decision to make the first names of Aaronsohn and Frank less visible.

***Czech Military to Use Israeli Air Defense Systems;*** Following an international tender process that lasted several years, the Czech Ministry of Defense informed the Directorate of International Defense Cooperation (SIBAT) in the Israel Ministry of Defense, of its decision to equip its military with Israeli air defense systems. The Czech government approved the launch of procurement negotiations for four Israeli "SPYDER" batteries, within the framework of a GTG agreement between the two countries. Israel was selected as the sole supplier for the project and the expected agreement between the countries' defense ministries is estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars. "We thank the Czech government for their partnership", said Defense Minister Benny Gantz, "and for the decision to equip their military with Israeli air defense systems. This is another significant step in strengthening security relations between our two countries, and it is also great news for Israeli defense industries during such a complex period."

***Dubai Rabbinate Releases Glatt Kosher Meals;*** The Jewish community in the UAE continues re-establishing its religious lifestyle following the country's peace agreement with Israel. The slaughter of about 2,500 poultry was carried out for the country's Jews as well as hotels in Dubai seeking strictly kosher food for the large number of Jewish businessmen visiting the country. Israeli citizens expected to arrive in the Gulf kingdom in the near future are also expected to benefit from the operation. The ritual slaughter was carried out by butcher Rabbi Mendel Duchman and supervised by Rabbi Mandy Hitrik of Istanbul, who heads Turkey's

rabbinate's kosher slaughter system, and took place in one of the largest, most modern slaughterhouses in Dubai.

***Israel Surpasses US in Coronavirus Patients per Capita;*** Israel has surpassed the US in coronavirus patients per capita on Monday. There are 20,562 per one million people infected with coronavirus in Israel today. "Israel has been one of the leading countries in the world in infected people per capita for a while," said Prof. Ronit Calderon-Margalit from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem School of Public Health. Calderon-Margalit went on to explain that Israel is seeing an increase in infections that cannot be explained by more testing. "The rate of those who test positive is approximately 11% and that is high in relation to the rest of the world," she said. Israel is also above the global average for coronavirus deaths per capita. The national average is 124 deaths per million and Israel has 137 death per million, according to N12. There has been an increase in infections in many Western European countries, at the same time as school systems opened.

***Unemployment Claims Surge After Lockdown Imposed;*** Nearly 42,000 new unemployment claims were filed in Israel over the past few days, coinciding with the start of the country's second nationwide lockdown. On Friday, Israel imposed its second comprehensive national lockdown, barring Israelis from traveling more than one kilometer from their homes except for 'essential needs' and work in occupations permitted under the lockdown. Only in effect for half a week, the new lockdown has apparently already reversed the downward trend in unemployment. After peaking at over 27% in the spring, Israel's unemployment rate fell to 21% in August and continued to fall through September, declining to 18.5% last Wednesday. Over the past few days, however, the number of new unemployment claims has outpaced the number of workers who found jobs or were returned to work by a ratio of nine-to-one. After Israel's last labor market report, released last Thursday, 41,924 new claims for unemployment benefits have been filed, far outpacing the 4,650 workers who returned to work or found new jobs in that same time.

***Iran-Backed Hezbollah Arms Depot Explodes in Southern Lebanon;*** An arms depot of the Iran-backed Shi'ite Muslim group Hezbollah exploded in southern Lebanon on Tuesday, a security source said, injuring several people and sending a new shockwave across a nation grappling with its deepest crisis in three decades. The security source said the arms depot blast, which sent a huge column of black smoke into the sky, was caused by a "technical error." The al-Manar television station run by Lebanon's Hezbollah said the cause of an explosion in southern Lebanon on Tuesday was not yet clear. The explosion rocked the village of Ain Qana in south Lebanon, a political stronghold of the heavily armed and politically powerful group which has fought wars with neighboring Israel. The blast has further rattled a nation grappling with its worst crisis since the 1975-1990 civil war and still reeling from a devastating explosion at Beirut port that ripped through the capital, killing at least 190 people.

***Iran Could Have Material for Nuke by End of Year;*** As Iran counts down the minutes to the end of an arms embargo, a senior US official alleged that it is resuming work with North Korea on long-range missiles. Iran also could have enough material for a nuclear weapon by the end of the year. The report was part of a larger Reuters report about new US sanctions against up to two dozen people and entities that will be slapped onto Iran. The US has urged the UN to snap back sanctions on Iran after Washington says Iran violated a 2015 deal. Iran has circled the wagons and brought in the Russians, China, Turkey, the EU, and many other countries to oppose the US attempts to put more sanctions on. The US allegation about the long-range missile work is linked to other US claims that Iran has violated agreements linked to ballistic missile development. Iran says it can build whatever it wants. It recently put a military satellite into space.

***Bulgarian Court Sentences Two Hezbollah Terrorists to Life for Attack on Israeli Tourists;*** A Bulgarian court on Monday sentenced two terrorists with ties to Hezbollah and Iran to life in prison over a deadly 2012 bus bomb attack on Israeli tourists at the country's Burgas airport. Judge Adelina Ivanova sentenced the two men -- who fled Bulgaria and were tried in absentia -- to "life in jail without parole",

finding them guilty of terrorism and manslaughter. The attack in July 2012 killed five Israelis including a pregnant woman, their Bulgarian bus driver, and the Franco-Lebanese who carried the explosive, and left over 35 people injured. It was the deadliest terrorist attack against Israelis abroad since 2004. Bulgarian and Israeli authorities blamed the bombing on the Lebanese Shiite terror group Hezbollah, playing a part in a subsequent European Union decision to blacklist Hezbollah's military wing. The two terrorists were identified as Lebanese-Australian Meliad Farah, 31 at the time of the attack, and Lebanese-Canadian Hassan El Hajj Hassan, 24, and were charged in mid-2016 as the bomber's accomplices. DNA analysis identified the bomber as 23-year-old Franco-Lebanese national Mohamad Hassan El-Husseini.

***US, UAE Said Holding 'Decisive' Meeting with Sudan over Israel Normalization;*** Sudanese officials are holding a "decisive" meeting with counterparts from the US and UAE over signing a normalization deal with Israel. Sudan has been among several of countries touted as possibly inking a deal with Israel, following the diplomatic move made by the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain on Tuesday. According to the report, Sudan is asking for a wide-reaching economic support package, and if an agreement is reached, could announce a deal with Israel in the coming days. Sudan is reportedly asking for oil and wheat shipments worth \$1.2 billion to cope with recent devastating floods, a \$2 billion grant to deal with Sudan's economic crisis, and a commitment of economic support from the US and the UAE over the next three years.

***Honduras to Move Embassy to Jerusalem;*** Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and the President of Honduras, Juan Orlando Hernandez, spoke on Sunday and agreed to open embassies in the national capitals of the two countries. A joint statement from the two countries states that Honduras will open an embassy in Jerusalem, Israel will also open an embassy in the capital of Honduras, Tegucigalpa, and that they hope to complete the move by the end of 2020. The statement also said that Netanyahu and Hernandez reaffirmed in their conversation "the close friendship and strategic partnership" between the two countries. It also said that Hernandez congratulated Netanyahu on signing the peace agreements with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, "as part of the peace revolution that the region is going through."

***Most Water Sources in Israel above Green Line for First Time in 23 Years;*** Most water sources in Israel are full above the green line for the first time in the last 23 years, Army Radio reported on Tuesday. Strong rainy seasons in the past two years have filled up the lakes and underground aquifers in Israel. Despite the good news, Israel is expected to get dryer in the coming years.



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