

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update April 14, 2022 ***(13th Nisan, 5782)***



For the Yachad Report Newsletter For April 2022

77% of Evangelicals Think Iran will Use Nukes to 'Wipe Israel off the Map'; More than three-quarters (77%) of Evangelical Christians believe that if the Iranian regime were able to build a nuclear weapon, its leaders would use it to carry out their repeated threats to “wipe Israel off the map” and “bring about a second Holocaust,” according to a new survey. The poll was conducted by McLaughlin & Associates between March 17 and 22 and asked questions of 1,000 American adults. The Joshua Fund is a non-profit organization founded by Joel and Lynn Rosenberg to “mobilize Christians to bless Israel.” In general, two out of three Americans (67.6%) said they believe that Iran would use a nuclear weapon against Israel, while only 12.5% said that they did not believe a nuclear Iran posed a threat to the Jewish state. Nearly 20% of Americans said they did not know. When broken down by religion, nearly half (49.7%) of atheists said they believe Iran wants to destroy Israel with a nuclear weapon, 59.3% of agnostics, 40% of self-identified “secular” Americans, 80% of Jews, 71.2% of Catholics and 74.9% of Protestants, compared to the 77.1% of Evangelicals. The survey also asked how respondents feel about the Iranian nuclear deal in general. The question was, “Do you believe that the new nuclear deal that the international community is negotiating with the leaders of Iran will make the world safer or more dangerous?” The majority of Protestants and Evangelicals, and close to half of all Americans, said that the deal “will make the world more dangerous by lifting economic sanctions, giving Iran’s government enormous oil revenues, and making it easier for Iran to fund - and hide - its efforts to build nuclear weapons.” Less than one-third (31.3%) of respondents said they believe the deal will make the world safer by preventing Iran from building nuclear weapons. When broken down by religion: 24.2% of atheists believe the deal will make the world more dangerous, 47.8% of agnostics, 12.1% of self-identified “secular” Americans, 41.3% of Jews, 48.7% of Catholics, 51.9% of Protestants and 55.3% of Evangelical born-again Christians.

Iran Says US not Showing Necessary Will to Revive Nuclear Agreement; Tehran on Monday, April 11, questioned Washington’s will in reaching an agreement to restore the 2015 nuclear agreement that GOP then-president Donald Trump destroyed, with key sticking points unresolved after talks halted last month. Iran has been engaged for a year in negotiations with France, Germany, Britain, Russia, and China directly, and the United States indirectly to revive the deal, known formally as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Negotiations in the Austrian capital Vienna aim to return the United States to the nuclear deal, including through the lifting of sanctions on Iran, and to ensure Tehran’s full compliance with its

commitments. “We really don’t know if we’ll get a deal or not, because the United States hasn’t shown the necessary will to reach an agreement,” Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said. “What remains are the decisions of Washington,” he added. Earlier this month, Khatibzadeh’s counterpart in the State Department Ned Price said it was Tehran that was not giving way to make a deal possible, but that Washington still believed there was an “opportunity to overcome our remaining differences.” The US unilateral withdrawal from the accord in 2018 under then-president Donald Trump and the reimposition of biting economic sanctions under a “maximum pressure” campaign prompted Iran to begin publicly rolling back on its own commitments.

Israel to Rebuild 40 Kilometers of its West Bank Security Barrier; Israel plans to rebuild 40 kilometers of its 470-kilometer West Bank security barrier in the northern Samaria area by replacing the wire fencing with nine-meter-high concrete blocks. The security cabinet approved the reconstruction and a NIS 360 million initial budget on Sunday in the aftermath of two terror attacks in Bnei Brak and Tel Aviv that claimed eight lives. The new barrier will run from the Salem area to the Bat Hefer region. It "will be comprised of concrete, protective equipment, and additional technological components," the Defense Ministry said adding that "it will be up to 9 meters high and will replace the fence that was built about 20 years ago." The project will be led by Brigadier General Eran Ofir and work is slated to begin as soon as possible. The bulk of the 525-kilometer barrier, designed to prevent terror attacks, has fallen into disrepair and has gaps throughout by which thousands of Palestinians cross into sovereign Israel to work. The system of surveillance and maintenance that was designed to ensure that the barrier would be effective was never maintained, despite the NIS 8 billion already spent on the project.

Bahrain, UAE Condemn Tel Aviv Attack; Bahrain on Friday, April 8, condemned the terrorist attack that took place in Tel Aviv on Thursday evening, in which three Israelis were murdered. The Bahraini Foreign Ministry described the attack as a “terrorist operation” and offered condolences to the families of the victims and the Israeli government. "We reiterate the Kingdom of Bahrain's position that opposes all forms of terrorism and violence no matter the motives and the justifications", the ministry said in a statement quoted by Reuters. The United Arab Emirates’ embassy in Israel later also condemned the attack, offering condolences to the families of the victims. Both the UAE and Bahrain normalized ties with Israel in late 2020 as part of the US-brokered Abraham Accords. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett recently made a historic visit to Bahrain, where he met with Bahraini Crown Prince and Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad al-Khalifa at his palace.

Israel Ready to Export Gas to Europe via Egypt in September; Israel is preparing to step into the gap in Europe’s energy market left by sanctions on Russian natural gas as soon as this summer, according to Energy Minister Karin Elharrar. “The European energy market is facing a substantial shortage following the Russia crisis,” Elharrar said. “Israel sees an opportunity, and will take full advantage of it.” Russia provides Europe with about 40% of its natural gas consumption per year – more than 150 billion cubic meters (BCM). Israel cannot entirely take Russia's place, but eastern Mediterranean states can provide about 20 BCM annually, most of which would come from Israel. The US promised Europe 15-20 BCM of liquefied natural gas (LNG) following the Russia sanctions, and Qatar is expected to export 20-30 BCM to Europe. “We’re not a replacement for Russian gas, but we have a good amount that we can export,” a senior diplomatic source said this week, commenting that the energy issue comes up as “a huge issue for everyone” in most conversations between top Israeli officials and foreign counterparts. “The question is what is the quickest and most cost-efficient method, and what is most beneficial to all those involved,” said the source. Elharrar and EU Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson established a working group on energy, which Egypt will be joining as well. The working plan, based on an agreement between Elharrar and her Egyptian counterpart that has yet to be finalized, is for Israeli natural gas to go through Egypt’s plant for liquefaction and then exported to Europe.

Moody's Upgrades Israel's Outlook to Positive, Affirms A1 Rating; Global rating agency Moody's on Friday, April 8, upgraded the Israeli government's outlook to "positive" from "stable" and affirmed its sovereign credit rating at "A1" Moody's said the key drivers for the change in outlook included the government's reform agenda that aimed to address longer-term challenges and the agency's expectation of a further reduction in the government's debt ratio. Israel's economy grew 8.2% in 2021, above forecasts by the country's central bank, after a 20.2% contraction in 2020. Israel's annual inflation rate hit 3.5% in February, the highest since 2011. The Bank of Israel is expected to hike its interest rates this week, the first tightening in over a decade, to combat rising inflation from strong economic growth and the labor market. Israeli Finance Minister Avigdor Lieberman announced earlier this week the country's budget deficit likely fell to between 1.5% and 1.6% of the gross domestic product in March, and that he intended to cut petrol taxes due to spiking fuel costs. The agency also said Israel's affirmation of the A1 rating balances the economy's growth prospect and resilience against the government's relatively high public debt burden. Moody's also noted that the Israeli government's debt affordability metrics were somewhat weaker than its peers.

Israeli Researchers Find Potential Answer to Deadly Autoimmune Disease; New findings open a novel direction for developing future treatment against an incurable and devastating disorder. Researchers at three Israeli institutions have demonstrated that supporting cells called fibroblasts, previously seen as uniform background players, are vital against some diseases. A subset of these cells may be part of the cause of scleroderma – a rare autoimmune disease that affects the skin. This was revealed in the study, which was published on Wednesday, April 6, in *Cell* (a peer-reviewed journal). In the Weizmann Institute, Hadassah, and Rambam collaboration, scientists collected skin samples from nearly 100 scleroderma patients and from a control group of more than 50 healthy volunteers, in the largest study of this kind ever done to investigate the disorder. “Scleroderma is one of the most frustrating disorders to treat – we can alleviate some of the patient’s symptoms, but usually we cannot significantly affect the cause of the disease, block its progression or reverse its course,” said Prof. Chamutal Gur, a senior physician in the Rheumatology Department at Hadassah University Medical Center, who was drawn to lead the study for both professional and personal reasons: two of her cousins suffer from the disease. Scleroderma (from the Greek skleros, meaning “hard,” and derma, meaning “skin”) is identified by the formation of an abnormally hard, inflexible layer of skin on the arms, legs, and face. Its manifestations vary greatly among patients. In about a third of the cases, the disease, which mainly strikes women aged 30 to 50, advances rapidly and spreads beyond the extremities, causing life-threatening damage to internal organs. Immune-regulating drugs that normally bring relief to people with autoimmune diseases are less effective in scleroderma, which has a higher mortality rate than other rheumatic disorders.

Israel's Second Astronaut Launched into Space; The final countdown to the launch of the Rakia mission was heard in Cape Canaveral, and Eitan Stibbe will become Israel's second-ever astronaut as he flies onboard the Axiom mission 1 (Ax-1) to the International Space Station. The mission, led by Israel’s Science and Technology Ministry and the Ramon Foundation, selected 35 different experiments for Stibbe to undertake during his 10-day stay in orbit. The experiments cover a wide variety of different fields of study, including testing or demonstrating the viability of certain technologies, observing scientific phenomena, studying mechanisms of theorized concepts, and groundbreaking tests on food and agriculture. Also on board with Stibbe is a sculpture made by Tel Aviv University physicist Dr. Yasmine Meroz and artist Liat Segal. Dubbed the "Impossible Object," this water sculpture can only form in space amid the absence of gravity. The sculpture is made of brass pipes and rods that carry water. In zero gravity conditions, the water envelops the brass to form a 3D shape that resembles an endless staircase. Ax-1 is the first fully private space mission headed by Houston-based start-up Axiom Space. The four took off from NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Florida onboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. The crew was set to dock at the ISS on Saturday, April 9. The mission was originally slated for a March 30 launch, but it was postponed twice to give more time to complete pre-launch processing work.

Ramadan Riots: Police Detain PA Governor of Jerusalem; The Palestinian Authority “governor” of Jerusalem, Adnan Gheith, was detained on Tuesday morning, April 5, by the police, as clashes continued for the third straight day near the Old City’s Damascus Gate. Gheith, a resident of the village of Silwan who holds an Israeli-issued ID card, was released hours later after being served with a decision to extend an IDF order banning him from entering the West Bank. The order means that Gheith can’t arrive at the offices of the PA’s Jerusalem Governorate in the town of Al-Ram, north of Jerusalem, which is located outside the boundaries of the Jerusalem Municipality. It also means that he can’t participate in meetings with PA officials in Ramallah or in other Palestinian cities in the West Bank. Like all Palestinian governors, Gheith was appointed by PA President Mahmoud Abbas in 2018. The governors are regarded as the PA president’s personal representatives. Since his appointment, Gheith has been detained at least 28 times and served with orders barring him from participating in any meetings or activities in the city. A law approved by the Knesset in 1994 bans the PA from carrying out various activities in Israel, including in Jerusalem. Shortly after his release, Gheith was quoted as saying that his arrest came “in the context of the occupation’s crimes against our people.” He said that despite the detention and the restrictions imposed on him and other residents of east Jerusalem, “We will remain on our land, embodying our sovereignty [in Jerusalem].” Gheith, who also holds a senior position in the ruling Fatah faction headed by Abbas, was detained hours after dozens of Palestinians again clashed with police officers outside Damascus Gate on Monday night. The disturbances began on Saturday night, the first day of the month of Ramadan. During the riots, Palestinians attacked officers with rocks, empty bottles, iron bars, and fireworks.

Israel No Longer Has Full Freedom of Action over Lebanon; Outgoing air force chief Amikam Norkin said Israel no longer has unfettered air superiority and freedom of action in Lebanon’s skies in an interview broadcast on Tuesday, April 5. After a drone was nearly shot down by an anti-aircraft missile over Lebanon about a year ago, Israel realized that Lebanon’s Hezbollah terror group had some capabilities it was not previously aware of, Norkin said. Israeli officials realized aircraft were threatened by Hezbollah missiles over Lebanon and decided to reduce the number of surveillance flights over its northern neighbor, harming Israel’s intelligence-gathering capabilities, Norkin told the Kan public broadcaster. The Iran-backed Hezbollah is believed to be holding onto some weapons, like anti-aircraft missiles, in case of war with Israel to surprise Israeli forces, the report said. The report seemed to confirm a boast by Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in February that Israeli drone flights over Lebanon have been “greatly reduced” due to Hezbollah’s improved air defenses. “We need to present what we can do, not only in Iran, in 2022, 2023, and on. But we also need to stand by what we cannot do, because the air force head has a huge responsibility,” Norkin said. “And based on what answers they give, decisions are made by the leadership. So I only give accurate, reliable answers about what we can do.” The Israeli Air Force regularly acts against Iran-linked targets in Syria, and sometimes over Lebanon, but has been contending with new aerial challenges from Hezbollah and other adversaries. The Israeli military fears that in the coming years its air superiority may be tested as Iranian-made and -designed drones and cruise missiles flood the Middle East, representing a greater threat to Israel than the simple rockets that terror groups in the region have possessed until now.

Netanyahu: This Government's Days Are Numbered; Opposition Leader Benjamin Netanyahu predicted that the Bennett government will collapse in the near future, following the departure of coalition chairwoman MK Idit Silman. Speaking at the Knesset plenum Wednesday, April 6, the former premier lauded Silman for her announcement Wednesday morning that she will resign as coalition chair and quit the coalition, depriving it of a majority in the Knesset. “During the holiday of Passover, we celebrate Israel’s exodus from Egypt to the Land of Israel, the Promised Land,” said Netanyahu. “Today, we are celebrating for a similar reason, and we commend MK Idit Silman for making the right decision.” “We all welcome her with open arms. Idit is coming home, to the true Right, the national camp.” Netanyahu went on to lambast the Bennett government

and predicted its collapse. "Today, Israel has a weak government. Its days are numbered. I call on more coalition MKs whose hearts are in the right place to join us: we are waiting for you. We will welcome you with honor and appreciation. You can secure your place [in heaven] with a single move that will save the State of Israel from this weak government." "We will establish a government that will defeat terror, stop Iran from going nuclear, that will lower taxes raised by this current government; a government that will fight crime and violence in Arab communities, and that will make sure to incorporate every Israeli citizen into the Israeli success story."

Bibi Activists Threatened Silman before She Left Coalition; Prime Minister Naftali Bennett stated that MK Idit Silman had been threatened by supporters of opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu and Religious Zionist head Betzalel Smotrich until she "broke" and left the coalition on Wednesday, April 6. "Idit was persecuted for months, verbally abused by supporters of Bibi and Smotrich at the most horrific level," said Bennett on Wednesday evening. "She described to me the threats against her husband Shmulik's workplace and her children in Bnei Akiva. She broke in the end." The prime minister stressed that the "main thing we need to deal with at the moment is stabilizing the faction and the coalition." Bennett added that all the leaders in the coalition are interested in continuing the current government. "There is an opportunity here to take this event, learn from it and correct the gaps that have been created," said Bennett. "The whole government was founded on maintaining the status quo - and not on making sharp movements." Bennett warned that the alternative to the current coalition is more elections and possibly multiple rounds of elections, "back to the days of dangerous instability for the State of Israel." Silman said that she "could not take it anymore," and that she could not continue undermining the Jewish identity of the State of Israel, a reference to a disagreement she had with Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz over allowing chametz (leavened grain products) into hospitals over Passover. Netanyahu congratulated Silman on her decision, thanking her "in the name of many people in Israel who waited for this moment." However, Labor MK Gilad Kariv said it was clear that the disagreement over the chametz was "not the real issue," adding that the government was always careful when it came to matters of religion and state. Silman ditched the coalition after she was reportedly offered the 10th spot in the Likud Party list in a future election and the position of Health Minister should the party - led by Benjamin Netanyahu - successfully form an alternative government.

Zelensky: Ukraine Will Be like Israel, Not Demilitarized like Switzerland after War; Ukraine plans to model itself after Israel and not Switzerland in the aftermath of the Russian invasion when it comes to issues of national security, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Tuesday, April 5. "I think all our people will be our great army. We cannot talk about 'Switzerland of the future' — probably, our state will be able to be like this a long time after," Zelensky said. "But we will definitely become a 'big Israel' with its own face." "We will not be surprised that we will have representatives of the Armed Forces or the National Guard in all institutions, supermarkets, cinemas, there will be people with weapons. I am sure that our security issue will be number one in the next ten years," he explained. Ukraine has persistently resisted Russian demands that it demilitarize, with Zelensky clarifying on Tuesday that his country must have an army to defend its people against Russian aggression in the future. There will also need to be countries that provide Ukraine with security guarantees, Zelensky said as he listed Israel as one of those countries. "All this is being discussed at the level of advisers and leaders with France, the United States, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Poland, Italy, Israel, and there are many friends who want to join," Zelensky said. "So far, we have not received a specific list of guarantees and a list of countries that are ready to join us 100%." Ukraine needs a small circle of states ready to help it with its defensive needs, Zelensky explained. "We need serious players who are ready for anything. We need a circle of states that are ready to provide any weapons within 24 hours. We need individual countries on which sanctions policy really depends so that these sanctions are deeply elaborated in advance. So that in the first second when we feel the threat from the Russian Federation, these states will unite and within three days introduce everything at once, block everything," Zelensky said.

Israel's Seventh Census Launched; Israel's seventh national census program, the first since 2008, was launched by President Isaac Herzog at the Knesset on Monday, April 4. The Census Bureau will survey roughly 700,000 people – 7% of Israel's population – on demographic-related questions, such as age, gender, education level, work, and more. Data collection began on April 3 and will continue until November 30, 2022. The questionnaire can be answered online, by phone, or via a face-to-face interview. "The census is a vital tool for a functioning and modern state," said Herzog. "The population census is essential so that a state like ours, a member of the OECD, an advanced state in very many senses, can base itself on the data for everything it does." Israel last conducted a census in 2008. The country typically surveys its population every 10-15 years. Israel has hosted a census in 2008, 1995, 1983, 1972, 1961, and 1948. "I know this is very difficult and complicated work. There are many elements at play. To everyone involved in this work, I wish great success. May we receive the statistics in the end and be able to use them," said Herzog, who became the first citizen to fill out a census form. Central Bureau of Statistics Director Prof. Danny Pfeffermann further supported the need for the census, saying, "Census data provides a demographic snapshot of the whole of Israeli society, socially and economically, and helps in planning and improving our common future.



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: <https://www.yachad.com/>

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

Sharing Yeshua in unity with both Jew and Gentile

To unsubscribe [click here](#).

()