

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update May 11, 2023 (Iyar 20, 5783)

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King Charles III Crowned: 'Monarch Cherishes His Warm Relationship with British Jews' King Charles III was formally crowned King of England on Saturday, May 6, at Westminster Abbey, in a ceremony officiated by the Archbishop of Canterbury. England declared several celebratory measures for the occasion, including a bank holiday, a special medal for the military and emergency personnel participating, and the publication of educational materials for schoolchildren to help them appreciate the significance of the event. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday congratulated King Charles and his wife Queen Camilla on the coronation. "Together with all of Israel's citizens, my wife Sara and I send our warm blessings to King Charles III and to Queen Camilla, on their historic coronation," Netanyahu tweeted. Israel's President, Isaac Herzog, was among the many foreign dignitaries that came to pay their respects to the King. Both President Herzog and Britain's Chief Rabbi, Sir Ephraim Mirvis, benefited from a number of special accommodations that allowed them to participate in the proceedings without violating the Shabbat, despite the coronation taking place on a Saturday. Rabbi Mirvis said "His Majesty King Charles III has made it clear that he wants representatives of the Jewish community and other minority faith communities to be present for the coronation service. At every stage, the Palace has been sensitive to the requirements of halacha when considering how best to include us." "We are blessed to have a Monarch who holds a deep, personal conviction that there is great strength in the diversity of our country and who cherishes his warm relationship with British Jews." (INN / VFI News)

King Charles Anointed with Israeli Oil Consecrated in Jerusalem; The oil which was used during King Charles III's coronation ceremony on Saturday, May 6, was consecrated in Jerusalem in early March, according to the Royal Family's official website. The oil was produced from olive groves on the Mount of Olives, from the Monastery of Mary Magdalene and the Monastery of the Ascension. The Monastery of

Mary Magdalene has a personal connection to the King, as it is the burial place of Princess Alice of Greece, his grandmother. The oils were pressed just outside Bethlehem and perfumed with essential oils such as sesame, rose, jasmine, cinnamon, neroli, benzoin, amber and orange blossom. The oils were then blessed by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III, and the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem, The Most Reverend Hosam Naoum, at a ceremony in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The formula is based on the same one that was used during the late Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953 and has been used for hundreds of years. The tradition of anointing kings with holy oil in Europe traces its origins to the same tradition performed by the ancient Israelites. (JPost / VFI News)

IDF Eliminates Terrorists Who Murdered Lucy Dee and Her Daughters; During a joint operation, Israel Security Agency (Shabak), Israel Border Police, Yamam (Israel's national counterterrorism unit), and the IDF on Thursday morning, May 4, eliminated the two terrorists responsible for the Dee family murder. Lucy Dee and her daughters Rina and Maia were murdered last month in a shooting attack in the Jordan Valley. The terrorists have been identified as Hassan Qatna'ani and Ma'ad Masri, Hamas operatives, who were hiding in an apartment in Shechem (Nablus). The Palestinian Authority Arab who aided them in the murder, Ibrahim Hura, has also been eliminated. The operation lasted one-and-a-half hours and involved 200 IDF and Yamam fighters. Efforts to apprehend the terrorists began immediately following the terror attack. The terrorists were killed during an exchange of fire, and a Kalashnikov rifle and two M16s were found in the apartment. Responding to the eliminations, Rabbi Leo Dee, father of Rina and Maia and husband of Lucy, said, "The kids and I were comforted to hear that the Israeli security forces have eliminated the Iranian-funded terrorists responsible for Lucy, Maia, and Rina's murders. This has been done in a way that has not endangered the lives of Israeli soldiers, nor innocent Palestinian civilians - in a way that only the Israeli army knows how to do." "Furthermore we have asked for the opportunity to speak with the terrorists' families and ask what good they thought would come out of their actions and to hear their vision for a better world." (INN / VFI News)

Iran Has Enough Uranium for Five Nukes, Not Just One – Gallant; Iran has enough enriched uranium for five nuclear weapons, should it decide to weaponized it and complete the detonation and delivery tasks for firing a weapon, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said Thursday, May 4. "Iran is not sufficing with one nuclear bomb," he told his hosts during a visit to Greece. "It has already accumulated enough enriched uranium at the 20% and 60% levels for five nuclear bombs." "If Iran enriches to the 90% weaponized level, it would be a great error and the price would be heavy, and there would be consequences which could inflame the Middle East," he added. Gallant suggested that he was taking the opportunity to discuss Iran's nuclear threats and regional terrorism in greater detail because there were recent efforts by the IRGC to perpetrate terrorist attacks against Jews in Greece. Only top-level intelligence cooperation by Israel and Greece had prevented a disaster, Gallant said. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday said Iran could blackmail any US city if it acquired nuclear weapons. "To have Iran being able to threaten every city in the United States with nuclear blackmail is a changing of history," he told a visiting congressional bipartisan delegation. "Iran is 50 North Koreas," he said. "It is not merely a neighborhood bully like the dynasty that rules North Korea." (JPost / VFI News)

French Parliament Declares Israel Not an Apartheid State; The French National Assembly voted down a resolution stating that Israel instituted an apartheid regime, with 199 opposed and 71 in favor on Thursday, May 4. Dep. Jean-Paul Lecoq of the French Communist Party, which is part of the Democratic and Republican Left parliamentary group, proposed the resolution to "reaffirm the need for a two-state solution and condemn the State of Israel's institutionalization of an apartheid regime as a result of its colonial policy." French Secretary of State for Europe Laurence Boone said in his speech opposing the resolution that "France is a friend of Israel. France is unfailingly committed to Israel's security." Boone

added that France rejects terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians and seeks security for Israelis and Palestinians. Boone also quoted French President Emmanuel Macron's past comments that antisemitism is often behind anti-Zionism. Meyer Habib, the representative of French ex-pats in the Mediterranean region, including Israel, spoke in the name of his party, Les Republicains, "To blame the State of Israel, the only democratic state in the region, of apartheid is to make cynical use of history," he said. "The fact that we are voting on this proposal is in of itself shameful to the republic, to the French parliament, to the Left." (JPost / VFI News)

Government Will 'Fall Apart' without Law on Haredi Military Exemption, Warns Minister; Housing and Construction Minister Yitzhak Galknopf, head of the United Torah Judaism (UTJ) party, said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition could collapse if a law that exempts members of the ultra-Orthodox community from military service does not pass. "If the [military] draft outline is not settled, the government will fall apart," the headline for Galknopf's interview read. The remarks came as Netanyahu's ultra-Orthodox allies have turned up the heat on this divisive issue in recent days. Haredi Knesset members have leveraged the upcoming vote on the 2023-2024 state budget in late May to push for progress on the exemption law. The budget must be passed by May 29 to prevent the Knesset's automatic dissolution, resulting in snap elections. The coalition agreement between Likud and UTJ stipulates that a Basic Law enshrining Torah study as "a foundational value in the heritage of the Jewish people" and legislation allowing for blanket exemptions from IDF service for ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students would pass before the state budget was brought to a vote. The demand for the Basic Law on Torah study is designed to prevent the High Court of Justice from striking down the blanket exemptions law, as it has done on three occasions in the past on the basis that such exemptions violate the principle of equality for all citizens since all other Jewish men are obligated to perform military service. Netanyahu's right-wing, religious coalition is seeking to pass new legislation that would lower the age after which men are exempt from military service from 26 to 21 years old. (TOI / VFI News)

IAI Reveals First-Ever Unmanned Israeli Mini-Submarine; Israel Aerospace Industries on Thursday, May 4, revealed a first-ever and potentially game-changing Israeli-made unmanned mini-submarine. It is expected to expand the IDF's intelligence-gathering capabilities and significantly reduce maintenance and training costs. The 12-meter-long "BlueWhale" mini-submarine is intended for covert intelligence-gathering operations. It can detect submarines and gather acoustic intelligence. It could be the start of a future in which the Israel Navy shifts to more unmanned vehicles that require fewer sailors. In addition, the vehicle's small size, which is possible because it does not need room for human operators, makes it much harder for enemy forces to detect than many current options in the Navy. The large autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) has successfully conducted thousands of hours of submerged and autonomous operations. BlueWhale uses radar and electro-optical systems, "fitted to a telescopic mast, to detect sea and coastal targets," IAI said in a press release. The mini-submarine is also equipped with "dedicated sonars to enable the detection of both manned and unmanned submarines and map mines on the seabed." In addition, a special sensor suite ensures safe transit for the submarine both below and in the proximity of the sea surface, on which it is also capable of "landing." (JPost / VFI News)

The World's Oldest Hebrew Bible Publicly Displayed in NYC; After stops in London, Tel Aviv, and other locales, the world's oldest nearly-complete Hebrew Bible is on view in New York City beginning Sunday, May 6. Known as the Codex Sassoon, the book — which was written by a single Jewish scribe on 400 pages of parchment about 1,100 years ago — will be on view at Sotheby's auction house (1334 York Ave.) by appointment until Tuesday, May 16. The following day, it will be sold at auction and is estimated to fetch between \$30 million to \$50 million — possibly making it the most expensive book or document ever sold. "Codex Sassoon has long held a revered and fabled place in the pantheon of surviving historic documents and is undeniably one of the most important and singular texts in human history," Richard

Austin, Sotheby's global head of books and manuscripts, said. "In Codex Sassoon, a monumental transformation in the history of the Hebrew Bible is revealed," said Sharon Mintz, Sotheby's senior Judaica specialist for books and manuscripts. "The biblical text in book format marks a critical turning point in how we perceive the history of the Divine word across thousands of years and is a transformative witness to how the Hebrew Bible has influenced the pillars of civilization — art, culture, law, politics — for centuries." Sotheby's New York galleries are free and open to the public, and the Codex Sassoon can be viewed by appointment. (INN / VFI News)

At Least 100 Rockets Shot at Israel, 12 Injured; At least 100 rockets and mortars were fired from the Gaza Strip toward southern Israel throughout Tuesday and Wednesday, May 2 - 3, with two rockets even hitting Sderot and wounding at least 12 civilians. The first round of rockets started just hours after Palestinian Islamic Jihad official Khader Adnan died following a three-month-long hunger strike against his being held in administrative detention. Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad both took responsibility for the rocket fire. Of the first three rockets, fired by Palestinian Islamic Jihad on Tuesday morning, all landed in open areas near the Gaza border. During that round of rockets, the IDF decided that there was no need to activate the Iron Dome missile defense batteries. The IDF then responded with tank fire on one Hamas military position, a relatively light reaction. Later Tuesday afternoon, another 22 rockets were fired, this time by a mix of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, causing sirens to go off in Sderot, Nir Am, Sde Avraham, Erez, and some other towns. Four rockets were intercepted and 16 landed in open fields, but two struck urban areas, according to the IDF. One rocket hit a construction site in Sderot, with another hitting the yard of a home in the city, according to Army Radio. At least 12 civilians were wounded, including a foreign laborer from China in his mid-20s. The Chinese worker was initially in serious condition, while the condition of the others was less serious. However, the Chinese worker's condition later improved to being moderately stable. A 49-year-old woman was also hospitalized after being lightly injured while on her way to a bomb shelter. MDA also hospitalized a person in their mid-20s who suffered from anxiety. The rocket barrage came as children were set to be picked up from school and daycare, with the schools having to shelter the children in place until it was safe for their parents to come to get them, according to instructions issued by local councils. (JPost / VFI News)

IDF Struck 16 Targets in Gaza Overnight in Response to 100 Rockets; A total of 104 rockets were fired into Israel between Tuesday and Wednesday, most by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad with some minor participation from Hamas, the IDF confirmed on Wednesday morning, May 3. Of the 104 rockets fired into Israel, 11 fell in the sea, 14 fell in Gaza, 24 were shot down by Iron Dome, 48 fell in open areas and the IDF said that the location of the remaining 7 was still unclear. In response, Israel countered with approximately 16 airstrikes, mostly on Hamas positions, to hold the group responsible for what occurred in Gaza. IDF Spokesman Brig.-Gen. Daniel Hagari said that despite an apparent ceasefire starting around 5:30 a.m. "all options are on the table" should any Palestinian group fire additional rockets at Israel. Most of the Israeli strikes in Gaza focused on Hamas' armament capabilities, including weapons factories, operational headquarters for its naval forces, underground tunnels, and other similar sites, with indications that only one Hamas member was killed. Hagari said that Hamas had participated with land-to-air missiles against Israeli aircraft which were not particularly effective, but had mostly left the fighting to Islamic Jihad, which was an early sign that Hamas did not want a major conflict. He also rejected media estimates of Iron Dome's effectiveness dropping to 70%, saying its effectiveness remained around 90%. Lastly, he said that only three people were injured directly by rocket fire, including a foreign worker from China in Sderot, who remains the only moderately injured person on the Israeli side. (JPost / VFI News)

Islamic State Leader Killed in Syria by Turkish Intelligence Services, Erdogan Says; Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Sunday, April 30, that Turkish intelligence forces killed Islamic State leader Abu Hussein al-Qurashi in Syria. "This individual was neutralized as part of an operation by the

Turkish national intelligence organization in Syria yesterday," Erdogan said in an interview with Turkish media. Erdogan said the intelligence organization had pursued Qurashi for a long time. Syrian local and security sources said the raid took place in the northern Syrian town of Jandaris, which is controlled by Turkey-backed rebel groups and was one of the worst affected in the Feb. 6 earthquake that hit both Turkey and Syria. The Syrian National Army, an opposition faction with a security presence in the area, did not immediately issue any comment. One resident said clashes started on the edge of Jandaris overnight from Saturday into Sunday, lasting for about an hour before residents heard a large explosion. The area was later encircled by security forces to prevent anyone from approaching the area. Al-Qurashi had been the leader of ISIS since November 2022. (JPost / VFI News)

Senior Iranian Ayatollah Abbas-Ali Soleimani Assassinated – Report; Iranian ayatollah Abbas-Ali Soleimani, a member of the Assembly of Experts for Leadership of Iran, was assassinated at a bank on Wednesday morning, April 24, in the northern city of Babolsar, according to Iranian media reports. Soleimani was a former representative of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Khamenei's representatives are clerics who officiate on behalf of the supreme leader at a provincial level. The Assembly of Experts is a powerful clerical body that supervises, appoints and in theory can sack the supreme leader. The southern province of Sistan-Baluchistan, bordering Pakistan and Afghanistan and one of Iran's poorest, faced months of intensive anti-government protests sparked by the death in custody of a young Iranian woman in September. Soleimani's killer has been detained, IRGC backed media said. The governor of Mazandaran, Mahmoud Hosseinipour, stated that Soleimani was killed by a security guard at the bank. Initial investigations have indicated that the attacker fired aimlessly and did not know that Soleimani was there, although the attacker's motive is still not clear, according to Hosseinipour. (JPost / VFI News)

Iran Seizes Second Oil Tanker in a Week in Gulf - US Navy; Iran has seized a second oil tanker in a week on Wednesday, May 3, in Gulf waters, the US Navy said, the latest escalation in a series of seizures or attacks on commercial vessels in Gulf waters since 2019. The Bahrain-based Fifth Fleet of the U.S. Navy said the Panama-flagged oil tanker Niovi was seized by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy (IRGCN) at 6:20 a.m. (0220 GMT) while passing through the narrow Strait of Hormuz. In Iran's first response, Tehran's prosecutor announced the oil tanker was seized on a judicial order following a complaint by a plaintiff, Iranian judiciary's news agency said. No further details were provided. Maritime security firm Ambrey has said it believed the Advantage Sweet's seizure by Iran was in response to a recent seizure via a court order by the United States of an oil cargo aboard the Marshall Islands tanker Suez Rajan. The Niovi oil tanker seized on Wednesday had been traveling from Dubai toward the UAE's Fujairah port when it was forced by IRGCN boats to change course towards Iranian territorial waters, the Navy said. (JPost / VFI News)

Kevin McCarthy Tells Knesset: We Thank You for the Miracle of Israel; US Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy addressed the Knesset Monday, May 1, during the opening ceremony of the Knesset's summer session. McCarthy is the second House Speaker in history to address the Knesset, and the first since Newt Gingrich in 1998. The Speaker began his remarks by stating that it is "an honor to join you in the city of Jerusalem, the eternal capital of Israel." "Ladies and gentlemen, Israel's rebirth is nothing less than a modern miracle, and I thank you for it," he said. "If we remain united, then the forces of freedom and democracy will always prevail," McCarthy declared. "This is the foundation of our special relationship. We are the only two countries in history that were conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all are equal. America is grateful for our friendship with Israel. We are a better nation because of it, and we must never shy away from defending it." Earlier, on Sunday, McCarthy said that if US President Joe Biden does not invite Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to visit the White House soon, he will invite the Israeli leader to meet with Congress. On Monday, Israeli President Isaac Herzog

hosted and McCarthy met for a private working meeting, followed by a wider diplomatic meeting attended by the President's advisors, Israel's Ambassador to the US Michael Herzog, and 17 members of Congress who arrived with the Speaker as part of a bipartisan delegation. During the meeting, the President and Speaker of the House discussed the strong partnership between Israel and the United States, and focused on ways to deepen cooperation between the countries in various fields. (INN / VFI News)

Ukraine Starts Testing Israeli Missile Warning System in Kyiv; An Israeli early warning system for missile attacks began operating in Kyiv this week, Ukrainian Ambassador to Israel Yevgen Kornichuk said on Wednesday, May 3. Kornichuk had asked Israel for missile warning systems since Russia invaded Ukraine last year. The previous government promised the system to Ukraine, but the ambassador credited Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's personal involvement in ensuring the project's quick completion. "Hopefully they will finalize [the warning system] quickly and we can copy-paste it to all major cities. The Ukrainian government controls six cities with over a million residents and we will definitely be using Israeli technology to help save people's lives," the ambassador said. The system identifies rockets and missiles of all kinds and projects where they will fall, in order to narrow the radius in which residents may be in danger. It also calculates how much time people in that area have to seek shelter. "This is very important for our civilian and military infrastructure. It is equipment that will allow us to save lives," Kornichuk stated. Israel is also aiding Ukraine in clearing mines, something that Foreign Minister Eli Cohen brought up in his meetings with EU officials in Brussels this week. Kornichuk explained that "over the last six months, we have liberated territory twice as large as Israel that is full of mines." (JPost / VFI News)

Malta: Seven Syrians Accused of Encouraging Terror in Europe; Seven Syrian men were accused in a heavily guarded Maltese court on Sunday, April 30, of having encouraged and trained others to commit terrorism in Europe, British media reported. The seven, aged between 21 and 27, were arrested on Saturday in an operation coordinated with the European police agency Europol, the Malta police said. The men are accused of association with an extremist organization, inciting terrorism through public messages, recruiting or attempting to recruit others to commit terrorism, instructing others on the use of explosives or firearms and attempting to travel to Europe to commit terrorism. They pleaded not guilty and were remanded in custody at the end of the hearing. The suspects face a maximum punishment of life imprisonment if convicted. No further details about the case were immediately available. Europe has seen an uptick in terrorist attacks in recent years. Just last week, German authorities arrested a Syrian man on suspicion of planning to carry out an explosives attack motivated by Islamic extremism. In June of 2022, four suspected members or sympathizers of the Islamic State (ISIS) group were detained in Germany and Switzerland. (INN / VFI News)

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

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