

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update April 22, 2024 (Nisan 14, 5784)

As the sun falls from the sky this evening we begin the Passover holiday.

It is known as the Season of Freedom; it is celebration of the biblical story of the Israelites exodus from Egypt after hundreds of years of slavery. This evening as we gather around the Seder table, for many of us, it is unfathomable to celebrate freedom. There are still 129 hostages being brutally held in Gaza at the hands of Hamas. Their fate is unknown. Can we possibly commemorate our freedom while hostages suffer more than 200 days in captivity?

To answer this, we want to tell you about the night Iran attacked Israel on an unprecedented scale. As each of us understood that Iran launched a major attack of drones, ballistic missiles, and cruise missiles directly at Israel, we all moved into the bomb shelters and some into safe rooms. Most of us did not sleep. We stayed awake waiting and wondering what our fate would be.

The attack took hours to arrive, and we watched on television and on the internet as the attack got closer. Even deep underground in bomb shelters we started to hear the percussive booms of what we hoped were interceptions and not ground impacts. All at once the red alerts sounded in communities across Israel. Now was the time. The attack had arrived. We sat together silently, some with just our families, and some with their communities. The news showed of interceptions as seen from Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, and Tel Aviv. We whole country could hear the IDF at work protecting the homeland. Soon the sounds of war decreased until it was quiet. We were told it wasn't fully finished and we had to stay inside our protected areas longer.

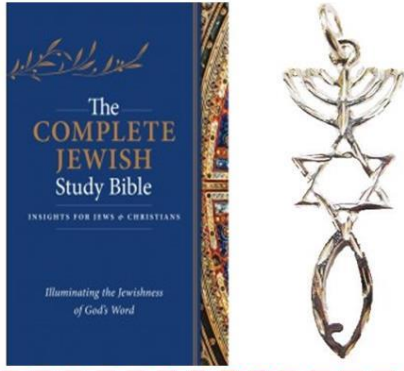
Eventually at about 7 am the IDF gave the all clear. We immersed from underground into the sunshine of a new day. Israel had survived the attack. The IDF together with the United States, Great Brittan, France, and Jordan intercepted 99% of the munitions fired. Most did not reach the boarder of Israel.

It is this hope and unity that should be at the center of this evening's Seder. With overwhelming appreciation, we thank those who came to our aid. The people of Israel are grateful for your solid support and friendship.

It is a tradition that Jews continue to commemorate the holy days even in hardship and through oppression. Therefore, tonight we will sit at the Seder table. We will commemorate the holiday, but we will not celebrate it. The focus of this Seder will not be on the distant past, but on today.

We will have the Seder in honor of those who are being held by Hamas, of those who were murdered on October 7th, and those who fell in battle protecting our dear Israel. We will set the table with an empty chair, we will add a solid walnut to the Seder plate, tie the matzah with a yellow ribbon, and pray for the release of the hostages.

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The advertisement features two items: on the left, the cover of 'The Complete Jewish Study Bible' with the subtitle 'INSIGHTS FOR JEWS & CHRISTIANS' and the tagline 'Illuminating the Jewishness of God's Word'; on the right, a silver menorah.

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Israel-Hamas War, Day 199

IDF Intel Chief Resigns Over Oct. 7 Failures: 'Will Forever Carry the Terrible Burden of the War'

- *Two arrested for Jerusalem car ramming attack that lightly wounded three*
- *Israeli security forces arrest suspect in murder of 14-year-old settler Binyamin Ahimeir*
- *Israeli defense minister decries U.S. sanctions on IDF unit, pledges to respect to international law*

- *Blinken urges Gallant, Gantz to de-escalate regional tensions in phone call*
- *Biden says U.S. working 'around the clock' for hostage release, calls for 'immediate' Gaza cease-fire*
 - *Palestinians report six wounded by settler, IDF gunfire in West Bank*
- *Gallant decries U.S. sanctions on IDF unit, pledges to respect to international law*
- *Israeli soldier dies from wounds sustained in drone and missile attack on north*
 - *Israeli wounded by planted explosive device in West Bank*
- *Palestinian woman killed in attempt to stab soldiers at West Bank checkpoint*

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If you are interested in having Yachad Ministries to come your church and share about what is going on in Israel and the Middle East, and how the Bible is unfolding right in front of our eyes.

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14 Soldiers, 4 Civilians Wounded in Hezbollah Drone Attack on Northern Border Town; Fourteen soldiers and four civilians were wounded as an explosive drone fired from Lebanon struck a community center in the northern border town of Arab al-Aramshe on Wednesday, April 17, medics and the military said. The victims were taken to Galilee Medical Center in Nahariya, which said that one was listed in critical condition and four were seriously wounded, with the remaining victims being moderately and lightly hurt. According to the IDF, the five listed in critical and serious condition were soldiers. The four civilian victims were all lightly hurt. Warning sirens did not sound. The IDF was investigating why the alarms were not activated before the strike, and why the drone was not intercepted. A nearby vehicle was also hit in the attack. Hezbollah claimed responsibility for the attack, saying it targeted a building being used by the Israeli military with guided missiles and explosive-laden drones. Though the town has been largely evacuated, soldiers are stationed there and may have used the building as a gathering space. The terror group said the attack was a response to the killing of three of its members, including two commanders, in Israeli strikes in southern Lebanon a day earlier. (TOI / VFI News)

Report: Israel Strikes Iran Near Nuclear Sites; Reports emerged early Friday morning, April 19, that Israel had attacked several Iranian sites — including targets near the suspected locations of Iran’s nuclear facilities. Israel’s Army media reported at 5:00 a.m. local time that American media had identified Israeli strikes near the town of Isfahan, Iran, as well as in locations in Syria and Iraq. Reports had claimed on

Wednesday that Iran has allegedly removed senior Hezbollah and IRGC members from Syria, in fear of a potential Israeli retaliation. Another Israeli news agency reported that semi-official Iranian media say that explosions have been heard near the airport at the country's central Isfahan city, but that the reason is unknown. Isfahan, however, is known to be home to Iran's fleet of American-made F-14 Tomcats — purchased before the 1979 Islamic Revolution. The Israeli strikes apparently came in response to a massive Iranian missile and drone attack on Israel over the weekend. Though Israeli and allied air defenses largely intercepted the attack, it marked the first such direct attack by Iran against Israel from Iranian territory. Israel gave no official comment and there has been no change to the IDF Home Front Command's instruction to civilians. IRGC put all bases on high alert and the Iranian National Security Council was called for an urgent consultation. One Iranian government official suggested sites may have been targeted by drones launched from within Iranian territory and not missiles. (BB / VFI News)

The Israeli Response to the Iranian Attack Appears to Be Limited; There has been no official confirmation of a strike from Israeli authorities, and state-run media in Iran reported only that air defenses were activated, downplaying claims of the alleged Israeli attack near the Iranian city of Isfahan, some 315 kilometers (196 miles) south of Tehran, and describing the incident as business-as-usual. The limited nature of the strike reportedly carried out with drones rather than missiles or airstrikes, and the lack of official acknowledgment will likely give the regime in Iran the strategic deniability needed to wriggle out of its aggressive threats to attack Israel a second time, providing an early indication that both Israel and Iran may be seeking to step back from the brink of war. The attack had been widely expected, with Israel providing indications throughout the week that it would not let an unprecedented Iranian barrage of over 300 ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and drones early Sunday, April 14, pass without a response, leading to fears of spiraling tit-for-tat attacks giving way to all-out war. However, there were also indications that the Israel Defense Forces had moderated its attack plans in response to international pressure for restraint. National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir a hardliner who has pushed for wide military action against Iran, commented on X with a simple “lame.” (TOI / VFI News)

Iran's Attack on Israel Shines Spotlight on Tehran's Advancing Nuclear Weapons Program; With all eyes focused on a brewing war between Israel and the Islamic Republic of Iran, the state of Tehran's illicit nuclear weapons program has come under the microscope. Iran's sprawling aerial attack, with over 300 suicide drones and missiles on Israel has raised pressing new questions about the Islamic Republic's capability to fire a nuclear weapon at the Jewish state. On Sunday, April 14, after rejecting calls that the Biden administration was too soft on Tehran, the White House National Security Communication spokesperson, John Kirby told American media that “Iran is so much dramatically closer to a potential nuclear weapon capability than they were before Mr. Trump was elected.” David Albright, a physicist who is the founder and president of the Institute for Science and International Security in Washington, D.C., told the news agency that “Iran would need a year or more to build a semi-reliable warhead for a ballistic missile and about two years to reconstitute the Amad Plan so as to be able to serially produce reliable warheads for ballistic missiles, i.e., have a fully developed nuclear weapons production complex.” Albright warned that “Iran can make a crude nuclear explosive in about six months, able to be tested underground or delivered by truck, ship or cargo plane. This accomplishment would be enough to establish Iran as a nuclear weapons power.” (FN / VFI News)

NYPD Arrests 108 People at Columbia University After Anti-Israel Agitators Set up Encampment on Campus; Police removed anti-Israel protesters from Columbia University's campus in New York City on Thursday, April 18, after the demonstrating students had set up an encampment on a campus lawn, and announced the suspension of those students involved. In total, 108 people were arrested and given a summons for trespassing, the NYPD said during an early evening press conference. Two people were additionally given a summons for obstruction of governmental administration. The daughter

of Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., was arrested and given a trespass summons, the NYPD said. NYPD officers also noted that while many of the protesters were peaceful and didn't resist arrest, around 500 students left their classrooms and told officers they were the "KKK," "baby killers" and to "go kill ourselves," a police official said. "It was very sad to see," he said. "It's very troubling when you protest protesting for peace. You should not be using inflammatory comments like we saw. It was very vile," NYC Mayor Eric Adams said. (FN / VFI News)

Iranian Volleyball Player Posted Support for Israel on Social Media, And Then She Disappeared; As tensions continue to rise between Israel and Iran, several Iranian athletes expressed support for Israel, despite the risk involved. Mobina Rostami, who plays on the Iranian women's volleyball team, came out against the attack, expressed support for Israel, and was arrested by the authorities. Now, no one knows where she is. "As an Iranian, I am truly ashamed of the authorities' attack on Israel," Rostami wrote on Instagram on the night of April 13, when Iran attacked Israel with hundreds of anti-aircraft missiles and drones. "But you need to know that the people in Iran love Israel and hate the Islamic Republic." Since that message, Rostami's social media accounts have been closed and she has been arrested. There is great concern about her condition, which is currently unknown. "Only God knows what they did to her," friends posted on social media. "We will shove you in a bag," read one of the responses to her words, from an Iranian account. The day after the Iranian attack, a series of senior sportsmen in Iran came out openly and with great courage against the regime. The most famous of them is Ali Karimi, a former star of Iran's national soccer team. Karimi uploaded a post on X, in which hands were seen joined with the Israeli flag and the flag of Iran from before the Islamic revolution in 1979, with the caption: "We are Iran, not the Islamic Republic." (YNet / VFI News)



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