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Middle East Update



DAN STOLEBARGER

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ISSUES

Czech textbooks to drop Jerusalem as Israel's capital

"Palestinian incitement knows no bounds," Foreign Ministry says • Move follows complaint by Palestinian official saying atlases used in country's schools name Jerusalem as capital • Czech Education Ministry orders books revised, names Tel Aviv as capital.

Netanyahu does not trust what the Obama administration might be considering on the Israeli-Palestinian issue," "There have been rumors flying around, that after the November elections, the administration will consider trying to work out a set of parameters on final status issues, either with a UN Security Council resolution or some other arrangement – basically to create a new framework for what would constitute the international community's preferred outcome for a two-state solution, including what to do about borders, Jerusalem, refugees.

Israeli visitors are tagged differently from other guests at a five-star resort in Rhodes, Greece Israel's Channel 10 reported on Sunday. According to the report, the plastic wrist bands given to guests at the Imperial Hotel - to enable them unlimited entrance to the spa and other facilities - are color-coded (in blue) only for customers from the Jewish state.



Fatah vs Hamas

- ❖ Fatah and Hamas are locked in a high-stakes struggle ahead of the October 8 vote. Abbas's Fatah movement currently holds power in the West Bank, where he heads the Palestinian Authority, while Hamas has ruled Gaza since it ousted Fatah in a bloody 2007 coup. A year earlier, in elections for the Palestinian parliament, Hamas won 74 of 132 seats, and Fatah just 45.
- ❖ Channel 2 television reported Friday that leading Fatah officials have told Abbas that they face defeat to Hamas in the West Bank and that this will mean "the destruction" of Fatah.
- ❖ Officials close to Abbas earlier this week accused the Israeli leadership of hoping for a Hamas win. The officials told The Times of Israel. "They desire a victory for Hamas, as this would prove their allegations that there is no one to talk to" on the Palestinian side, they said.



PA LOSING GRIP

- ❖ The Palestinian Authority is getting dismantled,” Inbari said. “Every province is going its own way, and Ramallah is losing its control over the entire West Bank.” In Hebron, he said, “We have the tribal system getting stronger, and the family rule and the merchants are controlling” the area to prevent chaos. To the north, in Nablus, Inbari said, “The refugee camps are taking over the city... they are spreading anarchy all around.”
- ❖ And in Ramallah, where the Palestinian Authority (PA) leadership is headquartered, tensions between veteran Palestinian leaders – including PA President Mahmoud Abbas, in the 12th year of his four-year term in office.



RUSSIA - PEACE FACILITATOR?

- ❖ A senior official in the Palestine Liberation Organization praised Russia this week as a more “credible” and “balanced” third-party facilitator for Israeli-Palestinian peace talks than the US.
- ❖ “Russia can fulfill a positive, credible and more balanced role,” Ahmad Majdalani told the el-Raad television station, “since the US is not at all interested in pressuring Israel, which is carrying out its policy in the region.”



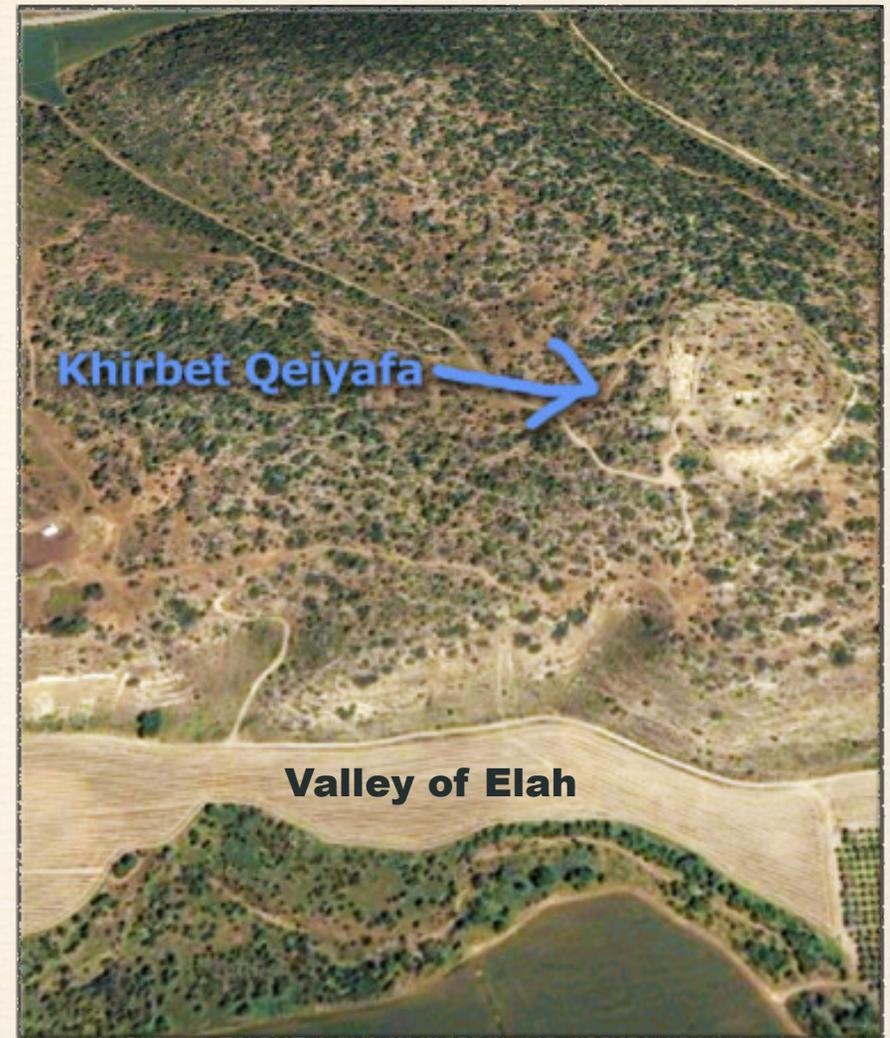
Children's Torah Scroll

- ❖ Thousands gathered at the Western Wall this weekend to celebrate the dedication of a special Torah scroll, each of whose letters was purchased by an Israeli child.
- ❖ The Torah scroll contains 304,805 letters, each of which was sold to a child for 4 shekels (about \$1). This is the sixth scroll written expressly for the children of Israel.
- ❖ The project of selling the individual letters of the Torah text was inspired by the late Lubavitcher Rebbe Menahem Mendel Schneersohn, the renowned leader of the Chabad movement, who decades ago issued a call to create a Torah in which each letter would be dedicated to Jewish children. Thus far, over 2 million children have taken part in the creation of Torah scrolls.



Valley of Elah

- ❖ Relics from Khirbet Qeiyafa, a Judean city close to where David fought Goliath, including two portable shrines, showcased by Bible Lands Museum • Artifacts date back to 11th century BCE, provide strong evidence that ancient Israelites lived in area.
- ❖ The city, which lies close to modern day Beit Shemesh, near Jerusalem, is believed to have been inhabited by the ancient Israelites during the time of King Saul. The long archeological excavations on the site have provided some of the strongest evidence that ancient Israelites lived in the area at the end of the 11th century BCE, Archeologists say that swords at the site could have been used during the battle of David and Goliath.



TORAH GLEANINGS

One of the greatest sins is to forget who you really are -- a prince or princess of God (Deut. 14:1). Forgetting who you are leads to forgetting who the LORD is, just as forgetting who the LORD is leads to forgetting who you are.

Of the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch, one would think that "sight" would be considered the lowest of all of them. All the others provide some measure of a physical and sensual experience, while sight does not. Even more perplexing is the fact that the Talmud teaches that "the yetzer hara (the evil inclination) has no power except with respect to what the eyes see. (Sotah 8a).

The key element seems to be the power to change "sight" into "vision". Sight is the ability to see the physical reality around us, while vision is the power of seeing within and beyond it. How then, is such a metamorphosis achieved? It seems that the secret to that, is ensconced in learning the art of "Listening with one's eyes". **Open your eyes and look around you and hear the song of creation.**



Quotable Quotes

It has been said that the only thing we can “take with us” when we die is what we have freely given away to others.





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