

KFIR

MIDDLE EAST UPDATE

Week of June 30, 2017



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Holy Ground Explorations



holygroundexplorations.com

THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

President Donald Trump decided against hosting the annual Ramadan feast at the White House this year, effectively ending a two-decade tradition which began in 1996 with First Lady Hillary Clinton.

IDF targets Syrian artillery positions and ammunitions truck after errant shells land in Golan Heights Sunday.

In 'Al-Quds Day' Message, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani Urges Muslim War on Israel.

Facebook will not block Holocaust-denying content on its platform in countries where it remains legal, saying it is merely the expression of an opinion. (Facebook does remove hate content, threats and Nazi symbols.)

"We want peace with Israel. Most people understand that the enemy is Iran and not Israel," said Salim Hudaifa of the Free Syrian Army.



PA'S MARTYRS FUND

Trump's peace initiative has already met obstacles, as the Palestinians are refusing to cease their practice of paying terrorists and inciting terrorists.

However, Abbas reportedly left the meeting enraged by the delegation's demand to cut off payments for some convicted terrorists and their families. Originally, the US had demanded that Ramallah stop all payments, but later watered-down conditions to some 600 prisoners serving life sentences for murder.

On Friday, the PA accused the US delegation of being mouthpieces for the Israel government and refused Washington's watered-down demand to stop paying salaries to Palestinian terrorists, the *Times of Israel* reported.

The PA reportedly also accused the US delegation of siding with Israel against the interests of the Palestinians. "They sounded like Netanyahu's advisers and not as honest mediators," a source told *Haaretz*.



TAYLOR FORCE ACT

Currently making its way through Congress is the Taylor Force Act that is named for Taylor Force, the West Point graduate and US army veteran who was murdered in March 2016 in Tel Aviv by a Palestinian terrorist, the Taylor Force Act will end US funding of the PA until it ends its payments to terrorists and their families - including the family of Force's murderer Bashar Masalha.

The Taylor Force Act enjoys bipartisan majority support in both the House and the Senate. It is also supported by the Israeli government.



GOLAN ROCKETS

The Israeli military on Monday declared a border-adjacent area in the Golan Heights temporarily off-limits to civilians, following a series of incidents in which errant Syrian fire hit Israeli territory.

The army said several "crowd gathering points" in the Quneitra area would be closed off until further notice. Farmers will be allowed in to work in their fields, though they will also be barred from coming near the border fence itself.

In the past three days there have been three incidents of errant fire hitting Israel. The IDF has responded with force, targeting Syrian army installations, which Israel holds responsible for all incidents originating from Syrian soil.



BIBI - GOLAN ROCKETS

A shell from fighting in Syria landed in the Golan Heights on Wednesday as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was touring the strategic plateau. There were no injuries or damage caused and the PM was not in any danger.

The IDF immediately struck a Syrian military position from which the mortar shell was fired, fulfilling Netanyahu's vow that Israel "will not accept stray fire" from the Syrian civil war landing in its territory.

The incident came as Netanyahu spoke at an event marking the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the city of Katzrin, some 17 kilometers (10 miles) from the Quneitra area where the mortar struck.



GAZA ROCKETS

The Israeli Air Force on Monday night struck two Hamas infrastructure targets in the north and south of the Gaza Strip, the military said.

The IDF said the strikes came in response to a rocket launch from the Strip earlier in the night. Strikes were recorded in at least three locations in Gaza, Palestinian sources and eyewitnesses said, with Hamas bases struck near the southern city of Rafah and Gaza City in the north, as well as open land southeast of Gaza City.

Earlier a rocket hit southern Israel, in the Sha'ar Hanegev region, not causing any damage or casualties.

The launch was claimed by a salafist group linked to the Islamic State, according to Hebrew media reports.

Israel says it holds Hamas responsible for any attacks emanating from the territory it controls, and has in the past responded to any launch with strikes on Hamas targets.



LEBANON WARNING!

Commenting on the threat in the north, Maj. Gen. Amir Eshel said that, at this time, Hezbollah is not interested in attacking Israel again. "For us, this presents an opportunity because it gives us time to build our strength. If a war breaks out in the northern arena, we need to act with full force from the beginning. What we could do in 34 days during the Second Lebanon War, we can now do in 48 hours. The growth of our strength has not been linear."

In the next war with Hezbollah, the IAF will do "whatever possible to reduce any collateral damage to civilians in any war, and we aspire towards zero civilian casualties. But I cannot delude myself; in every war there will always be people who are harmed inadvertently. I have a recommendation to the people of Lebanon: Hezbollah has chosen to stay and infiltrate some of your homes - if you leave your homes as soon as the conflict erupts, you will not be harmed."

Eshel warned that if Hezbollah launches an attack against Israel, "thousands" of Lebanese would be put at risk when Israel strikes back. He explained that Hezbollah has established thousands of bases in Beirut, the Bekaa Valley, and southern Lebanon, both ["above and below live civilians"](#) whom we have nothing against - a kind of human shield."

"And that is where the war will be," he added. "That is where we will have to fight in order to stop it and win. Whoever stays in these bases will simply be hit and will risk their lives. And whoever goes out will live."



NIKKI HAYLEY - HEZBOLLAH

HEARD YESTERDAY -- Ambassador Haley Blasts UN Forces in Lebanon -- by Aaron Magid: Speaking at a Capitol Hill National Security Forum yesterday, US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley slammed the UN peacekeeping forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for not directing sufficient attention to Hezbollah. "The UN troops there are not looking at Hezbollah or bringing any attention to that. They need to talk about if they see missiles or tunnels, if they see something like that happening," Haley told moderator Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL). Haley emphasized that Israel's northern border with Lebanon remains the country's most dangerous threat. "To have conflict break out between Lebanon and Israel, the destabilization that would do would be horrible," she said. [JewishInsider]



BOMB SHELTERS

The defense establishment plans to renovate hundreds of public shelters in northern Israel, especially in communities located up to 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the Israeli-Lebanese border.

"The State of Israel is taking a big step on behalf of its residents where the local authorities have failed to realize their responsibility," a senior defense official told Israel Hayom. "The Homefront Command has the authority to tell municipalities, 'You have to maintain these shelters, and if you don't you will be penalized.'"



THE NEW WALL

Israeli media reported Sunday that the IDF is expected to start construction of a wall on the Israeli-Lebanese border within the next month, Israeli media reports on Sunday. The initial stage of the wall will be built from Rosh Hanikra, at the northwest corner of Israel, running around 12 kilometers to Hanita to the east, and from Misgav Am to Metula.

The wall, the tender for which was published over a year ago, comes in response to fears that Hezbollah will stage a ground invasion of northern Israel and attempt to take over Israeli communities along the border. The barrier is expected to eventually run the entire 80 kilometers from Rosh Hanikra on the coast to Har Dov and the Hermon Mountain range in the east.

The report quoted security sources as saying Hezbollah may try to disrupt the works by organizing demonstrations on the grounds that the barrier does not comply with the international border, known as the Blue Line, and could even respond with sniper fire. They added, however, that Hezbollah is not interested in an all-out conflict.



CHEMICAL WEAPONS

The White House warned Syrian President Bashar Assad on Monday that he and his military would "pay a heavy price" if they carry out another chemical weapons attack against civilians, and said the United States had reason to believe such preparations were underway.

In a statement released late on Monday, the White House said the preparations by Syria are similar to those undertaken before an April 4 chemical attack that killed dozens of civilians and prompted President Donald Trump to order a cruise missile strike on a Syrian air base.

"The United States has identified potential preparations for another chemical weapons attack by the Assad regime that would likely result in the mass murder of civilians, including innocent children," White House spokesman Sean Spicer said. "If ... Assad conducts another mass murder attack using chemical weapons, he and his military will pay a heavy price," he said.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley posted on Twitter: "Any further attacks done to the people of Syria will be blamed on Assad, but also on Russia and Iran who support him killing his own people."



IRAN'S COUNTDOWN CLOCK

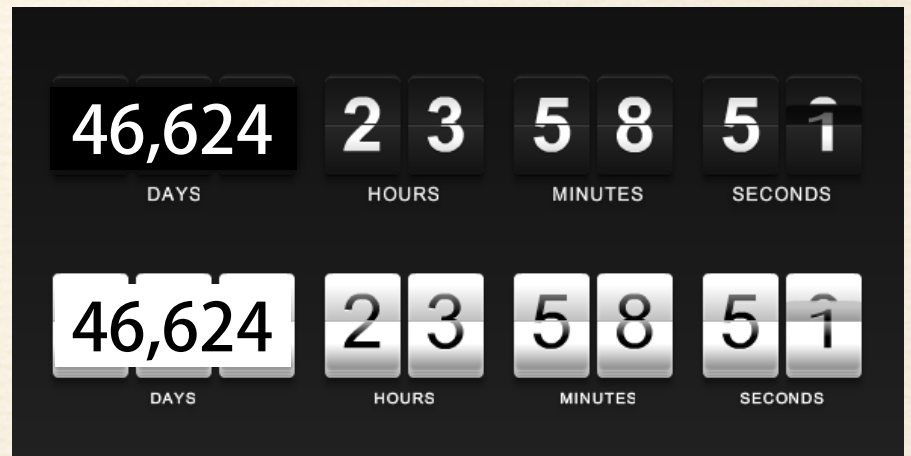
Iran has begun its 25-year countdown to Israel's destruction, preferably at its own hands.

Iran unveiled a digital clock in Tehran's center counting down the days to what it says will be the destruction of Israel in 2040.

The event took place as part of the annual al-Quds Day celebration, during which millions of Iranians marched under the banner, "Death to Israel, Death to America."

The timeframe appears to stem from comments made in 2015 by Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who vowed there will be "nothing" left of Israel by the year 2040, the UK's *Independent* reported.

In September 2015, Khamenei proclaimed, "You [Israelis] will not see the coming 25 years and, God willing, there will not be something named the Zionist regime in next 25 years."



ISRAEL'S DEMANDS

"In the talks with Greenblatt, Israel has emphasized its principles for any potential settlement with the Palestinians. In permanent-status negotiations, **Israel will insist that all of the West Bank remain under Israel's overriding security responsibility and that the Palestinians will only maintain a police force for public order that will cooperate with Israel on the prevention of terror. Also, Israel will demand the Palestinian leadership recognize Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people.** The border will be based on Israel's security needs. Much of today's West Bank area C (under Israeli control) will come under Israel's sovereignty, and Jerusalem will remain the united capital of Israel. **A Palestinian capital will be established outside of Jerusalem...** The Foreign Ministry official further said that Israel will insist in the negotiations on immediate normalization of relations with the pragmatic Arab states." [[Al-Monitor](#)]

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I would rather have a strong Israel that the world hates than an Auschwitz that the world loves" - Rabbi Meir Kahane - And they did love it!



HGE - UPCOMING FALL TOURS

Israel - Off The Beaten Path
with Petra Extension (optional)



Israel - NOV 12-20 / Petra - Nov 20-24, 2017



Thus says the LORD: "Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good and walk in it, and find rest for your souls..." Jer. 6:16

There are many paths in Israel. OFF THE BEATEN PATH will take in paths not found on "traditc tours - yet they are important paths, ones that should be seen to take in the full breadth of Israe Dan & Sharon Stolebarger and guide, Jane Ben-Ari as we give you a totally different type of expe Included will be a geo-political Jeep Tour on the Golan Heights - see for yourselves what is truly happening along this strategic border of Israel.



**HOLY
GROUND
TOURS**

OFF THE BEATEN PATH ITINERARY

DAY 1: Overnight in Tel Aviv right on the Mediterranean Sea.

DAY 2 - 4: Travel to Jerusalem where we will be staying inside the walls of the Old City for three nights. While in Jerusalem, visit **OLD SYNAGOGUE TOUR, RABBINICAL TUNNELS, TEMPLE INSTITUTE, BURNT HOUSE, JERICO** with **ST. GEORGE'S MONASTERY** and **FRIENDS OF ZION MUSEUM**. Also planned is an incredible landscape of the Judean desert on a fully guided **JEEP TOUR**.

DAY 5 - 7: Travel to the Galilee where we will stay for three nights at a kibbutz hotel right on the shores of the Sea, away from the hustle and bustle of Tiberias. Our time in the north includes: **TSIPORI, NAZARETH VILLAGE, CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION, MT. ARBEL** (with an option to hike up), **MAGDALA, GAMLA** (with hike to the synagogue) and **MT. BENTAL**. On Shabbat, we will have a Shabbat Service at our hotel. In addition, while in the Golan Heights, we will take a geo-political **JEEP TOUR** to hear and see for ourselves exactly what is happening on this strategic border.

DAY 8: We travel to **JAFFA** for one night. En route, visit the grottoes at **ROSH HANIKRA** and the **VALLEY OF ELAH**.

DAY 9: Before bidding farewell to Israel, we will enjoy a leisurely morning, a tour of **JAFFA**, as well as a **FAREWELL DINNER**. Those departing will be taken to the airport.

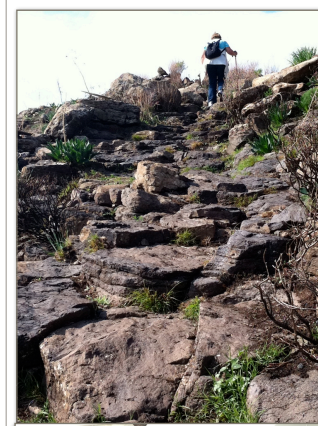
BEATEN PATH INCLUSIONS:

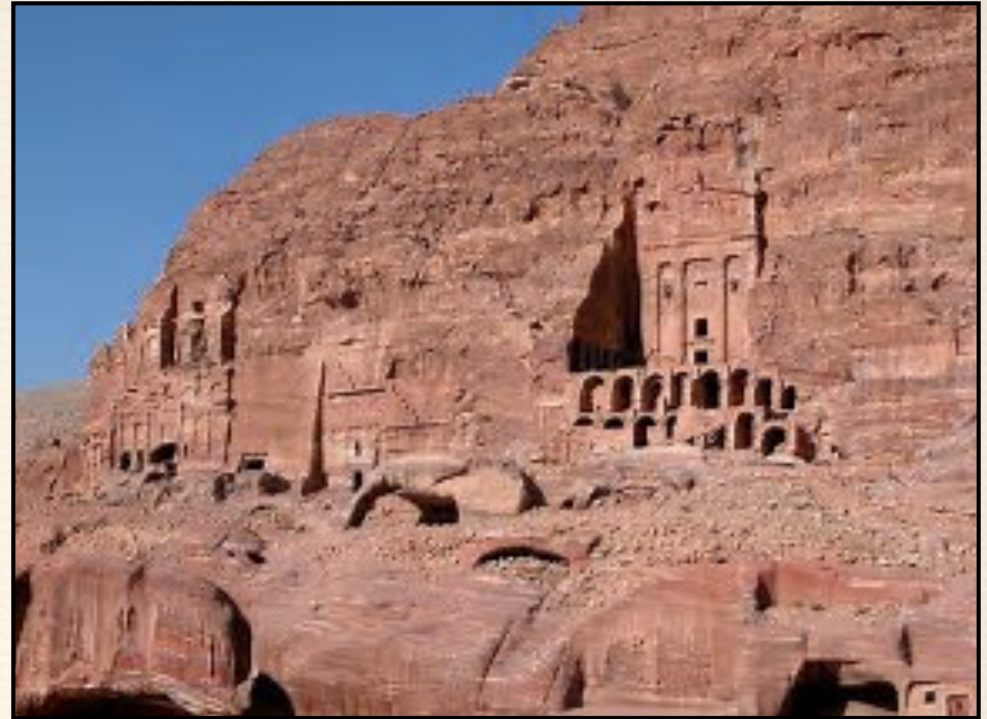
Pricing: \$2995 LAND ONLY per person double occupancy

PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- ⊗ Hotels: 1 night Tel Aviv, 3 nights Jerusalem, 3 nights Tiberias, 1 night Jaffa
- ⊗ Meals: Breakfast daily, 4 Lunches, 5 Dinners
- ⊗ All Sightseeing and Entrance Fees including two JEEP TOURS
- ⊗ Gratuities for Guide and Driver
- ⊗ Baggage handling for one piece of checked luggage per person
- ⊗ All ground transportation

See Registration Form for complete pricing and the Terms & Conditions for the "fine print."





PETRA EXTENSION (optional): Nov. 21-24, 2017
(1 night Jaffa; 2 nights Eilat, 1 night Petra)*

Israel is the land where it all began and **PETRA** just may be the land where the "end" may be centered. It's one thing to see all the sites where prophecy has taken place and has been fulfilled, but then there are the places where the fulfillment is yet to come. During the Tribulation period, God will provide a refuge for His people...many believe that Petra is that place.

Also included is a visit to the replica **TABERNACLE at TIMNA** where you will learn more in 30 minutes about the Tabernacle than you probably have learned in a decade. All this plus the resort city at the southernmost tip of Israel, **EILAT**, where at night you can see the lights of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel and Egypt, all at the same time. Add to this an overnight in Petra where our hotel is located right across the street from the entrance. This extension is not often offered so take advantage of this departure date.

*NOTE: Those staying on for Petra will spend Nov. 20th in Jaffa before beginning the Petra extension on Nov. 21st.

For complete brochure information:

<http://holygroundexplorations.com/israel-tours/israel-off-the-beaten-path-tour-petra-extension/>





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