

**KFIR**

# MIDDLE EAST UPDATE

Week of August 18, 2017



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# THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

Israel's message to visiting UN chief: Iran, Hezbollah must be stopped  
Israeli officials express concern over Iran's attempts to gain "contiguous zone of influence" through Iraq and Syria. The head of the Mossad warned Sunday that as the Islamic State terrorist group is beaten back, Iran and its proxies are rushing in to take over its territory.

Israeli minister warns Lebanon over Hezbollah leader's threat  
Education Minister Naftali Bennett says any future attack by Shiite terrorist group would be considered a "declaration of war by the Lebanese state." **Israel will not operate "surgically" in next war with Hezbollah, he warns.**

Mossad Chief: Middle East Changing For The Worse ... "Israel is identifying a presence not only of Iran and Hezbollah, but also of Shiite forces, that are not Iranian, from all over the world that are making their way to the region, and our number one mission is to stop this."





# SURROUNDED

**ISRAEL  
HAS BEEN  
ATTACKED IN  
THE NORTH  
AND SOUTH**



For three consecutive days, Israelis in the north dealt with gunfire from Syria that landed within Israel's borders and explosions were reported. At the same time Hamas, in the south, launched rockets into southern Israel. With explicit threats from Syria looming, farmers in the Quneitra Valley were ordered to evacuate their homes by the Israel Defense Forces.

If this were not enough, terrorists also recently attacked and killed two Israeli police officers outside of the temple mount in Jerusalem. Just days after that, a terrorist broke into a home in Samaria and brutally murdered a family of three while they were eating dinner. **The danger is very real!**





# DRUMS OF WAR

## 1. Hamas Accepts Unity Deal with Fatah

The Hamas organization, which rules Gaza, has accepted a unity deal with the Palestinian Authority's (PA) Fatah party proposed by Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi.

## 2. Jordanian King Sends Message to Israel

Jordan's King Abdullah II met with PA President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah for the first time in five years.

**3. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif met with a delegation of officials from the Palestinian terror group Hamas.** In May, Iran agreed in principle to renew its funding for Hamas.

**4. Kim Yong Nam**, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of North Korea, came to Iran for the inauguration ceremony for Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and stayed 10 days in Iran.

**5. Iran's parliament voted to adding \$609m to the national missile program** and the Revolutionary Guards al Qods budgets.





# NASRALLAH THREATS

**The leader of the Lebanese terror group Hezbollah hinted that Israel should relocate its Dimona nuclear reactor because it too is a target for his organization, and one whose destruction could have more dire consequences** than an attack on the huge ammonia tank in Haifa that he previously threatened to destroy.

Speaking from his hidden bunker to a Hezbollah event in the village of Khiam in southern Lebanon to mark 11 years since the end of the Second Lebanon War, Hezbollah General-Secretary Hassan Nasrallah warned that, should Israel try to invade the country again, it would be met by a defending force that is 100 times more powerful than the force Israeli troops encountered in the previous conflict.





# PA - BIGGEST PROBLEM

## **The Palestinians' biggest problem is the Palestinians**

Ramallah reportedly feels dejected because the U.S. is "entirely" on Israel's side, but the problem is not the U.S. -- the Americans are simply opting to work with the side that is showing willingness and displaying a desire to give rather than just take.

But the real story here is the suspicion with which Washington and the Palestinian Authority regard each other. **In Washington, despite the strong desire to see a peace deal, they understand that Ramallah can't deliver the goods.**

In Ramallah, they are convinced that the U.S. and Israel are working toward a regional move at the expense of the two-state solution. But it must be said that they came by their suspicions honestly.





# AFTER ABBAS DEATH

Abbas's death will mark the dissolution of the Palestinian national identity. That identity has already been supplanted in Judea and Samaria by local, tribal identities. It will also be the end of the PLO and its largest faction, Fatah, founded by Yasser Arafat in 1958 and led by Abbas since Arafat's death in 2004.

**Fatah, they explain, has "no new leaders, no convincing evidence of validation, no marked success in government, no progress toward peace, fragile links to its original setting abroad and a local environment buffeted by the crosswinds of petty quarrels and regional antagonisms."**

The post-Abbas era will pose new threats and opportunities for Israel. It is up to Israel to ensure that the opportunities are maximized and the threats are neutralized as quickly as possible. Failing that, Israel can expect to contend with military threats in Judea and Samaria several orders of magnitude greater than what it has dealt with in the past. **Caroline Glick**





# INTERESTING BRO-MANCE

**PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas today sent congratulations to the ruler of North Korea, Kim Jong-un, in honor of the country's Liberation Day.** In the statement released by WAFA, the official PA news agency, Abbas wished Jong-un "all health and happiness." His greetings did not mention the international tension following Jong-un's threat to fire missiles toward the US Pacific territory of Guam in honor of Korea's Liberation Day.

**Abbas wished "the Korean people continued stability and prosperity; and that the historical friendly relations between Palestine and North Korea and their two peoples will continue to develop and grow."**





# SBARROS

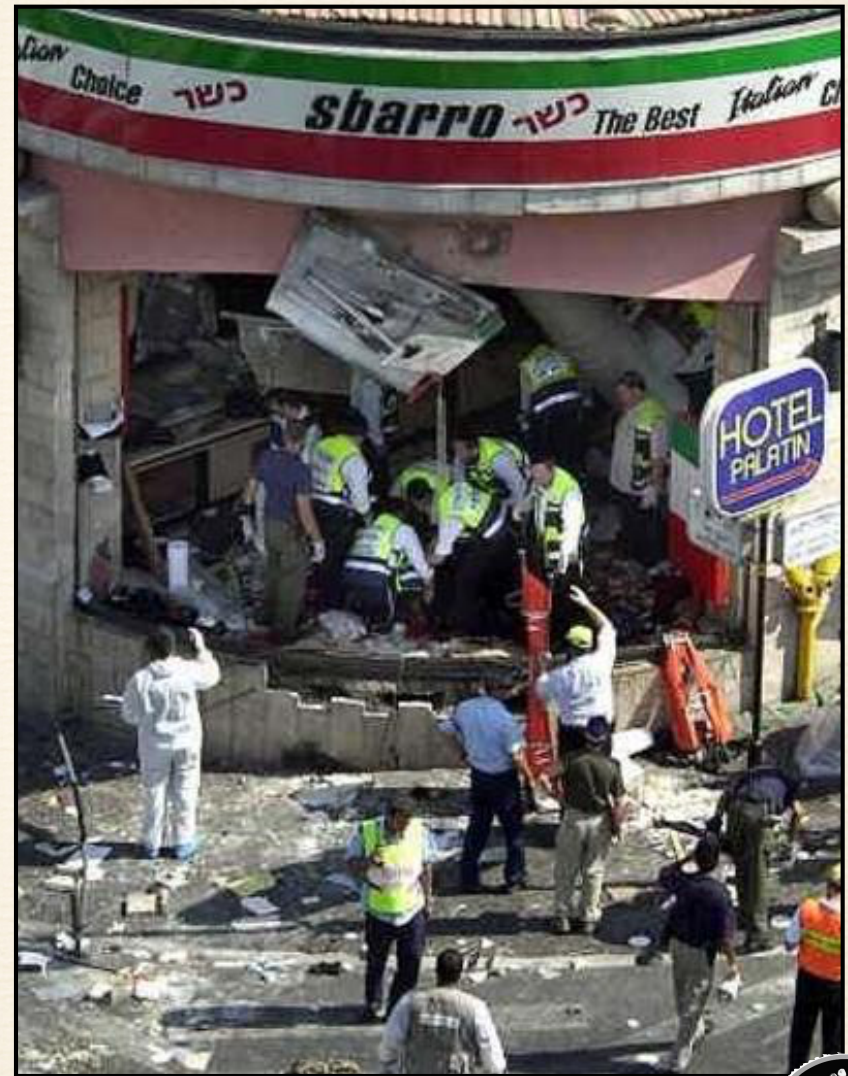
Art Moore - Posted with permission from WND

**The anniversary of a terrorist attack on a Sbarro's pizza restaurant in Jerusalem that killed 15 people, including seven children, and wounded another 130 was cause for celebration by the governors of the Palestinian territory of Gaza.**

**Hamas, on the website of its TV channel, recalled "news of the operation made Palestinians joyous everywhere," reported the Israeli news monitor Palestinian Media Watch.**

"Masses of people went out to the streets, cheered and distributed candies out of happiness," Hamas said on its Al Aqsa Channel website.

A similar celebration took place in the Palestinian territories after the 9/11 attacks, including the distribution of candies. In 2014, Palestinians also danced in the streets in celebration of a meat-cleaver terror attack in Jerusalem that left five people at a synagogue dead.





# ISRAEL TOURISM

New data obtained by *Israel Hayom* analyzes the rising number of tourists arriving in the Jewish state, including visitors' age, religion and the nature of their trips.

A record-high 2.9 million tourists visited Israel in 2016. According to a survey by Mertens Hoffman Management Consultants, 47 percent had already visited Israel at least once before, and 80 percent said they would be willing to visit again.

Fifty-four percent of the tourists who visited Israel last year were Christians.

Nearly half of the tourists who arrived in Israel in 2016 were more than 45 years old. Only 18 percent were younger than 25. More than half (57 percent) came to Israel on their own, and 12 percent came as part of family groups of three or more members. The average stay per tourist was 11.4 nights. At least 64 percent organized their own trips, compared to the 27 percent who visited Israel as part of a tour group.



**OFF THE BEATEN PATH**  
HOLY GROUND EXPLORATIONS - PRIVATE TOUR  
Plus a Pre-tour Option to PETRA

November 12-20, 2017

**PETRA**  
PRE-TOUR OPTION  
NOVEMBER 9-12, 2017

**ISRAEL TOUR HIGHLIGHTS**  
Guided Jeep Tours on the Golan Heights & Judean Desert, Old Synagogue Tour, Rabbinical Tunnels, Temple Institute, Friends of Zion Museum, Temple Mount Sifting Project, Mount Arbel, Tzipori, Nazareth Village, Magdala, Gamla, Mount Bental, Rosh Hanikrah, Jaffa, Valley of Elah

**ISRAEL PACKAGE**  
HOTELS: 4 nights Jerusalem, 3 nights Chorazin - Galilee area, 1 night Tel Aviv  
SIGHTSEEING: All entrance fees as noted  
MEALS: 8 Breakfasts, 1 Lunch, 1 Farewell Dinner  
TRANSPORTATION: Via Private Van  
AIRPORT PICK-UP & RETURN

**PETRA PRE-TOUR EXTENSION**  
HOTELS: 1 night Ashkelon, 2 nights Eilat  
PETRA SIGHTSEEING: All entrance fees and visas, transportation  
MEALS: 4 Breakfasts & 1 Lunch  
TRANSPORTATION: Via Private Van  
AIRPORT PICK-UP

**MORE INFORMATION**  
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**SPACE IS EXTREMELY LIMITED!**





# QUOTE OF THE WEEK

With Christmas coming, Grandma was out shopping for gifts for her grandchildren. While she was at the toy store going through her list and carefully selecting gifts, she noticed a small homeless girl wistfully looking into the store. Grandma's heart went out to this little girl. She invited her into the store and asked her to pick out a gift for herself. As they walked out of the store, the little girl held the grandma's hand and looked into her kind eyes and asked, "Are you God?" Grandma, somewhat embarrassed and somewhat touched, said, "No, my dear, I am not God." "Then who are you?" continued the little girl. Grandma thought for a moment and said, "I am a child of God." The little girl, fully satisfied and smiling, said, "I knew there was a connection." (Paul Coutinho - *How Big is Your God?*)





# HGE UPCOMING TOURS

## HOLY GROUND EXPLORATIONS ISRAEL TOURS

### **'OFF THE BEATEN PATH' TOUR**

**HIGHLIGHTS: Jeep Tours - Judean Desert and the Golan Border**

**Pre Tour - PETRA\***

**\*Nov 9-12 / Beaten Path -Nov 12-20, 2017**

### **2018 ISRAEL TOURS**

**'EXPERIENCE ISRAEL' - APR 22-MAY 1**

**'JOURNEY THRU ISRAEL' - MAY 2-10**

**For more information go to our website  
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