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YOUNG LIONS CLUB

MIDDLE EAST UPDATE

**Week of
NOVEMBER 24, 2018**

DAN STOLEBARGER

<http://holygroundexplorations.com>



LET'S HIKE ISRAEL



- This is an "limited" exclusive Tour led by Dan Stolebarger from HGE.
- We will be hiking the Snake Path at Masada, all the way to the top of En Gedi, down to the ancient synagogue at Gamla as well as a three and one half trek from Nazareth to Capernahum along the Jesus Trail.
- The dates are from Feb 16-26. For pricing and more information email dan right away at dan@hgexplorations.com

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Details upcoming at:

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NEWS BITES

*** The US on Friday for the first time voted against an annual UN resolution calling for Israel to withdraw from the Golan Heights, signifying a dramatic shift in US policy toward the territory.** Despite the unprecedented move by the US, the resolution passed with 151 in favor, two against (Israel and the US) and 14 abstentions, one of nine anti-Israel resolutions passed by the world body in one day.

*** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced Sunday he will take over temporarily as defense minister** following the departure of Avigdor Liberman from the post last week.

*** Netanyahu Is No Longer Hawkish Enough for His Own Government World Jewish**

*** Congress CEO Robert Singer said that "this is an initiative of the utmost importance, because today, 75 years after the Holocaust, more than 46% of the population of the world never even heard of the worst atrocity in history."**

*** Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said that Turkey will not abide by the renewed U.S. sanctions on Iran's oil and shipping industries,** claiming that they are "steps aimed at unbalancing the world."



MUSLIMS IN CONGRESS



Ilhan Abdullahi Omar of Minnesota and Rashida Harbi Tlaib of Michigan will be the first two Muslim women ever to serve in the US Congress. Most of the media coverage since their election on November 6 has been effusive in praise of their Muslim identity and personal history. Less known is that both women deceived voters about their positions on Israel. Both women, at some point during their rise in electoral politics, led voters -- especially Jewish voters -- to believe that they held moderate views on Israel. After being elected, both women reversed their positions and now say they are committed to sanctioning the Jewish state.



Less than a week after being elected, however, Omar admitted that she supports the BDS movement. When Tlaib was asked whether, once in Congress, she would vote to cut aid to Israel, she replied: "Absolutely.



GOLAN HEIGHTS



"We are well aware of Iran's increasing attempts to establish itself militarily in many areas of Syria," he continued. "We see how the Iranians are trying to transfer weapons to Hezbollah in Lebanon through Syria. We know that Hezbollah is trying to establish terrorist infrastructures on the Syrian Golan Heights, near our border, but the IDF will not allow this to happen."

Maj. Gen. Yoel Strick further warned that "anyone seeking to undermine Israeli civilians' security, in the immediate or distant future, will encounter a strong and determined response by a military that is well aware of what is going on beyond its borders. We will counter those who want to harm us."



BENNETT WITHDRAWS



BUZZ ON BALFOUR – Israel avoids early elections as coalition is kept intact – by Tia Goldenberg: "Israel avoided early elections after... Naftali Bennett said his hard-line, pro-settler Jewish Home party would give Netanyahu another chance to address the security challenges facing Israel... "I tell the prime minister here: we are withdrawing right now all of our political demands and will stand to help you in this great mission of getting Israel to win again," he said... While the move put off early elections for now, it keeps the governing coalition on shaky ground with only a slim 61-seat majority in Israel's 120-seat parliament."



ULTIMATE DEAL



ULTIMATE DEAL WATCH – Trump, top advisers to meet about launch of Middle East peace plan – by Barak Ravid: “President Trump will hold a crucial meeting this week with his top national security and foreign policy advisers to discuss both the details of the White House's Israeli-Palestinian peace plan and the timing for its release... U.S. officials said the current political crisis in Israel and the imminent announcement on early elections in the country will play a role in any decision Trump makes regarding the plan's release... David Friedman, the U.S. ambassador to Israel, flew to Washington this weekend to be there.”



RUSSIA AND HAMAS



Russian Ambassador to Israel Anatoly Viktorov says that Russia does not view Hamas as a terrorist group, but considers it part of Palestinian society. "We are keeping contacts with Hamas," he added, saying the group "is a legitimate political force in Palestine."

Viktorov says labeling Hamas as a terrorist group undermines the political process, suggesting that the movement "should be involved in a possible political solution." He further said that Israel should engage with Hamas. Hamas might list Russia as a friend rather than ally, and could use Russian help to promote Hamas' political stances. Hamas might benefit from its growing relations with Iran to further develop its contacts with Russia in light of the close relations between Moscow and Tehran.



AIRBNB BDS



Airbnb's decision on Monday to ban Judea and Samaria apartment listings from its popular home-rental site kindled strong reactions from Jews and Arabs.

The strongest reaction, perhaps, came from Israel's Minister of Tourism, Yariv Levin, who released a video of himself condemning Airbnb's move, calling it "the most wretched of wretched capitulations to the boycott efforts." The San Francisco-based company admitted its decision, which affects some 200 listings, was for political reasons. In a statement on its website, the company made it clear that it had accepted the Palestinian narrative of the conflict.

"We concluded that we should remove listings in Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank that are at the core of the dispute between Israelis and Palestinians," Airbnb said.



WORDS TO PONDER

The categories of the Bible are not principles to be comprehended but events to be continued. - Abraham Joshua Heschel

