



# Friday, the 5th of Iyar 5708: A Harrowing, Holy, Halachik & Eternal Moment

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## 1) Introduction

*On Friday, May 14, following some debate, the National Council, established to oversee the political needs of the Jewish community in Palestine, voted to accept the final text of the Declaration. That afternoon at 4 pm, David Ben-Gurion, head of the National Council, read the Declaration at the Tel Aviv Museum. Without electricity in Jerusalem, few there heard Ben-Gurion's words or the singing and playing of 'Hatikvah,' Israel's national anthem. That morning, Ben-Gurion, uncertain about the coming war with Arab states, had his secretary secure a safety deposit box at a local bank so that the Declaration could be immediately placed there for safekeeping.*

*Israeli Declaration of Independence contained a list of historical claims to the land of Israel. **The Declaration cited benchmark historical events when the international community sanctioned the Jewish state's legitimacy**, particularly the acknowledgement to build a national home given by the League of Nations (1922) and by the United Nations (1947) to establish a Jewish state. While there were skirmishes going on between Americans and the British when the American Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, when Israel declared its independence it was in the midst of a full-fledged war for*

survival with the local Arab population and surrounding Arab states. The on-going war notwithstanding, the Israeli Declaration of Independence includes a declaratory statement offering “peace and amity” to its neighbors and the request “to return to the ways of peace.” Both declarations made reference to a higher authority: the Israeli Declaration of Independence does not mention religion, but it closes with the phrase “with trust in the Rock of Israel [Tzur Yisrael].”<sup>1</sup> The choice of this phrase was Ben-Gurion’s verbal compromise, made to balance strong secular and religious pressures. Any precise mention of religion might have required mention of religious practice, which could have created enormous social fragmentation in the early fragile years of the state. By contrast, the American Declaration of Independence appealed to the “Supreme Judge, protection of the Divine.”

**What impact did the Israeli Declaration of Independence have? Coupled with the attack by Arab fighters on Israel’s establishment, it served as a rallying point for Jews in Palestine and in the Diaspora. The Declaration of Independence was signed by representatives of all existing political parties. It appealed to Diaspora Jews to immigrate to Israel. Later, when a constitution was not written, the phrase “guaranteeing freedom of religion, conscience, language, education, and culture,” became the foundation for protected civil liberties in Israel. Eight hours after Ben-Gurion read the Declaration, the Egyptian Air Force dropped its first bombs on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. Israel’s War of Independence lasted until early 1949.**

-Ken Stein, May 2008

## **2) The 16:00 Declaration**

**a)The full text of the state of Israel’s “proclamation of Independence,” released here today by the Provisional Jewish Government, follows:**

**b) The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and national identity was formed. Here they achieved independence and created a culture of national and universal significance. Here they wrote and gave the Bible to the world.**

**Exiled from Palestine, the Jewish people remained faithful to it in all the countries of their dispersion, never ceasing to pray and hope for their return and restoration of their national freedom.**

**c) Impelled by this historic association, Jews strove throughout the centuries to go back to the land of their fathers and regain statehood. In recent decades, they returned in their masses. They reclaimed a wilderness, revived their language, built cities and villages, and established a vigorous and ever-growing community, with its own economic and cultural life. They sought peace, yet were ever prepared to defend themselves. They brought blessings of progress to all inhabitants of the country.**

In the year 1897 the first Zionist Congress, inspired by Theodore Herzl's vision of a Jewish state, proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to a national revival in their own country.

This right was acknowledged by the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, and reaffirmed by the mandate of the League of Nations, which gave explicit international recognition to the historic connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and their right to reconstitute their national home.

The Nazi holocaust which engulfed millions of Jews in Europe proved anew the urgency of the re-establishment of the Jewish state, which would solve the problem of Jewish homelessness by opening the gates to all Jews and lifting the Jewish people to equality in the family of nations.

Survivors of the European catastrophe as well as Jews from other lands, claiming their right to a life of dignity, freedom and labor, and undeterred by hazards, hardships and obstacles, have tried unceasingly to enter Palestine.

In the Second World War, the Jewish people in Palestine made a full contribution in the struggle of freedom-loving nations against the Nazi evil. The sacrifices of their soldiers and efforts of their workers gained them title to rank with the people who founded the United Nations. On November 29, 1947, the General Assembly of United Nations adopted a resolution for re-establishment of an independent Jewish state in Palestine

and called upon inhabitants of the country to take such steps as may be necessary on their part to put the plan into effect.

**d) This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their independent state may not be revoked. It is, moreover, the self-evident right of the Jewish people to be a nation, as all other nations, in its own sovereign state.**

Accordingly we, the members of National Council, representing the Jewish people in Palestine and the Zionist movement of the world, met together in solemn assembly by virtue of the natural and historic right of Jewish people and of resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations:

**e) Hereby proclaim the establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine, to be called Israel.**

**We hereby declare that as from the termination of the Mandate at midnight this night of the 14th to 15th of May, 1948 and until the setting up of duly-elected bodies of the state in accordance with a constitution to be drawn up by a constituent assembly not later than the first day of October, 1948, the present National Council shall act as the Provisional State Council, and its executive organ, the National Administration, shall constitute the Provisional**

**Government of the state of Israel.**

**f) The state of Israel will promote the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; will be based on precepts of liberty, justice and peace taught by the Hebrew prophets; will uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens without distinction of race, creed or sex; will guarantee full freedom of conscience, worship, education and culture; will safeguard the sanctity and inviolability of shrines and holy places of all religions; and will dedicate itself to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.**

The state of Israel will be ready to cooperate with the organs and representatives of the United Nations in the implementation of the resolution of November 29, 1947, and will take steps to bring about an economic union over the whole of Palestine.

**g) We appeal to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building of its state and admit Israel into the family of nations.**

In the midst of wanton aggression we call upon the Arab inhabitants of the state of Israel to return to the ways of peace and play their part in the development of the state, with full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its bodies and institutions, provisional or permanent.

We offer peace and amity to all neighboring states and their peoples, and invite them to co-operate with the independent Jewish nation for the common good of all. The state of Israel is ready to contribute its full share to the peaceful progress and reconstitution of the Middle East. Our call goes out to the Jewish people all over the world to rally to our side in the task of immigration and development, and to stand by us in the great struggle for the fulfillment of the dream of generations — the redemption of Israel.

**H) (With trust in Almighty God, we set our hands to this declaration at this session of the Provisional state Council in the city of Tel Aviv this Sabbath eve, the fifth day of Iyar, 5708, the fourteenth day of May,1948)**

**I) With trust in the Rock of Israel, we set our hand to this Declaration, at this Session of the Provisional State Council, in the city of Tel Aviv, on this Sabbath eve, the fifth of Iyar 5708, the fourteenth day of May 1948.**

**3) The establishment of the State is a Kiddush Hashem**

**a) Ezekiel Chapter 36 יְחִזְקֵאל**

א וְאַתָּה בֶן-אָדָם, הַנִּבֵּא אֶל-הָרִי יִשְׂרָאֵל;  
אֲמַרְתָּ--הָרִי יִשְׂרָאֵל, שְׁמְעוּ דְבַר-יְהוָה.

1. And thou, son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say: Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD.

**ב** כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה, יַעַן אָמַר הָאוֹיֵב  
עֲלֵיכֶם הָאָח; וּבְמֹת עוֹלָם, לְמוֹרָשָׁה  
הִיְתָה לָנוּ.

**2** Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because  
the enemy hath said against you:  
Aha! even the ancient high  
places are ours in possession;

**ג** לִכֵּן הִנְבֵּא וְאָמַרְתָּ, כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה:  
יַעַן בִּיעַן שְׁמוֹת וְשֹׂאף אֶתְכֶם מִסְּבִיב,  
לְהִיּוֹתְכֶם מוֹרָשָׁה לְשֹׂאֲרֵי הַגּוֹיִם, וַתַּעֲלוּ  
עַל-שִׁפְתַי לְשׁוֹן, וְדַבַּת-עַם.

**3** therefore prophesy, and say: Thus  
saith the Lord GOD: Because,  
even because they have made  
you desolate, and swallowed you  
up on every side, that ye might  
be a possession unto the rest of  
the nations, and ye are taken up  
in the lips of talkers, and the evil  
report of the people;

**ד** לִכֵּן הִרִי יִשְׂרָאֵל, שְׁמַעוּ דְבַר-אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה:  
כֹּה-אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה לְהַרִים וּלְגִבְעוֹת  
לְאִפְיָקִים וּלְגֵאוֹת, וּלְחֲרָבוֹת הַשְּׁמָמוֹת  
וּלְעָרִים הַנְּעֻזְבוֹת, אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ לְבַז  
וּלְלַעַג, לְשֹׂאֲרֵי הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר מִסְּבִיב.

**4** therefore, ye mountains of Israel,  
hear the word of the Lord GOD:  
Thus saith the Lord GOD to the  
mountains and to the hills, to the  
streams and to the valleys, to the  
desolate wastes and to the cities  
that are forsaken, which are  
become a prey and derision to  
the residue of the nations that are  
round about;

**ה** לִכֵּן, כֹּה-אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה, אִם-לֹא בָאֵשׁ  
קִנְיָתִי דְבַרְתִּי עַל-שֹׂאֲרֵי הַגּוֹיִם,  
וְעַל-אֲדוֹם כָּלֵא: אֲשֶׁר נָתַנוּ-אֶת-אֶרְצִי  
לָהֶם לְמוֹרָשָׁה בְּשִׂמְחַת כָּל-לֵבָב, בְּשֹׂאֵט  
נַפְשׁ--לְמַעַן מִגְרָשָׁה, לְבַז.

**5** therefore thus saith the Lord GOD:  
Surely in the fire of My jealousy  
have I spoken against the residue  
of the nations, and against all  
Edom, that have appointed My  
land unto themselves for a  
possession with the joy of all their



heart, with disdain of soul, to cast it out for a prey;

ו לכן, הנבא על-אדמת ישראל; ואמרת להרים ולגבעות לאפיקים ולגאיות כה-אמר אדני יהוה, הנני בקנאתי ובחמתי דברתי, יען כלמת גוים, נשאתם.

6 therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains and to the hills, to the streams and to the valleys: Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I have spoken in My jealousy and in My fury, because ye have borne the shame of the nations;

ז לכן, כה אמר אדני יהוה, אני, נשאתי את-ידי: אם-לא הגוים אשר לכם מסביב, המה כלמתם ישאו.

7 therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: I have lifted up My hand: Surely the nations that are round about you, they shall bear their shame.

ח ואתם הרי ישראל, ענפכם תתנו, ופריכם כתשאו, לעמי ישראל: כי קרבו, לבוא.

8 But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to My people Israel; for they are at hand to come.

ט כי, הנני אליכם; ופנית אליכם, ונעבדתם ונזרעתם.

9 For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown;

י והרביתי עליכם אדם, כל-בית ישראל כלה; ונשבו, הערים, והחרבות, תבנינה.

10 and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be



inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded;

יא והרביתי עליכם אדם ובהמה, ורבו ופרו; והושבתי אתכם כקדמותיכם, והיטבתי מראשתיכם, וידעתם, כי-אני יהוה.

**11** and I will multiply upon you man and beast, and they shall increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited after your former estate, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

יב והולכתי עליכם אדם את-עמי ישראל, וירשוך, והיית להם, לנחלה; ולא-תוסף עוד, לשכלם. {ס}

**12** Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel, and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance; and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of children. {S}

יג כה אמר, אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה, יַעַן אָמַרְתָּ לָכֶם, אֲכַלְתָּ אָדָם אֶתִי (אֶתְּ); וּמְשַׁכַּלְתָּ גּוֹיִךְ (גּוֹיִיךְ), הֵייתָ.

**13** Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because they say unto you: Thou land art a devourer of men, and hast been a bereaver of thy nations;

יד לָכֵן, אָדָם לֹא-תֹאכְלִי עוֹד, וּגּוֹיִךְ (וּגּוֹיִיךְ), לֹא תִכְשַׁלִּי- (תִּשְׁכַּלִּי-) עוֹד--נָא, אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה.

**14** therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord GOD;

טו וְלֹא־אֲשַׁמֶּיעַ אֲלֵיךָ עוֹד כְּלַמַּת הַגּוֹיִם, d  
וְחָרַפְתָּ עַמִּים לֹא תִשָּׂאֵי־עוֹד; וְגוֹיִךְ  
(וְגוֹיִיךָ) לֹא־תִכְשַׁלֵּי עוֹד, נֹאֵם אֲדֹנָי  
יְהוָה. {פ}

**15** neither will I suffer the shame of the nations any more to be heard against thee, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the peoples any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nations to stumble any more, saith the Lord GOD.' {P}

טז וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה, אֵלַי לֵאמֹר.

**16** Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying:

יז בֶּן־אָדָם, בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל יֹשְׁבִים עַל־אֲדָמָתָם,  
וַיִּטְמְאוּ אוֹתָהּ, בְּדַרְכָּם וּבַעֲלִילוֹתָם:  
כְּטִמְאַת, הַנְּזֵדָה, הַיְתֵה דַרְכָּם, לְפָנָי.

**17** 'Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their way and by their doings; their way before Me was as the uncleanness of a woman in her impurity.

יח וְאֲשַׁפַּךְ חֲמַתִּי עֲלֵיהֶם, עַל־הַדָּם E  
אֲשֶׁר־שָׁפְכוּ עַל־הָאָרֶץ; וּבְגִלוּלֵיהֶם,  
טִמְאוּהָ.

**18** Wherefore I poured out My fury upon them for the blood which they had shed upon the land, and because they had defiled it with their idols;

יט וְאֶפֶיַץ אֹתָם בְּגוֹיִם, וַיִּזְרוּ בְּאֲרָצוֹת:  
כְּדַרְכָּם וְכַעֲלִילוֹתָם, שִׁפְטִיתִים.

**19** and I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries; according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.

כ ויבוא אל הגוים אשר באו שם, ויחללו,  
את שם קדשי--באמר להם עם-יהוה  
אלה, ומארצו יצאו.

20 And when they came unto the  
nations, whither they came,  
they profaned My holy name;  
in that men said of them:  
These are the people of the  
LORD, and are gone forth out  
of His land.

כא ואחמל, על-שם קדשי, אשר חללהו  
בית F ישראל, בגוים אשר באו שמה.  
{פ}

21 But I had pity for My holy  
name, which the house of  
Israel had profaned among the  
nations, whither they came. {P}

כב לכן אמר לבית-ישראל, כה אמר אדני  
G יהוה, לא למענכם אני עשה, בית  
ישראל: כי אם-לשם-קדשי אשר  
חללתם, בגוים אשר-באתם שם.

22 Therefore say unto the house  
of Israel: Thus saith the Lord  
GOD: I do not this for your  
sake, O house of Israel, but for  
My holy name, which ye have  
profaned among the nations,  
whither ye came.

כג וקדשתי את-שמי הגדול, המחלל  
בגוים, H אשר חללתם, בתוכם; וידעו  
הגוים כי-אני יהוה, נאם אדני יהוה,  
בהקדשי בכם, לעיניהם.

23 And I will sanctify My great  
name, which hath been  
profaned among the nations,  
which ye have profaned in the  
midst of them; and the nations  
shall know that I am the LORD,  
saith the Lord GOD, when I  
shall be sanctified in you  
before their eyes.

כד וּלְקַחְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִן־הַגּוֹיִם, וְקִבַּצְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל־הָאֲרָצוֹת; וְהִבֵּאתִי אֶתְכֶם, אֶל־אֲדַמְתְּכֶם.

**24** For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land.

כה וְזָרַקְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם מִיַּם טְהוֹרִים, וְטָהַרְתֶּם; וְכָל־מַעַלְגֵּי־לֵבְכֶם, אֶטְהַר אֶתְכֶם.

**25** And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

כו וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם לֵב חָדָשׁ, וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה אֶתֶן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם; וְהִסַּרְתִּי אֶת־לֵב הָאֲבָן, מִבְּשָׂרְכֶם, וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם, לֵב בָּשָׂר.

**26** A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

כז וְאֶת־רוּחִי, אֶתֶן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם; וְעָשִׂיתִי, אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־בְּחַקֵּי תִלְכוּ, וּמִשְׁפָּטֵי תִשְׁמְרוּ, וְעָשִׂיתֶם.

**27** And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep Mine ordinances, and do them.

כח וּיִשְׁבְּתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְאֲבֹתֵיכֶם; וְהִיִּיתֶם לִי, לְעָם, וְאֲנִי, אֶהְיֶה לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים.

**28** And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God.

כֹּט וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי אֶתְכֶם, מִכָּל טִמְאוֹתֵיכֶם;  
וְקָרָאתִי אֶל-הַדָּגַן וְהַרְבִּיתִי אֹתוֹ,  
וְלֹא-אֶתֵּן עֲלֵיכֶם רָעַב.

**29** And I will save you from all your uncleannesses; and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you.

ל וְהַרְבִּיתִי אֶת-פְּרֵי הָעֵץ, וְתִנּוּבַת הַשָּׂדֶה:  
לְמַעַן, אֲשֶׁר לֹא תִקְחוּ עוֹד חֲרַפַּת  
רָעַב--בְּגוֹיִם.

**30** And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye may receive no more the reproach of famine among the nations.

**לא** וְזָכַרְתֶּם אֶת-דַּרְכֵיכֶם הָרָעִים, וּמַעַלְלֵיכֶם  
אֲשֶׁר לֹא-טוֹבִים; וּנְקַטְתֶּם, בְּפִנְיֵיכֶם, עַל  
עוֹנְוֹתֵיכֶם, וְעַל תּוֹעֲבוֹתֵיכֶם.

**31** Then shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

**לב** לֹא לְמַעַנְכֶם אֲנִי-עוֹשֶׂה, נְאֻם אֲדֹנָי  
יְהוָה--יִוָּדַע, לְכֶם: בּוֹשׁוּ וְהִכְלִמוּ  
מִדַּרְכֵיכֶם, בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. {ס}

**32** Not for your sake do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you; be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel. {S}

**לג** כֹּה אָמַר, אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה, בְּיוֹם טְהַרִּי אֶתְכֶם,  
מִכָּל עוֹנְוֹתֵיכֶם--וְהוֹשַׁבְתִּי, אֶת-הָעָרִים,  
וּנְבִנּוּ, הַחֲרָבוֹת.

**33** Thus saith the Lord GOD: In the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded.

לד והארץ הנשמה, תעבד, תחת אשר  
היתה לשממה, לעיני כל-עובר.

34 And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, whereas it was a desolation in the sight of all that passed by.

לה ואמרו, הארץ הלזו הנשמה, היתה,  
כגן-עדן; והערים החרבות והנשמות  
והנהרסות, בצורות ישבו.

35 And they shall say: This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited.

לו וידעו הגוים, אשר ישארו סביבותיכם,  
כי אני יהוה בניתי הנהרסות, נטעתי  
הנשמה: אני יהוה, דברתי ועשיתי.  
{o}

36 Then the nations that are left  
round about you shall know  
that I the LORD have builded  
the ruined places, and planted  
that which was desolate; I the  
LORD have spoken it, and I will  
do it. {S}

לז כה אמר, אדני יהוה, עוד זאת אדרש  
לבית-ישראל, לעשות להם: ארבה אתם  
כצאן, אדם.

37 Thus saith the Lord GOD: I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock.

לח כצאן קדשים, כצאן ירושלם  
במועדיה--כן תהיינה הערים החרבות,  
מלאות צאן אדם; וידעו, כי-אני יהוה.  
{פ}

38 As the flock for sacrifice, as the flock of Jerusalem in her appointed seasons, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men; and they shall know that I am the LORD.' {P}

#### 4) Establishment of the State is the ideal fulfillment of the Mitzvah of Yishuv Haaretz

##### a) Rav Eliezer Melamed

###### מצוות ישוב הארץ -

ביום ה' באייר חמשת אלפים תש"ח למניין שאנו מונים לבריאת העולם, בעת ההכרזה על הקמת מדינת ישראל, זכה עם ישראל לקיים את מצוות ישוב הארץ. ואף שגם לפני כן כל יהודי ויהודי שהתגורר בארץ ישראל קיים מצווה בישיבתו, ואמרו חכמים (כתובות קי, ב): "לעולם ידור אדם בארץ ישראל ואפילו בעיר שרובה עובדי כוכבים ואל ידור בחוץ לארץ ואפילו בעיר שרובה ישראל, שכל הדר בארץ ישראל דומה כמי שיש לו א-לוה, וכל הדר בחוצה לארץ דומה כמי שאין לו א-לוה". מכל מקום עיקר המצווה היא לכלל ישראל, שהארץ תהיה בריבונות ישראל, והמצווה על כל יחיד לגור בארץ היא ענף מהמצווה הכללית המוטלת על כלל ישראל.

###### b)

וזהו שנאמר (במדבר לג, נג): "וְהוֹרַשְׁתֶּם אֶת הָאָרֶץ וּשְׁבַתֶּם בָּהּ כִּי לָכֵם נָתַתִּי אֶת הָאָרֶץ לְרִשְׁתָּ אֹתָהּ". 'הורשתם' הכוונה כיבוש וריבונות, 'וישבתם' הכוונה ליישבה שלא תהיה שוממה. וכן נאמר (דברים יא, לא): "וּרְשַׁתְּם אֹתָהּ וּשְׁבַתְּם בָּהּ". וכך הגדיר הרמב"ן את המצווה: "נצטווינו לרשת את הארץ אשר נתן הא-ל יתעלה לאבותינו לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב, ולא נעזבנה ביד זולתנו מן האומות (או לשממה" (הוספותיו למצוות עשה ד

###### c)

מצווה זו מוטלת על עם ישראל בכל הדורות, אלא שבמשך תקופה ארוכה היינו אנוסים ולא היתה ידינו תקיפה לקיים את המצווה, שלא היה לנו צבא וכלי נשק לכבוש את ארצנו וליישבה. בחדסי ה' על עמו, בדורות האחרונים החלה הרוח הלאומית להתעורר, יהודים הלכו ונתקבצו לארץ, נטעו בה עצים, פיתחו את כלכלתה, התארגנו והקימו כח מגן, נאבקו בשלטון הזר, וכך כאשר המנדט הבריטי הסתיים יכלו נציגי הציבור שלנו להכריז על הקמת מדינת ישראל. מאז עם ישראל התחיל לקיים את מצוות ישוב הארץ. אמנם עדיין לא כל הארץ בידינו, ועדיין אנו תלויים במידה מסוימת באומות העולם, אבל חזרנו לקיומה הממשי של מצוות ישוב הארץ.

###### d)

וכן מצינו בהלכה, שדין האבלות על חורבן הארץ תלוי בריבונות. שכן תקנו חכמים, שכל הרואה ערי יהודה בחורבן, יאמר (ישעיהו סד, ט): "עֲרֵי קִדְשֶׁךָ הֵיוּ מְדַבְּרִים וּיקרע את בגדו. וביארו הפוסקים, שהגדרת החורבן תלויה בשלטון, שכל זמן שהארץ נשלטת בידי נוכרים, אפילו אם רוב תושבי אותן הערים יהודים, הרי הן נחשבות חריבות וקורעים על ראיתן. ואם הן תחת ריבונות ישראל, אפילו אם רוב תושביהן גויים, אין הן נחשבות חריבות ואין קורעים על ראיתן (ב"י וב"ח או"ח תקסא, מ"א א, מ"ב ב).



וכבר הפליגו חז"ל בשבח מצוות ישוב הארץ עד שאמרו עליה שהיא שקולה כנגד כל המצוות (ספרי ראה נג).<sup>1</sup>

e)

סודות מצוות ישוב הארץ נתבארו בדברי הרמב"ן בהוספותיו לספר המצוות מצווה ד, והורחבו בדברי מו"ר הרצי"ה קוק זצ"ל בספר 'לנתיבות ישראל' (בח"א 'לתוקף קדושתו של יום עצמאותנו', בהוצאת בית אל עמ' רמז-רנ, ועוד עי' בעמ' קס-קסב, ובח"ב 'מזמור י"ט של מדינת ישראל' עמ' שנז-שסח). ונזכיר את תמציתם. מצוות ישוב הארץ חלה על כל הדורות, כפי שכתבו הרמב"ן (מצווה ד) והריב"ש (שפ"ז), ועל כן בכל הדורות ההלכה היא שבני הזוג כופים זה את זה לעלות לארץ (כתובות קי, ב), וכן נפסק בשולחן ערוך (אה"ע עה, ג-ה). וכך מוסכם על הראשונים והאחרונים כמובא שם בפתי תשובה ו. ואמנם בתוס' כתובות שם מובאת דעת ר' חיים "שאינו נוהג בזמן הזה", אולם גדולי הראשונים והאחרונים אינם מתווכחים כלל עם דעה זו, אלא סוברים שאיזה תלמיד טועה כתבה (כ"כ המהרי"ט יו"ד כח, ועוד הרבה מגדולי רבותינו האחרונים, עי' גליון מהרש"א כתובות שם, וחת"ס יו"ד רלד). וזה שעיקר המצווה היא ריבונות ישראל מבואר גם בישועות מלכו יו"ד סו, ובאבני נזר יו"ד תנה, ועוד מקומות.

## 5) Halachik imperatives

- a) Setting up a Yom Tov-Mishna Berura 686:8
- b) Details of the Yom Tov-Rav Seraya Devlizki ZT"l page 61 Hilchot Yom Haazmaut
- c) Rev Eliezer Melamed Shlita Hilchot Ym Haazmaut p.67

## 6) Kibbutz Galuyoth-The State increased & stabilized the process'

a)

**100th anniversary of San Remo.** On 25th Apr 1920, the San Remo Conference of the Supreme Council of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers signed the treaty that established the international right of the Jewish people to a national home. It was enshrined in the 1922 League of Nations Mandate and the 1945 UN Charter.

- b) **A quarter of a million immigrants in a single decade** Over a quarter of a million immigrants

**Statistics from the Jewish Agency show that over a quarter of a million immigrants between 2010 and the end of 2019. The figures, which were submitted**

**this week to Jewish Agency Chairman MK Yitzhak Herzog, showed that over 255,000 immigrants arrived in Israel from 155 different countries.**

The top countries the immigrants hailed from were Russia, Ukraine, France, the US, and Ethiopia. The Jewish Agency believes that by the end of 2019, a total of 34,000 immigrants will have arrived in Israel over the course of the year.

"You arrived here from all corners of the world, in order to fulfill the Zionist dream and to strengthen the State of Israel," Herzog said at a Wednesday event for immigrants who arrived in Israel over the past decade and their children, who were born in Israel and wore "Made in Israel" shirts.

"It's always exciting to meet the next generation," he added. "Over the past decade, over a quarter of a million immigrants arrived with the Jewish Agency's help. These immigrants chose Israel out of a deep feeling of belonging and out of a desire to build their future and their children's future in this state."

According to the Jewish Agency statistics, over half the new immigrants (130,000) arrived from the former Soviet Union, and over 55,000 arrived from Europe, including 38,000 from France. Another 36,000 immigrants arrived from North America - over **32,000 from the US and over 3,800 from Canada**, Jewish Agency and Nefesh B'Nefesh numbers showed. Another 13,420 arrived from Latin America, including 4,320 from Brazil and 3,150 from Argentina, and 10,500 arrived from Ethiopia. Over 2,560 immigrants arrived from South Africa, 1,950 from Oceania (mostly from Australia), and 1,700 from Asia and Africa, including 1,180 from India and over 190 from Hong Kong and China. The report also showed that 3,040 arrived from the Middle East and other countries with whom Israel has no diplomatic relations.

French immigration reached an all-time peak with 38,000 immigrants arriving since 2010 - a full third of all French immigrants who arrived since 1948. In 2015, 7,892 immigrants arrived from France - an all-time high - and after that it leveled out. The numbers of Jews immigrating from the US remained stable at approximately 3,000 per year, Jewish Agency and Nefesh B'Nefesh numbers showed. Earlier in the decade, immigration from Brazil stood at 200 immigrants per year, but those numbers soon peaked, reaching 600 per year. Renewed immigration was also seen from the Former Soviet Union, especially from Russian and Ukraine. And according to the Jewish Agency, 60% of those immigrating in the past decade were under 45 years of age.

**c) The top ten countries from which immigrants hailed (until November 2019) are:**

1. Russia (66,800 immigrants)
2. Ukraine (45,670 immigrants)
3. France (38,000 immigrants)
4. United States (32,000 immigrants)
5. Ethiopia (10,500 immigrants)
6. Britain (6,320 immigrants)
7. Belarus (5,530 immigrants)
8. Brazil (4,320 immigrants)
9. Canada (3,640 immigrants)
10. Argentina (3,150 immigrants)

**Immigration statistics per year:**

In the year 2010 - 19,297 immigrants arrived

In the year 2011 - 19,151 immigrants arrived

In the year 2012 - 18,771 immigrants arrived

In the year 2013 - 19,023 immigrants arrived

In the year 2014 - 26,508 immigrants arrived

In the year 2015 - 31, 229 immigrants arrived

In the year 2016 - 27,629 immigrants arrived

In the year 2017 - 29,509 immigrants arrived

In the year 2018 - 30,403 immigrants arrived

In the year 2019 - approximately 34,000 immigrants arrived.

**d)**

The Jewish population makes up 6,744,000 (74.2%); 1,907,000 (21%) are **Arabs** (2018); and, those identified as “others” (**non-Arab Christians, Baha’i**, etc) make up 4.8% of the population (441,000 people). In 2017, the **population by religion** was roughly 18% **Muslim**, 2% **Christian** and 2% **Druze**.

When the state was established, there were only 806,000 residents and the total population reached its first and second millions in 1949 and 1958 respectively. Judging by current population trend data, experts predict that the population of Israel will reach 10 million by 2024 or sooner.

In addition to these numbers, there are approximately 170,000 people living in Israel who are neither citizens nor permanent residents.

The **overall population** grew by 2.1% from **Rosh HaShanah** 2018 to Rosh Hashanah 2019.

***Out of the 14.5 million Jewish people in the world, 46% reside in Israel.***

The average earnings per household are NIS 20,027 gross (approximately \$5,800).

A total of 45,000 people died in 2018.

Israel is the 99<sup>th</sup> most populous country in the world, not including the over 250,000 illegal foreign workers and African migrants residing in Israel.

2018 also marked the first time in Israel's history that Jewish immigrants to Israel were outnumbered by non-Jewish immigrants.

Such immigrants, hailing largely from the former Soviet Union and Baltic states, count Jewish ancestry but are ineligible to marry as Jews, for example, under the state-controlled rabbinic court system.

**e) According to a report on the Israeli news website *Ynet*, 3.3 million people have immigrated to Israel since 1948. Around 44 percent of them have come since 1990.**

#### **f) Immigration to Israel up 28% in 2019**

Fueled by large number of Russian immigrants moving to Israel, immigration rate surges in 2019.



**g) Immigration to Israel is on the rise, while emigration from the Jewish state continues to decline.**

According to a December 27th, 2018 report by the Jewish Agency, 2018 saw a 45% increase in immigration from Russia, even as immigration from other Eastern European countries like Ukraine declined in 2018. More than 10,500 immigrants from Russia moved to Israel in 2018.

Last month, Nefesh B'Nefesh, an NGO working to facilitate immigration from North America to Israel, brought its 60,000 immigrant to Israel.tz Sheva, your Israel news site

**Emigration from Israel drops to lowest level in decades**

600,000 Israelis living abroad, with number of Israelis emigrating falling to lowest level in more than three decades.

The number of Israelis moving abroad fell to the lowest level in more than three decades, according to a new report by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics.

About 14,300 Israeli citizens and permanent residents left the country for more than a year in 2017, the report says, the lowest number of emigrants departing Israel since the 1980s.

That's a 6% decrease in the number of emigrants compared to 2016, when 15,200 Israeli citizens and residents left the country for a year or more.

h) The number of Israelis leaving the country has been in decline since 2003, following two years of heavy outward migration during the peak of the Second Intifada from 2001 to 2002. Since 2002, emigration has fallen 48%, from a high point of 27,300 emigrants in 2002 to 14,300 in 2017.

7) PREPARATION for complete Kibbutz Galuyoth

a) 'Another record-breaking month' in tourism

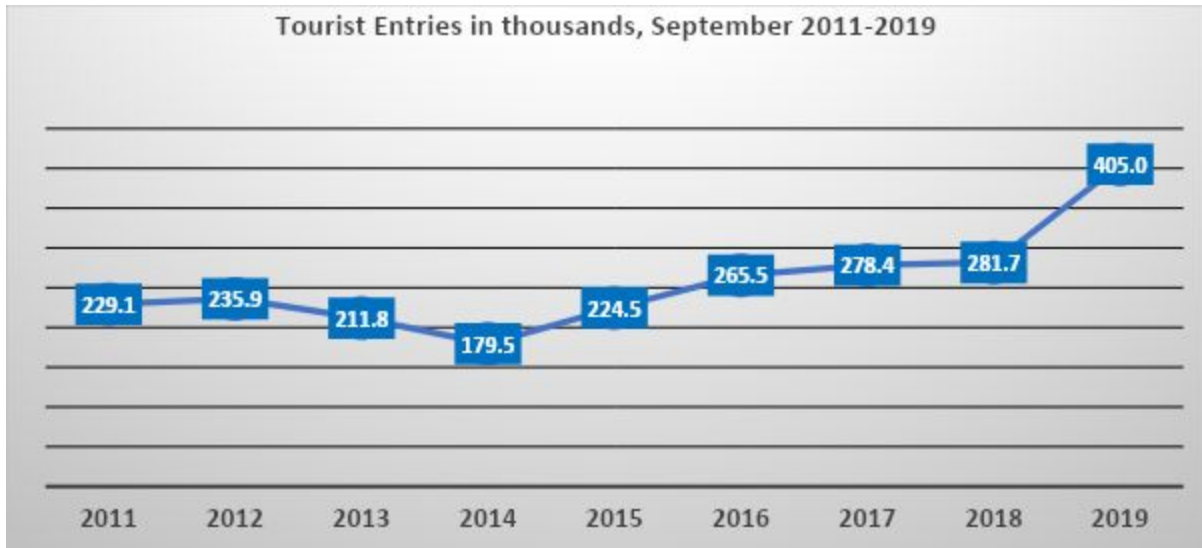
About 405,000 tourist entries into Israel recorded in September 2019, 44% more than September 2018 and 46% more than September 2017.

- b) In the period January – September 2019, 3.297 million tourist entries were recorded, as opposed to 2.917 million in the same period last year, an increase of 13%. (It should be noted that a fuller picture will emerge with the publication of the October statistics, given the fact that the Jewish holidays typically fall in September and October).
- c) Revenue from incoming tourism in September stood at \$581 million (about NIS 2.1 billion) and, since the beginning of the year, at \$4.728 billion (about NIS 17 billion).

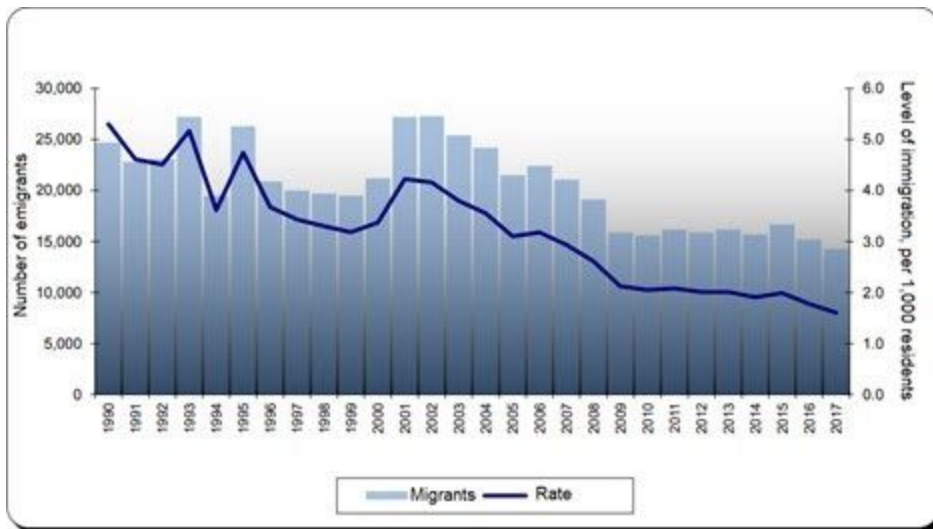
- d) 31,500 day visitors arrived in September 2019, as opposed to 19,500 in September 2018 and 21,600 in September 2017.

**Director General of the Ministry of Tourism, Amir Halevi: "Another record-breaking month that serves as testimony to Israel's attractiveness to tourists from around the world. The Israel Ministry of Tourism is working constantly to ensure a continuation of these record-breaking statistics and to develop new tourism products in order to attract varied target markets such as extreme adventure tourism.**





### Emigration from Israel 1990-2017 Central Bureau of Statistics





***Outgoing and current heads of the Jewish Agency Natan Sharansky (L) and Isaac Herzog at Ben Gurion airport, July 23, 2018.***

- e) Ministry of Absorption officials in Israel report that in the past few weeks, no less than 60,000 Israelis living abroad have express an interest in returning home soon. “There is an awakening among Israelis living abroad,” they said.
- f) ***Jewish Agency Chairman Yitzhak Herzog told [Makor Rishon](#) on Thursday that he anticipated “a great wave of immigration to Israel when the coronavirus crisis ends, as has happened historically in Jewish communities around the world after many crises since the establishment of the state.”***

- g) Herzog called on the Israeli government and other parties to prepare as soon as possible for an aliyah wave, and put together a well-organized plan for a massive absorption effort for the new immigrants.**
- h) “The coronavirus crisis is paralyzing the Jewish communities’ establishment, and the Jewish agency is doing its best to help communities in need, through the emissaries in the field and also through a special loan fund we have set up with Keren Hayesod and JFNA to help them financially,” Herzog said.**
- i) “These communities regard Israel’s functioning in fighting the virus in the midst of a global crisis, and they see a robust, relatively well-functioning state,” Herzog said. “And I get a lot of reactions from around the world.”**

**Zev Gershinsky, VP of the aliyah and absorption group Nefesh B’Nefesh, told Makor Rihon: “Indeed, there has been movement in the Jewish communities since the outbreak of the coronavirus crisis, and the topic of aliyah has been contemplated by many.”**

- j) “In April alone, about 300 aliyah forms were submitted to the Nefesh B’Nefesh offices, and more than 400 people have begun the aliyah process,” Gershinsky said. “We are prepared for all possible scenarios and are able to accompany everyone who is interested: tens, hundreds and thousands.”**
- k) Interest in aliyah to Israel has been recorded in Jewish communities where the number of Jews who died from the coronavirus is high. In the UK, for example, about 500 people expressed an interest in aliyah over the past month alone. Normally, the average annual number of olim from the UK is only about 700.**
- l) It appears that many British Jews believe that Israel was better prepared than Britain for the Corona war. They have a positive opinion about the Israeli health system, which is under attack inside Israel. The coronavirus epidemic is expected to last a long time, so they are considering seeking shelter in Israel more seriously than ever before.**

***m) In France, about a thousand families are waiting to immigrate to Israel.***

In the former Soviet Union, aliyah files for 40,000 local Jews and their close relatives have been opened this year, even before the pandemic's outbreak. Now, aliyah officials expect even more cases.

In 2019, about 35,000 people immigrated to Israel, which set a record for the entire decade. Aliyah sources say as many as 40,000 will arrive by the end of 2020, not including the projected 60,000 returning Israelis.

***n) "If this data are correct, about 100,000 Israelis and Jews from around the world may arrive in Israel in the coming year," the same officials believe.***

## 8) Religion

כֹּו וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם לֵב חָדָשׁ, וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה אֶתֶּן  
בְּקִרְבְּכֶם; וְהִסַּרְתִּי אֶת-לֵב הָאֲבֶן,  
מִבְּשָׂרְכֶם, וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם, לֵב בָּשָׂר.

26 A new heart also will I give you,  
and a new spirit will I put  
within you; and I will take away  
the stony heart out of your  
flesh, and I will give you a  
heart of flesh.

כִּז וְאֶת-רוּחִי, אֶתֵּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם; וְעָשִׂיתִי, אֵת  
אֲשֶׁר-בְּחָקִי תֵלְכוּ, וּמִשְׁפָּטֵי תִשְׁמְרוּ,  
וְעָשִׂיתֶם.

27 And I will put My spirit within  
you, and cause you to walk in  
My statutes, and ye shall keep  
Mine ordinances, and do them.

- a) THE SECULAR founders of the state could not have imagined that 71 years later, the president of the state would pray to God in front of the Knesset and the nation. I applaud the president for being so openly Jewish in his pre-Yom Kippur speech. I applaud Channel 12 and Ynet for their featured coverage of a remarkable moment in Jewish worship.
- b) There was much anticipation leading up to President Reuven Rivlin's address to the Knesset at last week's inauguration, even as everyone knew he would urge Likud and Blue and White to form a unity government, and address the healing necessary after the contentious election which has still not ended.
- c) *It turned out that the most significant part of the president's speech was not political. At the end of his address, the president took a kippah out of his pocket, put it on his head, and told the audience that because it was during the days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, he had to add these words*
- d) *"One is only forgiven for sins against another man, if one appeases the other and asks for forgiveness. I apologize if I acted or spoke improperly.... I ask forgiveness from anyone who I hurt, from anyone who was hurt by my words, my actions or my shortcomings, and from anyone who was hurt by words that I said or from words that I did not say. God in heaven, please heal all those who are sick. Establish peace among us. Let there be peace*

*in the land. Give rain for blessing in the right time. Give good crops for the farmers and bread for those who need to eat. May the nation of Israel be blessed with a good New Year.*

- e) The looks on everyone's faces on the Knesset floor said, "Yes, we live in a Jewish state, and that's the way a leader should speak in a Jewish state."
- f) A few nights later, the night before Yom Kippur, close to 100,000 people gathered at the Western Wall for the final recitation of the slihot penitential poems and prayers. That so many people from so many backgrounds gathered at midnight for this experience is noteworthy in itself, but that it was aired live by Channel 12 with two of its top reporters covering it, and was the top story featured on Ynet, makes it revolutionary.
- g) Bibi on solving the corona crisis: "We need both. Even in Weizman Institute of Science they are praying.
- h) **'Most Israelis seek to connect to their heritage'**

Tzohar to hold 350 free, public, Yom Kippur prayer services around Israel.

- i) *From the north to the south: 350 free-to-the-public Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) prayer services are scheduled to take place all across Israel over the holiday.*

*The traditional services organized by Tzohar, in partnership with Yachad Ohr Torah Stone, are expecting a crowd of 68,000 at locations all across the country, including no less than 18 different events in Tel Aviv alone.*

The participants, religious and secular, will be provided with prayer books specifically designed for those less familiar with the service – including when to stand, when to sit, when the cantor will be saying things out loud and when the congregation prays along. The service will include explanations, discussion and the shofar blowing at the conclusion of the holiday.

“Yom Kippur is a wonderful opportunity to take a break and disconnect from all the noise around us. Like every year, the community is invited to take part in one

of the hundreds of tefilla services around the country,” said Rabbi David Stav, founder of Tzohar Rabbinical Organization.

Rabbi Kenneth Brander, president and Rosh HaYeshiva of Ohr Torah Stone Institutions, said: “Yom Kippur is a special and holy day among the people of Israel, but there are Israelis who feel less comfortable in observing it in the synagogue for various reasons.”

*j) “On the other hand, research indicates that most Israelis seek to connect with their heritage and dedicate a place for tradition in their daily lives. Therefore, we offer the public the opportunity to pray in beautiful and comfortable locations with a songs, experience and meaning. Judaism is considered the treasure of the nation of Israel; so, too, Yom Kippur and the rest of the holidays belong to everyone.”*

## 9) Financial:

### a) EAST MEETS WEST

Israel rises to 35th place in 'Ease of Doing Business' World Bank report

**Joint inter-ministerial action bears fruit as Israel jumps 19 ranks up over past two years**

Israel has risen 14 places, now ranking 35th among 190 countries in the World Bank's "Ease of Doing Business" report, published on Thursday.

Over the past two years, Israel has moved up 19 places. The Ministry of Finance attributes this success to inter-ministerial coordinated efforts to overcome obstacles related to improving business environment.

According to the report, during the past year Israel had made the process of starting a business easier by allowing joint registration of corporate and value added tax (VAT).



**Tax paying was also simplified, with the introduction of an electronic system used to file and pay the VAT.**

**World Bank's report also said that cross-border trade had improved with the elimination of the certificate of origin requirement.**

**Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu commented on the report, saying that "the praiseworthy work carried out by the Finance Ministry, the accountant-general, the Justice Ministry, and our office is changing the face of the Israeli economy."**

**"This is an important achievement," he added. "It needs to be continued."**

**Daphna Aviram-Nitzan, the director of the Israel Democracy Institute's Center for Governance and the Economy, believes that Israel needs to continue digitizing its bureaucratic procedures in order to advance its ease of business.**

**b) Israel sells record \$25 billion in bonds as investors show confidence in economy**

**The sales, which took place as the world grapples with economic uncertainty tied to the coronavirus pandemic, represent an indication of confidence by investors in the nation's economy and future, experts say.**

**BY ISRAEL KASNETT**



**The empty Ayalon highway in Tel Aviv on April 8, 2020. All intercity travel has been banned until after the first days of Passover. Photo by Miriam Alster/Flash90.**

**(April 8, 2020 / JNS) To cover the rising costs of the coronavirus pandemic, and a near total economic shutdown, Israel's treasury sold a whopping \$25 billion in long-term bonds. The sales, which took place as the world grapples with economic uncertainty, represent an indication of confidence by investors in the nation's economy and future, experts say.**

**Israel priced the three-part dollar transaction with maturities of 10, 30 and 100 years, which was the first time the country offered 100-year or century bonds. Additionally, while the Israeli government initially only aimed to sell \$5 billion in bonds, it instead attracted**

more than \$25 billion with 400 investors from 40 different countries taking part in the offering.

Israel's Accountant General Rony Hizkiyahu, the man responsible for the offering, said "the largest-ever bond issue in the history of the state demonstrated the confidence among large and quality investors worldwide in the strength of Israel's economy, especially as the country copes with the coronavirus crisis."

The reason for this sale was due to Israel's need to fund a substantial stimulus package announced last week by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He said that his government plans to assist individuals and small businesses with a NIS 80 billion (\$22 billion) package to help the economy weather the global pandemic.

## 10) Corona challenges and successes

- a) **Successful caesarian birth.** A seriously ill corona patient, 32-week's pregnant and on ventilation, gave birth to a healthy 5.2lb baby via cesarean section in the isolation ward at Ziv Medical Center in Tzfat (Safed).
- b) **Israeli biotech Redhill** has announced that another of its pipeline medicines RHB-107 (upamostat) is to be tested by the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) against SARS-CoV2, the virus that causes Corona
- c) **Scientists from Israel's Technion Institute** have developed Liquid Foam Therapy (LIFT). It improves the distribution across the lungs of surfactant, the liquid that coats the surface of alveoli in the lungs,. COVID-19 kills the cells that secrete surfactant, making it harder to breathe.

<https://www.calcalistech.com/ctech/articles/0,7340,L-3807833,00.html>

- d) **Israeli-Arab praise for Israeli pandemic support.** Professor Fahed Hakim, medical director of Nazareth Hospital, the largest medical facility in the Arab sector, praised Israel's Health Ministry for funding 3 coronavirus wards. He also thanked The IDF for providing ventilators and other equipment.
  
- e) **COVID-19 decision support for doctors.** Israeli startup Kahun uses Artificial Intelligence to retrieve vital data for medical professionals on the coronavirus. Kahun's algorithm mimics the diagnosis process in searching over 2,500 research papers to help physicians make fast vital decisions. Also open to the public. <https://kahun.com>
- f) **Radar to detect coronavirus carriers.** (TY Hazel) Israel Aerospace Industries and Israel's Elbit Systems have converted radar and electro-optic (camera) sensors into high-sensitivity sensors. These can measure pulse, temperature, and respiratory rate, to indicate a likely coronavirus infection.

<https://www.jns.org/israeli-defense-companies-are-turning-radars-into-coronaviruses-symptom-detectors/>

- g) **Thermal cameras check for infection.** Israeli startup Iron-Drone has developed ThermoGate to test the temperature of people entering shops and workplaces as per Israeli government regulations. Meanwhile Israel's Rafael Advanced Defense Systems has built and installed its own temperature checkers at two Israeli hospitals.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/coming-soon-across-israel-futuristic-temperature-testers-using-defense-tech/>

- h) **Home coronavirus test.** Researchers from Israel's Technion Institute have developed a process that they say can be made into a simple, inexpensive, fast and accurate home test for the coronavirus. Dip a swab of saliva into a test tube of chemical reagents and then into hot water. If the reagent color changes, the saliva is infected.

<https://unitedwithisrael.org/israeli-researchers-home-test-kit-a-corona-game-changer/>

- i) Millions of 3D-printed swabs for US. In response to the pressing need for more COVID-19 testing, Israel's Stratasys and Origin of the US have signed an agreement in which Stratasys will market and promote Origin 3D-printed nasopharyngeal (NP) swabs to healthcare providers and other testing centers in the U.S.

<https://www.origin.io/news/stratasys-and-origin-partner-to-bring-swabs-to-healthcare-providers>

<https://www.origin.io/npswab>

- j) Rapid Response. Israel's Tikkun Olam ("Healing the World") Makers or TOM ([see previous](#)) has built a platform called Rapid Response Makers (RRM). Medical professionals and developers all over the world are encouraged to design and build medical infrastructure, products, and software to help fight the pandemic.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-created-movement-harnesses-tech-brains-worldwide-to-fight-coronavirus/>

<https://tomglobal.org/community?id=5e73198894711e10b13ebe3b>

- k) Drones pollinate date plantations. The coronavirus pandemic put Israel's date industry at risk due to shortage of labor to pollinate trees between February and April. Israel's Blue White Robotics ([see here](#)) is now deploying drones to pollinate date plantations in Israel's Arava region and the Jordan Valley.

<https://worldisraelnews.com/israeli-drones-pollinate-date-plantations-as-coronavirus-cuts-manpower/>

- l) **Fitch gives Israel an A+.** Amazingly, Fitch Ratings has affirmed Israel's long-term foreign-currency issuer default rating (IDR) at 'A+' with a stable outlook. It highlights strong external finances, a diversified high value-added economy and solid institutional strength. It projects a rebound in 2021, with GDP growing by 5%.

<https://www.fitchratings.com/research/sovereigns/fitch-affirms-israel-at-a-outlook-stable-23-04-2020>

- m) **Airlines renew Israel flights.** Good news for Israeli nationals. British Airways and Wizz are shortly resuming their London to Tel Aviv flights. Air Canada is restarting from Toronto and Montreal and Delta is resuming from New York. United Airlines is upgrading its New York service and restarting from San Francisco.

<https://en.globes.co.il/en/article-british-airways-air-canada-renewing-tel-aviv-flights-1001325940>

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/airlines-plan-to-resume-israel-routes-after-virus-ground-travel/>

- n) **IKEA re-opens 3 Israeli stores.** Multinational retailer IKEA has re-opened its stores in Netanya, Tel Aviv Port and Rishon LeZion as part of Israel's slow return to normality. IKEA will observe the latest Ministry of Health regulations, including social distancing, wearing of masks, maintaining hygiene and frequent cleaning.

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/279023>

- o) **Israeli schools to re-open.** Israeli school admin staff are returning to work in advance of schools reopening. They will be subject to Health Ministry guidelines. It is a major step towards allowing parents to return to work. Special education classes have already reopened.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/school-admin-staff-sent-back-to-work-as-education-systems-reopening-nears/>

- p) A thousand ventilators for Europe. (TY Hazel) Israel's BATM is already busy producing COVID-19 testing kits (reported [here](#) previously). Now, it has received a \$31 million order from an unnamed European country, for 1000 ventilators to be delivered between June and September.

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/israeli-manufacturer-awarded-31-million-to-produce-ventilators-for-europe-625465>

- q) El Al transports medical equipment from China to Italy. El Al's cargo department has signed a deal to operate 150 cargo flights from China to Italy, carrying medical equipment to help battle coronavirus. El Al will operate two flights daily between April and October using converted 777 planes and Dreamliners.

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/279031>

- r) Israel's response to COVID-19. Israeli global investment platform Ourcrowd held a webinar on how Israel's Government, healthcare and technology startups are combating the coronavirus. It featured PulmOne, SightDX and MigVax. Some 1000 medical, media and investment professionals attended. And me. See the slides here.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/zf90o4boz9armk8/Israel%27s%20Response%20to%20COVID19%20Webinar%20OurCrowd%20FINAL.pdf?dl=0>

- s) **Israeli vaccine gains support.** Israel's Migal Galilee Research Institute is now MigVax Corp and has just received \$12 million of funds, led by Ourcrowd. MigVax's is developing a safe, oral vaccine with 3 levels of protection. It will be easy to scale up and can be adjusted for other coronavirus strains.

<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20200421005579/en/OurCrowd-Leads-12-Million-Investment-Israeli-COVID-19>

<https://medium.com/@CEOOURCROWD/six-reasons-why-ourcrowd-is-investing-in-this-israeli-covid-19-vaccine-570f109f1eff>

- t) Emergency funds for startups. The Israeli Innovation Authority (IIA), the government's tech investment arm, is making available NIS 500 million for Israeli startups that have a good chance of succeeding in the long run, but are currently suffering from a shortage in funding and need immediate investment.



<https://www.calcalistech.com/ctech/articles/0,7340,L-3809995,00.html>

- u) More investment in Israeli startups. This week Israeli startups InnovoPro raised [\\$15 million](#), Granulate raised [\\$12 million](#), Orchestra raised [\\$7.5 million](#), MyndYou raised [\\$4 million](#), Arti raised [\\$4 million](#), and Gauzy raised some [\\$10 million](#).

v) SRAEL'S MEDICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

**Positive coronavirus treatment news.** [Six critically ill Israeli coronavirus patients](#) with organ failure are still alive after 1-week's Pluristem's PLX cell-therapy in three separate Israeli medical centers. Four show improved respiratory parameters - three of those could soon be weaned off ventilators with two showing clinical recovery.

- Latest – The first critically ill US coronavirus patient has received Pluristem's treatment ([in New Jersey](#)).

<https://www.jpost.com/health-science/israeli-covid-19-treatment-shows-100-percent-survival-rate-preliminary-data-624058>

- w) **Italy approves Israeli coronavirus treatment.** (TY [JNS](#)) Italy has approved Opaganib from Israel's Redhill Biopharma to treat some 160 severe COVID-19 patients with severe respiratory problems at three hospitals in northern Italy. Phase2 tests on 131 US patients were positive and two critically ill Israeli patients [are improving](#).

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/2-israeli-covid-19-patients-improve-in-experimental-drug-trial/>

- x) **Passive vaccine saves 29-year-old coronavirus patient.** (TY Hazel) A 29-year-old coronavirus patient in Ashdod has improved from serious to serious but stable condition, after receiving multiple doses of plasma from

a donor who recovered from coronavirus. Another patient who received plasma has also improved.

<https://www.jpost.com/HEALTH-SCIENCE/29-year-old-among-first-to-be-treated-with-MDA-passive-vaccine-624353>

<https://www.jpost.com/HEALTH-SCIENCE/Israels-MDA-to-treat-coronavirus-patients-with-new-passive-vaccine-623172>

- y) Targeting coronavirus proteins. Scientists at Israel's Weizmann Institute are working with a UK laboratory and others to develop an anti-viral treatment that targets Protease - a protein essential for coronavirus activity. Meanwhile, Hebrew University of Jerusalem scientists are testing many chemicals against similar proteins.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/science-will-conquer-this-inside-the-race-for-a-coronavirus-treatment/>

<https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/accelerated-oxford-weizmann-project-aims-to-identify-anti-covid-19-drug-in-weeks-1.498547>

- z) Decoys to trap coronavirus. Technion scientists are using their NanoGhost technology ([reported here](#)) to send NanoGhost stem cells into the lungs. The coronavirus cells then bind with the NanoGhost decoy cells rather than the cells in the lung, thus reducing the ability of the virus to propagate.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=koxdcMVnDA4>

Radar for the lungs. Israel's Sensible Medical has developed a radar-based system that continuously monitors a patient's lung fluid levels to prevent deterioration. It has already in operation in [four Italian hospitals](#) and a US hospital has bought 20 units. Israel is also about to adopt it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8v1GKdeKa0>

<https://www.calcalistech.com/ctech/articles/0,7340,L-3804703,00.html>

<https://sensible-medical.com/>

aa) New coronavirus test is 10 times faster. Scientists at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem have developed and implemented a new test for coronavirus infections that is much faster, cheaper and hasn't the resource issues of current tests. It extracts RNA from swabs as now, but with a magnetic bead-based cleanup process called SPRI.

<https://www.jwire.com.au/hebrew-university-researchers-develop-a-covid-19-diagnostic-test-10x-faster/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuWu9uGmrk>

Recovered. The many critically ill Israeli coronavirus patients being cured include a couple from Ashkelon aged 90 and 87 who can now celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary. Also, Eli Beer, CEO of Israel's United Hatzalah has awoken from a coma.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-couple-aged-90-87-recover-from-covid-19-in-ashkelon/>

<https://worldisraelnews.com/united-hatzalah-of-israel-founder-awakens-from-coronavirus-coma/>

Donation to fund coronavirus research. The Edmond de Rothschild Foundation has donated NIS 15 million to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for coronavirus research. It will fund 60 research teams at HU that are working on a vaccine, improving testing methods, and developing treatments for COVID-19 patients.

<https://www.jwire.com.au/edmond-de-rothschild-foundation-donates-15-million-nis-to-fund-corona-research-at-hebrew-university/>

<https://www.jewishpress.com/news/israel/jerusalem/rothschild-foundation-donates-4-2-million-to-hebrew-u-coronavirus-research/2020/04/13/>

*bb) Clean water reduces Africa's risk from COVID-19. Israeli NGO Innovation: Africa (see here) is racing to prevent mass infections by installing Israeli solar and water technologies in remote villages in Uganda, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia,*

*Cameroon and South Africa. Clean water can prevent COVID-19 wiping out entire villages.*

<https://www.israel21c.org/israeli-tech-helps-african-villages-protect-against-coronavirus/>

cc) SAFEST COUNTRY

The safest country. Forbes Economic magazine has published a study by Deep Knowledge that ranks how 60 countries are dealing with the coronavirus. It analyzed safety, risk level, treatment efficacy, and government support for people affected. Israel was ranked as the safest of the 200 countries assessed.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/cognitiveworld/2020/04/13/covid-19-complexity-demands-sophisticated-analytics-deep-analysis-of-global-pandemic-data-reveals-important-insights/#5df681062f6e>

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/278720>

**dd) Turning oxygen tanks into ventilators.** Another “beating swords into ploughshares” story. The IDF Shayetet 13 Naval commando unit is using its expertise in diving with oxygen to convert its oxygen tank production line into making medical oxygen compression systems (ventilators) for critically ill coronavirus patients.

**Focusing on Israel.** Despite the global economic slowdown, Israel-headquartered VC firm

Entrée Capital has raised \$100 million for a new, third Israel-focused fund. It will target

early-stage Israeli founded startups active in the fields including deep tech, SaaS, fintech,

quantum computing, AI, AR / VR and healthcare.

<https://www.calcalistech.com/ctech/articles/0,7340,L-3807992,00.html>

**Investment in Israeli startups.** Despite the economic crisis, Israel's Vast Data has raised

**\$100 million; Cato Networks raised another \$77 million; Tyto Care raised \$50 million;**

**Glassbox Digital raised \$40 million. Bringg raised \$30 million; CyberMDX raised \$20**

**million; Cyolo raised \$4.2 million and Agroscout raised \$3 million.**

ee) Sharansky donates Genesis Prize money. Natan Sharansky has donated his \$1 million

Genesis Prize to aid those affected by coronavirus. The Israeli former Soviet prisoner

urged people to “think about our great journey together and about new challenges which

we face together, and that we will win together.”

<https://www.jns.org/sharansky-donates-1-million-genes-is-prize-to-aid-those-affected-by-coronavirus/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhbhwMLMJUA>

ff) IDF cares. (TY Hazel) Some 1,000 Israeli soldiers are helping at 200 assisted living facilities

around the country, providing the help they need during this period, when they are unable

to leave their homes. A commander and four soldiers have been assigned to each facility,

[https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-to-send-paratrooper-division-into-virus-stricken-bnei-br](https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-to-send-paratrooper-division-into-virus-stricken-bnei-brak-to-help-residents/)

[ak-to-help-residents/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-to-send-paratrooper-division-into-virus-stricken-bnei-brak-to-help-residents/)

Israel sends matza to Egypt. The Israeli government has sent matzahs and other essential

Passover items to the tiny Jewish community in Egypt. Israel's Embassy in Cairo and

Jewish organizations managed to get boxes of kosher for Passover food to the 20 Jews in

Cairo and Alexandria - a tiny remnant of the 80,000 in the 1940's.

gg) Israel's largest port operating normally. (TY Hazel)  
Israel's largest seaport, Ashdod, is fully operational, at a level similar to last year despite the global coronavirus outbreak.

Some 97% of cargo to Israel, by weight, arrives by ship and the government has assured the country there will be no shortages of essential products.

hh) Israelis rescued from Peru. Itzik Garber piloted one of 4 El Al planes that flew 16 hours and over 12,000km to Peru to rescue 1,000 Israelis stranded by the coronavirus outbreak.

After a 4-hour break on the ground, Captain Garber flew his Boeing 787 Dreamliner with hundreds of Israelis for another 15 hours back home to Israel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpE8Q7KmGJk>

**ii) Record-breaking flight to Australia.** In a historic first, El Al flew a commercial flight

directly from Israel to Australia to evacuate Israelis stranded due to the coronavirus

pandemic. The 17-hour flight landed in Perth and took off several hours later. It carried

230 Israelis, including 80 who went to Perth from New Zealand.

<https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/First-ever-direct-EI-AI-flight-to-Australia-evacuates-stranded-Israelis-622120>

jj) More Israelis rescued. (TY Hazel) Israel showed again that it doesn't abandon its citizens.

EI AI planes have brought back 40 from Ghana, 600 from Ukraine (on 4 flights), including

160 mostly Arab-Israeli students from Odessa. Other missions include from Italy, Ethiopia,

Thailand and Croatia.

<https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Israelis-evacuated-from-Ghana-hours-before-borders-close-621901>

kk) Can't stop Aliya. (TY TPS) Immigration to Israel continues despite the coronavirus

pandemic. 961 immigrants have arrived in Israel since the beginning of March., They



included 72 Ethiopian immigrants from the Falash Mura community. All new immigrants have to spend their first 2 weeks in self-isolation.

#### 11) Gishmai Beracha

**The Kinneret is almost full.** (TY WIN) Prayers for rain have worked. The Kinneret (Sea of Galilee) is at a 16-year high - just short of the upper red line. At that level, the Dganya Dam should be opened to prevent flooding. A little more rain is forecast, plus the melting snow from Mount Hermon should push it over the line.

#### 12) Rivlin: Israel is a 'superpower of hope'

President Rivlin hosts diplomatic and consular corps in honor of Israel's 71st Independence Day.



- a) President Reuven Rivlin on Thursday hosted a reception for the diplomatic and consular corps in honor of Israel's 71st Independence Day. Acting Foreign Minister Yisrael Katz (Likud) also participated in the event.

"Distinguished members of the diplomatic corps, dear friends. It is a pleasure to welcome you to this celebration of our seventy-first Independence Day, in our three-thousand year old capital of Jerusalem," said the president at the beginning of his remarks, noting that in his meetings with world leaders they comment admiringly on Israel's achievements, and said that Israel is indeed a miracle, particularly in the vibrancy of its democracy.

- b) "From the day Israel was born until today, we have faced enemies. Yet despite the severe security threats, we have built a thriving democracy with an independent judiciary, a free press, and religious freedom for all. This is a modern miracle," he said.

"Israel is a small country, but we have big dreams. In fact, we are already becoming a world superpower. Not a superpower of military might -though we will always do what is necessary to defend ourselves - but a superpower of hope. Hope for a better future for all humanity."

"Israeli technologies are already improving the lives of people around the world in the fields of clean water, sustainable farming, green energy and medical aid. Now imagine how these technologies could improve lives throughout the Middle East," he continued.

"Peaceful relations between Israel and its neighbors, especially our Palestinian neighbors, could bring such tremendous development and prosperity to the region. We continue to dream of peace with all our neighbors, because I deeply believe that we are not doomed to live together, we are destined to live together. Together we can build a better future for all the peoples of the region," he concluded.

- c) During the day, the official presidential residence received messages of congratulations for world leaders on Yom Haatzmaut. Among those sending messages were President of the United States of America Donald J. Trump, who noted "shared values are the cornerstone of relations between our two great nations".

President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin congratulated Israel on its 71st anniversary and noted that today is also Victory Day, marking the end of the war against Nazi Germany and that the sacrifices for the sake victory was enormous.

Messages were received from Federal President of the Federal Republic of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom, who sent her best wishes for the good fortune and happiness of the people of Israel. King Felipe VI of Spain, President of Italy Sergio Mattarella and many others also sent wishes.

### 13) We are one

a) ZACH-nx-Zioni Charaidi

**Israel's first home-grown ultra-Orthodox doctor in midst of coronavirus fight**

April 12, 2020



Dr. Yehuda Sabiner. (YouTube/N12/Screenshot)

***Dr. Yehuda Sabiner started his internship at the country's first dedicated coronavirus ward.***

***By Paul Shindman, World Israel News***

**Israel's first home-grown ultra-Orthodox doctor has landed in the trenches of Israel's coronavirus fight, Channel 12 news reported Saturday.**

**On the first day of his internship at the Tel Hashomer hospital near Tel Aviv, Dr. Yehuda Sabiner, 29, said a senior doctor called him over and said the department was transitioning to become Israel's first ward dedicated exclusively to coronavirus patients.**

**"She said I could refuse," Sabiner told Channel 12. "I thought once or twice and told her I'm OK with that, let me just ask my wife, who said to me straight out wherever you are, whatever they ask of you that's your job."**

**It turned out that 70 percent of the patients in Ward C, the corona ward, are fellow members of the ultra-Orthodox community from the [hard-hit city of Bnei Brak](#) and Sabiner knows some of them personally.**

**Emerging last Wednesday after spending several days in the ward to minimize exposure to others, Sabiner said his last overnight went well and he was excited to be able get a special short leave to go home for a short time to [celebrate Passover with his family](#).**

**b) "There was also a bit of drama during the night," Sabiner said, during which doctors needed to stabilize some patients and "for the meantime to defeat the angel of death."**

**As a young child Sabiner was so impressed with his family doctor he made his mind up to make it his life goal to become a physician.**

**In his youth, he studied Torah all day, and when he told his rabbi his goal was to be a doctor, the rabbi's response was he needed to see a psychiatrist, Sabiner recounted.**

Sabiner said his rabbi told him, “It’s not realistic, you won’t be accepted, you are unable, you can’t go in opposition to your community.” However, he persevered and became the first ultra-Orthodox Jew to come out of Israel’s yeshiva world and graduate from medicine, getting his degree from the prestigious Technion University in Haifa.

All other ultra-Orthodox doctors in the country got their medical degrees abroad and immigrated to Israel, Sabiner said.

When the **coronavirus outbreak turned serious** and his children’s school was still holding classes, Sabiner called the principal and explained the gravity of the situation after which the school closed its doors.

- c) **As the outbreak worsened** and the religious community was still not fully accepting health directives before the Purim holiday, Sabiner arranged to meet Rabbi Yitzhok Zilberstein, one of the more prominent and respected leaders in Bnei Brak.

After only five minutes of explanation, the rabbi issued “a very extreme proclamation” to help keep people at home, Sabiner said. “If that ruling hadn’t come out in time, the catastrophe we are in today would have been much, much, bigger.”

Sabiner will not have much time off in the coming months. With its dense population and tradition of group prayers and **large gatherings for both weddings and funerals**, total closures were only imposed after Bnei Brak became Israel’s most infected city.

- d) **'Everyone has something to contribute'**

Naftali Stubin, a participant of the unique educational program in Israel for students with special needs wins Outstanding Soldier award.





## Ohr Torah Stone

In a moving ceremony that took place last week at the Etzion regional brigade base, 23-year-old Naftali Stubin of Passaic, New Jersey, received the Outstanding Soldier award from the base's commander, Col. David Shapira. Stubin is one of 25 young adults with special needs studying in the Elaine and Norm Brodsky Darkaynu program, a unique initiative run by the Ohr Torah Stone network which makes the "year-in-Israel" experience enjoyed by Jewish youth from all over the world accessible to everyone.

The program enables young adults with special needs to learn Torah and connect to the land of Israel, just like other young adults their age. The program also provides them with life skills and trains them in job skills, as well as organizing daily vocational placements in a variety of businesses and institutions. Furthermore, Darkaynu students also volunteer in a variety of frameworks.

"Our goal is not only for our students to spend time in Israel and enjoy the quintessential Israeli experience but that they contribute to the country as well," says Avi Ganz, director of Darkaynu's men's program. "The volunteer work they carry out in different settings helps them develop their personalities and connect to members of the local community, as well as provides them with a huge sense

of accomplishment from knowing that they have something to contribute to society."

One of these volunteer settings is the Etzion regional brigade base. "Our students don IDF uniforms every other week and provide crucial support to the Etzion base by unloading deliveries and preparing food, sorting and organizing uniforms, helping with general base upkeep, and organizing ammunition and weapons," reports Ganz. "In *Tehillim* it says that the world is built through kindness - our students give of themselves to society because everyone has something to contribute in bettering the world."

At the ceremony each student received a framed certificate, thanking them for their dedicated service to the state of Israel, and Stuben was presented with the "Outstanding Soldier" award by Col. David Shapira, commander of the base.

"The IDF is a people's army - it's an integral part of Israeli life and society," said Shapira. "Every single person has what to contribute, and each contributes in his own way. That's what fuels Israel and makes this country so special, and that's why it's important to us at the Etzion base to be an inclusive and accessible community."

"The graduating ceremony and the certificates of excellence which were awarded on the base were very significant for our students, who had worked hard throughout the year and were very excited to have reached this moment," said Ganz. "It proved that people with special needs can give of themselves to the community and to society - and even excel in it - just like everybody else."

Ohr Torah Stone president and yeshivah dean, Rabbi Kenneth Brander, said: "We have a responsibility to the entire Jewish people, both in Israel and in the Diaspora. The Elaine and Norm Brodsky Darkaynu Program is part of Ohr Torah Stone's overarching vision of connecting to each part of our nation, appreciating the God-given talents of all our children and helping each one actualize his or her full potential, no matter what their personal circumstances are."our Israel news site

#### e) Satmar hasidim buy pizza for IDF soldiers

A haredi IDF soldier on Monday told his friends that Satmar hasidim bought pies of pizza for a group of soldiers, *Kikar Hashabbat* reported.

In his post, the soldier said he was on duty near the Cave of the Patriarchs (Me'arat Hamachpelah) in Hevron when three Satmar hasidim visiting from the US came up to the jeep he and several other soldiers were sitting in.

The hasidim noticed a soldier with sidelocks and a beard sitting in the jeep and began speaking with him.

"They didn't know that there are chassidish (hasidic) eherlich (honest) people in the army," he noted.

According to *Kikar Hashabbat*, the haredi soldier also said he told the visiting hasidim about the IDF's activities in the city, and that there is a large number of haredi soldiers serving in the IDF. At the end of the conversation, the Satmar hasidim surprised the soldiers by buying them all pizza.

"If only we could also merit to protect the Jewish nation and the Land of Israel with our bodies," one of the hasidim told the soldiers.

#### g) Ceremony commemorating fallen Charaidi soldiers

**המדינה חיבקה את החרדים: "אתם מוסרים את נפשותיכם, תרתי משמע"**

הם עמדו בצפירה ושרו את "התקווה" - אבל גם אמרו פרקי תהילים ושרו "אני מאמין": לראשונה קיימו מדינת ישראל וצה"ל טקס ממלכתי-חרדי לזכר החיילים החרדים שנפלו במהלך שירותם בגדודים החרדיים. "סבתא חיכתה לעצרת הזאת 48 שנים, ועכשיו כשזה קורה היא כבר לא כאן ה היה נראה כמו כל טקס ממלכתי – אבל שונה: הקהל החרדי הנרגש הבין שקורה פה משהו שלא היה בעבר, בטקסים הפרטיים שיזמו פעילים חברתיים בשנתיים האחרונות. ההכרה הלאומית באבל שלהם. בטקס שנערך אמש (יום ג') ב"היכל שלמה" בירושלים, נטלו חלק כ-1,200 משתתפים - ובהם בני משפחות החללים, וחיילי הגדוד החרדי המשרתים כיום.

<< הכול על העולם היהודי - בפייסבוק של ערוץ היהדות >>

- אכלנו מעץ המוות, גורשנו מגן העדן/ הרב אהד טהרלב
- "כשהחזן הצבאי פגש את אמא של שחר: "השיר הזה מחזיר אותי"
- "מהשואה לשדה הקרב: "נעדרים זו חוויה קשה ממות"



"סבתא חיכתה לעצרת הזאת 48 שנים, ועכשיו כשזה קורה היא כבר לא כאן לראות זאת", אמר נרגש דוד רוט, שדודו, דוד-אליהו פירסט ז"ל, נפל במהלך שירותו בגדוד "נצח יהודה הראשון", בדצמבר 1970. "אבל אמי שתיבדל לחיים כאן בקהל, ובשמה אני רוצה להודות לכם על הערב".



(צילום: איציק בלניצקי, משרד הביטחון)

**"זו הפעם ראשונה שצה"ל מכיר באירוע חרדי שכולל את חיילי שני הגדודים: "נצח יהודה" הישן שפעל 70 שנות ה-70, והגדוד החרדי הפועל בימים אלה". אומר מנכ"ל עמותת נצח יהודה, יוסי לוי. האירוע כוון באופן ישיר למגזר החרדי, ואפילו הכותרת שניתנה לו – "עצרת זיכרון" - נבחר בקפידה.**

כך גם השקופיות הייחודיות עם הקדיש ופרקי התהילים, במהלך הדלקת נרות הזיכרון על ידי נציגי משפחות הנופלים, ואפילו הפרט (המובן מאליו למגזר) – שירה ווקאלית בלבד, ללא כלי נגינה, בשל אופיים של הימים, ספירת העומר.

h)

**"איננו יכול לעמוד במחיצתם בגן עדן"**

**העצרת נשאה אופי ממלכתי, אולם ניתן היה להבחין באלמנטים החרדיים ששיוו לאירוע את אופיו המיוחד. בשורות הראשונות ישבו, לצד קצינים בכירים, רבנים רבים שהובילו בעבר ובהווה את הגדוד החרדי. מלבד הרבנים הראשיים לירושלים, כובד בדברים הרב המבוגר, יואל שורץ, תלמיד חכם מפורסם שהקים את הנח"ל.**



אחד-אחד נקראו בני המשפחה להדליק נרות לזכר יקיריהם(צילום: איציק בלניצקי, משרד הביטחון)

**"אמנם חלק מהחיילים האלה עמדתי והספדתי", אמר, "אבל בערב זה קשה לי לדבר. מי אני שאדבר. אומר לכם רק מה שאמר מורי ורבי, רבי חיים שמואלביץ זצ"ל, על החיילים האלה: איננו יכולים לעמוד במחיצתם בגן עדן, ואת זה אני אומר להורים השכולים."**

"אני פיקדתי על הגדוד בין השנים 1963-1975, שנים קשות שכללו שתי מלחמות", אמר בעצרת משה שיינפלד, יהודי חרדי בשנות ה-70 לחייו. "החיילים שלי שלא זכו להיות כאן, שנפלו תוך כדי שירותם, יש להם דין של קדושים, בשבוע שעבר קראנו על מותם שני בני אהרן, ומשה רבינו ניחם אותם: 'בקרוביי אקדש', אלו שנפלו הם הקדושים".

i)

**"הלב מתפוצץ מגאווה"**

**כאן לא התלבטו אם לעמוד בצפירה או לומר פרקי תהילים. בשעת צפירת הזיכרון עמד כל הקהל כשהוא מתחבר בשידור ישיר לטקס המרכזי ברחבת הכותל, אך מיד לאחר מכן נשא הרב יצחק בר-חיים, ממקימי הנח"ל החרדי, פסוקי תהילים ומשניות בקול רועד, לעילוי נשמת הנופלים.**





### הזיכרון הדתי משולב בזיכרון הלאומי (צילום: איציק בלניצקי, משרד הביטחון)

נציגי המשפחות השכולות הדליקו נר זיכרון עם פתיחת האירוע, והקהל החרדי ישב בדממה והאזין לאב שכול, יוסף חיים שילוני, חובש כיפה שחורה, שסיפר על בנו, אלמוג שילוני ז"ל. הוא נפל בעשירי לנובמבר 2014 כשהותקף על ידי מחבל חמוש בסכין בעת שהיה בדרכו לבסיס נבטים. אלמוג שעמד לפני נישואיו לבחירת ליבו, נאבק במחבל תוך שהוא פצוע קשה.

"הלב מתפוצץ מגאווה", אמר יוסף חיים. "לא תכננתי לומר זאת, אבל כשראיתי את כל החבורה הנפלאה הזו - את כל המפקדים, את כל החיילים, את כל הרבנים - אשריכם. אנחנו אוהבים אתכם, מתפללים שתצליחו בכל מעשה ידיכם ותחזרו תמיד בשלום לבתיכם. אנחנו אוהבים אתכם מאוד".



חיפשו נחמה(צילום: איציק בלניצקי, משרד הביטחון)

### "כשהולך לך בן בגיל כל כך צעיר"

הזיכרון הדתי משולב בזיכרון הלאומי: "אי אפשר לומר שהאמונה נפגעת כשהולך לך בן בגיל כל כך צעיר", אמר אביו של יובל מור יוסף, שנפל לפני כחצי שנה, בדצמבר 2018. "אני יודע שיובל נמצא במקום הכי גבוה, הכי-הכי גבוה בשמים, עם רבי עקיבא וחבריו, וזה מנחם".

j)

**"אתם מוסרים את נפשותיכם, תרתי משמע", אמר דוד רוט, כשהוא פונה לחיילים באולם. "פעם אחת בגופכם ממש, בהשתדלות לשמירה על ארץ ישראל ועם ישראל, ופעם אחת בשמירה על נשמתכם הרוחנית, שהיא משימה קשה לא פחות. ההצלחה שלכם במשימה זו מגיעה מכוחם ומסירות נפשם של אבותיכם ששמרו על קלה כבחמורה".**





1,200 משתתפים גאים מלאו את ההיכל (צילום: איציק בלניצקי, משרד הביטחון)  
[מצאתם טעות בכתבה? כתבו לנו](#)

k)

שניים ממשחירי הכותל הזכורים מהצילום המפורסם פגשו בגבעת התחמושת קבוצת ילדי חיידר. "הייתה התרגשות עצומה, הם הביטו עלינו בהערצה

שמעון כהן, ל" בשבט תש"פ, 25/02



צילום: עמנואל בן סבו

קבוצת ילדי תלמוד תורה מביתר עילית הגיעה עם המחנכים לסיור לימודי בגבעת התחמושת, במקום נכחו באותה העת שנים מלוחמי הצנחנים, משחררי הכותל המערבי, ציון כרסנטי וחיים אושרי מהתמונה המפורסמת של דוד רובינגר.

כרסנטי ואושרי הגיעו לגבעת התחמושת כדי להציב במוזיאון את ספר הילדים שכתב הסופר עמנואל בן סבו אודות הקרב: 'אריות על הגבעה', הם לא ציפו לפגוש ילדי תלמוד תורה נרגשים המסיירים ולומדים במקום.

האינטראקציה הייתה מהירה ומיוחדת, אומר חיים אושרי, "פגשנו בילדים חמודים עם הרבנים שלהם, "כשהבאנו להם את הספר 'אריות על הגבעה', הייתה התרגשות עצומה, הם הביטו עלינו בהערצה

ציון (ציגי) כרסנטי מוסיף: "שאלנו את הרבנים אם אפשר שנספר להם על הקרב והם שמחו מאוד, שיתפנו אותם בחוויות הקרב, הם שאלו שאלות, ואז סיפרנו להם שחברנו השלישי בתמונה, ד"ר איציק יפעת, לא מרגיש טוב ולכן איננו עימנו, הם מייד קראו פרק תהילים בהתרגשות ועשו 'מי שברך'". להחלמתו.

הדבר שהכי ריגש אותי היה כשהרב אמר"

בתום המפגש: 'ילדים, כשנגיע לכותל להתפלל, תזכרו תמיד בהכרת הטוב את הלוחמים ששחררו את הכותל". זה ריגש אותי מאוד, היינו צריכים לפגוש תינוקות של בית רבן בגבעת התחמושת שיזכירו לנו שעל אף השסע המתרחב, רב המחבר על המפריד ואלה האחים שלי", אומר ציגי ומוסיף: "**הבטתי בילדים המתוקים האלה, נפעמתי והתרגשתי, למרות הימים הקשים של השסע המתרחב במדינה, רב המאחד על המפריד, אלה האחים שלי**"

זה היום עשה יהוה נגילה ונשמחה בו