



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending November 27, 2015

U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

Obama Calls Ezra Schwartz's Family to Offer Condolences

President Barack Obama called the parents of Ezra Schwartz, the 18-year-old American student murdered last week in a Palestinian terror attack in the West Bank, to offer his condolences. In the telephone call Monday, the president said that Schwartz's Israel studies had strengthened U.S.-Israel ties. "The president offered his profound condolences and condemned in the strongest terms the terrorist attack that took his life," a senior administration official told [JTA](#). "The president also underscored that Ezra's studies in Israel strengthened the bonds between Israel and the United States and, as we mourn his death, those bonds only grow stronger." U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry also spoke with Schwartz's parents, Ari and Ruth Schwartz. "Just yesterday, I talked to the family of Ezra Schwartz from Massachusetts, a young man who came here out of high school ready to go to college, excited about his future," Kerry said Tuesday at a meeting in Jerusalem with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "And yesterday, his family was sitting at shiva and I talked to them and heard their feelings, the feelings of any parent who lost their child."

ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

UPDATED: Palestinian Attacks on Israeli Citizens

Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israel have left at least 16 dead and over 150 wounded. Below is a timeline of major attacks since November 21.

Nov. 24: Three Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers and a Border Police officer were hurt in a car ramming attack at the Tapuah Junction in the West Bank. One victim sustained serious injuries while the other three were lightly wounded. The driver was shot by a group of Border Police officers on the scene.

Nov. 23: A Palestinian terrorist killed an 18-year-old Israeli and wounded two others in a stabbing attack at a gas station in the West Bank, near the central town of Modi'in. The Palestinian assailant was shot and killed by IDF soldiers. Hours earlier near Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda market, two Palestinian teenage girls, ages 14 and 16, stabbed a 70-year-old Palestinian man they misidentified as an Israeli. While being subdued, one of the attackers was killed and the other was wounded, and an Israeli civilian was wounded by gunfire. In a separate incident, one man was hit and lightly hurt in a suspected vehicular ramming attack in the West Bank. The suspect fled the scene.

Nov. 22: A 21-year-old Israeli woman was fatally stabbed at the Gush Etzion junction in the West Bank. IDF soldiers shot and killed the attacker. Near Kfar Adumim in the West Bank, a Palestinian taxi driver attempted to ram his car into a group of Israeli citizens, after which he

exited his vehicle and attempted to stab the victims. The attacker but was shot and killed. Near Nablus in the West Bank, a female knife-wielding Palestinian teenager was shot and killed as she attempted to carry out an attack against a group of Israelis.

Nov. 21: A Palestinian stabbed four people, including a 13-year-old girl, in Kiryat Gat. The attacker fled and evaded police for five hours before being arrested.

IRAN

Iranian Hackers Attack State Dept. via Social Media Accounts

Four months after a historic accord with Tehran to limit its atomic ambitions, American officials and private security groups say they see a surge in sophisticated computer espionage by Iran, culminating in a series of cyberattacks against State Department officials over the past month. According to [The New York Times](#), over the past month, Iranian hackers identified individual State Department officials who focus on Iran and the Middle East, and broke into their email and social media accounts, according to diplomatic and law enforcement officials familiar with the investigation. The State Department became aware of the compromises only after Facebook told the victims that state-sponsored hackers had compromised their accounts. “It was very carefully designed and showed the degree to which they understood which of our staff was working on Iran issues now that the nuclear deal is done,” said one senior American official who oversees much of that operation and who requested anonymity to discuss a continuing investigation. “It was subtle.” Iran’s cyberskills are not yet equal to those of Russia or China. But the attack against the State Department by using the social media accounts of young government employees to gain access to their friends across the administration—a focus that had not been seen before—showed an ingenuity beyond the Russian brute-force attack that infiltrated the State Department’s unclassified email system a year ago. In the aftermath of the nuclear accord, American intelligence officials have warned senior officials that they expect Iran to ramp up its use of cyberespionage.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israel Trains French Trauma Experts in Wake of Terror Attacks

When 130 people were killed and 368 injured in a series of terror attacks in Paris earlier this month on November 13, 15 clinicians trained by Israeli experts fanned out to area hospitals to offer psychotrauma interventions as the victims were brought in. These French mental-health professionals from Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants (OSE), the largest Jewish welfare organization in Paris, were among a group of 80 who had been trained by members of the Israel Trauma Coalition (ITC) following the terror attack on a Paris kosher supermarket last January. ITC Director Talia Levanon tells [Israel21c](#) that Israel’s unfortunate experience and expertise in the psychological effects of terror bring a critical perspective to foreign professionals more used to dealing with isolated incidents. As France is suffering such attacks on a more frequent basis, the ITC and Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) are stepping up efforts to train clinicians there—even as a wave of terror in Israel is keeping the ITC very busy at home. “Like people in Israel, the French are getting ready for long-time duress, which requires a different approach,” explains Levanon. “In Israel, we know there is no safe place or time and I think now people in France understand this. They understand they are very vulnerable.”