



# Rabbinic Recap

The week ending September 30, 2016

## U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

### **In rare tribute, President Obama orders flags flown at half-staff for Peres**

President Barack Obama announced he was heading to Jerusalem to attend the funeral of Shimon Peres and ordered flags flown at half-staff, a rare honor for foreign leaders. According to [JTA](#), in a [proclamation](#) late Wednesday, Obama said he ordered the flags to fly at “half-staff at the White House and on all public buildings and grounds, at all military posts and naval stations, and on all naval vessels of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia and throughout the United States and its Territories and possessions” through sunset Friday. “I also direct that the flag shall be flown at half-staff for the same period at all United States embassies, legations, consular offices, and other facilities abroad, including all military facilities and naval vessels and stations,” the proclamation said. A flag flown at half-staff for a foreign leader is rare. Obama ordered the honor after the death of Nelson Mandela, who led South Africa out of apartheid, in 2013. Prior to that, the last such foreign leader honored was Pope John Paul II, in 2005 by President George W. Bush. After hearing of the death of the former Israeli president and prime minister early Wednesday at 93, Obama [issued](#) an unusually lengthy and passionate tribute. “A light has gone out, but the hope he gave us will burn forever,” Obama said. “Shimon Peres was a soldier for Israel, for the Jewish people, for justice, for peace, and for the belief that we can be true to our best selves — to the very end of our time on Earth, and in the legacy that we leave to others. For the gift of his friendship and the example of his leadership, *todah rabah*, Shimon.”

### **President Obama, former President Bill Clinton to attend Peres funeral**

Tributes and condolences poured in Wednesday following the death of Israeli statesman Shimon Peres. [CNN](#) reports that President Barack Obama will lead the U.S. delegation to Israel for Friday's funeral, according to the White House. Current and former world leaders, including former President Bill Clinton and Democratic presidential nominee and former secretary of state Hillary Clinton, were invited to services for the former Prime Minister, President and Nobel laureate. Peres, 93, died two weeks after a stroke. Also invited are U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of State John Kerry, UK Prime Minister Theresa May, Prince Charles, the leaders of Canada, Germany, France and Australia, and Queen Maxima of the Netherlands. Former President Clinton, who worked and regularly met with Peres as president, will attend the funeral on behalf of the Clinton family, according to a spokesman.

### **AIPAC Statement: AIPAC Mourns the Passing of Shimon Peres**

We join the people of Israel in mourning the loss of Shimon Peres, a visionary Israeli patriot and beloved statesman who came to symbolize the reborn Jewish state. He sought to realize the ancient Jewish yearning for peace where there was strife and pursued reconciliation amidst

discord. As an indefatigable advocate for justice and human progress, he earned the respect and appreciation of his fellow leaders and the global community. Indeed, his life's work was an inspiration to all who strive for peace and freedom. Throughout his distinguished career in public service, including his work as Prime Minister and then as President, Shimon Peres sought to strengthen ties between the United States and Israel in deep appreciation of the democratic values we share. As we mourn his passing, we know his legacy will live on through the many good deeds he accomplished, the countless lives he enriched, and the commitment to the Jewish state he inspired in so many. May his memory forever be a blessing.

Click [here](#) to watch a [video tribute](#) to former president Peres.

## ISRAEL AND AFRICA

### Netanyahu Meets with Representatives from 15 African Countries at UNGA

On Sept. 22, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [held](#) a meeting at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York with more than 15 African heads of state and representatives. According to the Prime Minister Office's readout of the [meeting](#), "Prime Minister Netanyahu told his interlocutors that he believes that Israel could be an amazing partner for their countries. He said that technology changes everything, including in communications, medicine, agriculture and education. He noted that Israel wants to share its technology with African countries." Earlier this year, the prime minister became the first Israeli leader in nearly three decades to visit sub-Saharan Africa. "I would like to visit every country in Africa. Israel is looking at all of Africa, and I hope all of Africa looks at Israel," [wrote](#) Prime Minister Netanyahu in a social media post following the meeting. During his UNGA [speech](#), Prime Minister Netanyahu expressed that "governments are changing their attitudes towards Israel because they know that Israel can help them protect their peoples, can help them feed them, can help them better their lives. I had an unbelievable opportunity to see this change so vividly during an unforgettable visit to four African countries ... Israeli technology can help them in their efforts to transform their countries. In Africa, things are changing."

## ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

### Team Israel qualifies for World Baseball Classic

For the first time ever, [Team Israel](#) qualified for the World Baseball Classic with a 9-1 trounce over Great Britain in the qualifying competition — held in Brooklyn over the weekend. [Israel21c.org](#) notes that Israel was undefeated in the four-team qualifying tournament – beating Britain in the preliminary round and again in the qualifying rounds; and passing Brazil in the semifinals. The World Baseball Classic is a quadrennial event similar to soccer's World Cup. The 16-team event is scheduled for March in South Korea. Israel will be matched up against Taiwan, South Korea, and the Netherlands. Team Israel's oldest player is pitcher Shlomo Lipetz, 37, and its youngest player is pitcher [Dean Kremer](#), 20.