



Rabbinic Recap

The week of January 19, 2018

IRAN

U.S. Vows to Withdraw From Iran Nuclear Deal Without Major Changes

The Trump administration vowed Friday to pull out of the landmark 2015 Iran nuclear accord without substantial changes to it, setting the clock ticking on tough negotiations with Washington's European allies, as [the Wall Street Journal reported](#). It also imposed punitive new actions not directly related to Iran's nuclear program meant to pressure Tehran over ongoing missile tests and a recent crackdown on Iranian protesters. After waiving penalties against Tehran on Friday, Mr. Trump next faces such a decision in May. "I have outlined two possible paths forward," Mr. Trump said in a statement. "Either fix the deal's disastrous flaws, or the United States will withdraw."

Lapid: No regional stability as long as Iranian forces in Syria

There will be no stability in Syria as long as Iran tries to entrench itself militarily in the war-torn country, according to MK Yair Lapid, the head of the Yesh Atid party, according to [a Times of Israel report](#). In a recent interview with The Times of Israel Persian, the opposition lawmaker largely backed the government's position on Iran, declaring that Israel will continue to act to prevent the Islamic Republic from establishing military installations in Syria and calling for changes to the Iran nuclear deal.

PALESTINIANS

Abbas Calls Oslo Accords Dead and Blasts U.S.: 'Damn Your Money!'

President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority said on Sunday that Israel had killed the Oslo Accords and angrily assailed the Trump administration over its handling of the conflict. He vowed to reject American leadership of any peace talks and urged Palestinians to reconsider their signed agreements with Israel, [the New York Times noted](#). "We will not accept for the U.S. to be a mediator, because after what they have done to us — a believer shall not be stung twice in the same place," Mr. Abbas said. "The deal of the century is the slap of the century," he added, mocking the still-undefined peace initiative that the Trump administration has been working on and promoting in the region. "However, we'll get back at them."

Abbas Rips Into Trump: Palestinians Are Original Canaanites, Were in Jerusalem Before the Jews

[Haaretz reported](#) that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas lashed out on Wednesday at U.S. President Donald Trump over his decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. In Cairo, Abbas also said that the Palestinians were the "original Canaanites" and were in Jerusalem

before the Jews. "Every American administration has cursed its predecessor and promised something new but nothing came of it," the Palestinian president said at summit on Jerusalem at Cairo's Al-Azhar university, the 1,000-year-old seat of Sunni Muslim learning. "How can we have faith that the super-power would be a mediator between us and the Israelis?" he asked. After Trump's "sinful" decision in December to change the status of Jerusalem and his decision to relocate the American embassy, "the U.S. has pulled itself out of the diplomatic process and can no longer be a mediator or sponsor," he said.

HEZBOLLAH

U.S. Task Force to Probe Hezbollah 'Narco-Terror'

The U.S. Justice Department announced Thursday the creation of a special task force to investigate what it called "narco-terrorism" by the powerful Lebanese organization Hezbollah, which the U.S., along with Israel and other countries, has classified as a terror group, as [reported by the Times of Israel](#). The unit will comprise specialists on money-laundering, drug trafficking, terrorism and organized crime, targeting Iran ally Hezbollah's sprawling network, whose reach extends across Africa and into Central and South America, the department said. "The Justice Department will leave no stone unturned in order to eliminate threats to our citizens from terrorist organizations and to stem the tide of the devastating drug crisis," said Attorney General Jeff Sessions. "The team will initiate prosecutions that will restrict the flow of money to foreign terrorist organizations as well as disrupt violent international drug trafficking operations."

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Philippine High School Adopting Israeli Science Curriculum

Davao, the Philippines' second-largest largest city, has signed an agreement to implement the Israel Sci-Tech Schools' i-STEAM education model in one of its public high schools as a model for the rest of the city's high schools, [Israel21c noted](#). The i-STEAM curriculum adds innovation and arts (creativity and humanities) to traditional STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education to prepare students for the jobs of the future. Business organization, marketing and entrepreneurship components also were added to the curriculum. Israel Sci-Tech Schools, encompassing 206 institutions and 100,000 students, has received international interest — including from the World Bank — for using i-STEAM to transform underperforming schools across Israel, particularly in poorer parts of the county. The curriculum won the European Training Foundation's Good Practice Award and has been adopted by schools in Europe and in the United States. Partnerships in other countries including China are expected next. The Philippines program, called "Excellence in Education: A Lighthouse Project," is a pilot collaboration between the city and the school network, supported by the Embassy of Israel in the Philippines and coordinated through the national Department of Education's Davao City Schools Division and the Pass It Forward Foundation. "Our unique curriculum helps students become the leaders of tomorrow and our hope is that our partnership with Davao City will allow their students to establish themselves as future leaders in technology and innovation," said Zvi Peleg, director-general of Israel Sci-Tech Schools.