



Rabbinic Recap

The week of April 20, 2018

IRAN

Israel Says Iranian Drone It Shot Down in February Was Carrying Explosives

Israel said on Friday an Iranian drone it shot down over Israeli territory in February was armed with explosives and was meant to carry out an attack, as reported by [Reuters](#). The Israeli military said that after analyzing the flight path and investigating the drone, it “concluded that the Iranian UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) was armed with explosives and was tasked to attack Israel.” By intercepting the drone, the military said, the “combat helicopters prevented the attack Iran had hoped to carry out in Israel.” “The UAV was identified and tracked by Israeli defense systems until its destruction, effectively eliminating any threat the Iranian UAV posed,” it said. The drone was downed on Feb. 10 by an Israeli Apache helicopter over the northern town of Beit Shean. It had been sighted taking off from a base in Syria and was intercepted after it crossed into Israeli territory, the Israeli military said.

Netanyahu: Israel on Guard Against Iranian Terror Attacks on Diplomats

The [Jerusalem Post](#) reported that Israel’s security services are poised to thwart any attempt to harm its diplomats abroad, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Tuesday, amid Iran’s threats that it will avenge the attack last week on the T4 Air Base near Homs which has been attributed to Israel. Netanyahu was speaking at the Foreign Ministry’s annual memorial ceremony for 16 employees killed in terrorist attacks, 14 of them murdered abroad. “The forces of darkness and terrorism thought that, by striking at our representatives, they would hurt our international standing. The exact opposite happened,” the prime minister said. “At the same time, the members of our security branches – the Shin Bet [Israel Security Agency] and the Mossad – are standing guard to thwart additional attempts to harm us, and we take every warning seriously in order to protect the safety and security of our representatives wherever they are,” he said.

PALESTINIANS

Israeli Army Destroys 'Longest Ever' Hamas Attack Tunnel Crossing from Gaza into Israel

The Israeli army said it destroyed a Hamas attack tunnel that originated in the Gaza Strip and crossed into Israeli territory over the weekend, [Haaretz](#) reported. According to the information cleared for publication Sunday morning, the tunnel was several kilometers long and military intelligence services believe it was part of a wider tunnel network. The tunnel was located in the north of the Strip, near a site along the Israel-Gaza border where Palestinians have been protesting for the past few weeks. The Israel Defense Forces had been aware of the tunnel and

decided to destroy it based on operational considerations. Hamas' excavation of the tunnel began after the Gaza war in the summer of 2014 and it reached some 20 meters into Israeli territory. The military feared that Hamas would use it to carry out terror attacks in Israel under the cover of the protests. The tunnel was destroyed by pumping materials into it that render it useless and do not allow for its reconstruction. This is the fifth tunnel crossing into Israel that the IDF has destroyed in recent months, and the eighth altogether.

Barghouti Tells Abbas: Stand Firm, Trump and His Peace Plan Will Soon Be Gone

Jailed Palestinian uprising leader Marwan Barghouti on Sunday told Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to stand firm in his rejection of U.S. President Donald Trump's yet-to-be-announced peace plan, saying that Trump would be soon be gone, as reported by [The Times of Israel](#). In a message released from his prison cell to his supporters on the 16th anniversary of his arrest by the IDF, Barghouti voiced his full support for Abbas's rejection of the "conspiracy of the century," a reference to Trump's "deal of the century" peace plan, which has still not been made public. Barghouti, who is in prison serving five life sentences for his role in deadly terror attacks on Israelis in the Second Intifada, is hugely popular among the Palestinians and is seen as a possible successor to Abbas. Barghouti said he also supported Abbas in the face of "international, regional and Israeli pressure." Abbas has repeatedly dismissed the long-promised plan as a "conspiracy aimed at liquidating the Palestinian cause and national rights." [...] Abbas has reportedly faced intense pressure from Arab states like Saudi Arabia and Egypt to accept the terms of Trump's plan. [...] But Barghouti urged Palestinian leaders to stand firm, saying that Trump would soon be gone. "We also need to realize that Trump will be gone in a year or five years, but Jerusalem, Palestine and its people will remain and will pursue their resistance and struggle against the Zionist colonialism," he said.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israeli Scientist Working on Alzheimer's Vaccine

Alzheimer's disease, affecting some 47 million people worldwide, for now remains an irreversible and fatal brain disorder. Taking a proactive approach, an Israeli brain researcher is developing a vaccine against this devastating disease. Most vaccines work by mounting an immune response toward a weakened pathogen to boost the immune system's ability to fight the real pathogen. Prof. Eitan Okun's vaccine primes the body to attack amyloid beta protein accumulations in the brain, one of the signature signs of Alzheimer's disease, according to [Israel21c](#). Experiments on mice in Okun's Paul E. Feder Alzheimer's Research Lab at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan reportedly have shown great promise. He is now preparing to design human trials on people at known risk of developing the disease in their 50s or younger: those genetically inclined toward Alzheimer's and people with Down syndrome. "These critical trials will determine whether the vaccine actually works in humans," said Okun, who also is investigating why people with Down syndrome are more apt to develop Alzheimer's. [...] Depending on the success rate and side effects from [human] testing, we will be able to know how much more time is needed to make the vaccine available on a global scale. I am convinced that a vaccination approach is the way to go with neurodegenerative diseases," said Okun. In addition to his potentially groundbreaking vaccine, Okun is investigating new ways to diagnose Alzheimer's earlier and more accurately using advanced MRI technologies to detect initial signs of amyloid protein clumps in the brain.