

# ISRAEL

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CHRISTIANS FOR  
**ISRAEL**  
NEW ZEALAND

Understanding Israel and world events from a Biblical perspective

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## God With Us

### ■ Rev Henk Poot Christians for Israel Netherlands

The words spoken by the prophet Isaiah to the house of David (*Isaiah 7:14*) have a deep significance for both Israel and Christians.

#### The Fullness of God

God is unimaginably great. He inhabits an inaccessible light; His majesty is so great that He is called a consuming fire, and no one can bear the intensity of His being. When God turns towards His creation and towards His people (*Isaiah 43:7*), He reveals Himself in the Son, the radiance of His glory and the imprint of His being (*Hebrews 1*). John writes that no one has ever seen God, but that the Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, has revealed Him to us.

#### The Hidden One

Jesus is the son of the house of David. He is the seed that the Lord promised to Abram (*Genesis 12:3*) and which was to come through the generations of Israel. He is the twig

from the broken-off branch of Jesse. He is God and Jew. Mary, the virgin who gave birth to the Messiah, is the mother of the Lord but also represents her people. The Jewish people gave the world the Saviour.

This means that Jesus is connected to the Jewish people in His very being. That has never changed. Even though the gospel of the Kingdom has gone around the world and has found an audience with us, Jesus has always remained present in the midst of His people as the Hidden One. In the wanderings and sufferings of Israel, He was and is still Immanuel.

#### Servant of Israel

This also means, however bewildering it may be to us, that a Jew has borne the sin of the world, that a Jew has been at the forefront of His people when the gospel went into the world, that Jesus will return as a Jew on the clouds of heaven and that the Lion of the tribe of Judah will ascend the throne of David to rule over the entire world. And that God has given the judgment to a Jew. Yes, He is God's Son and what a privilege that we may live

with Him, that He dwells in us by His Spirit, that we may praise Him in worship.

Not only the cross but also the star of David belongs to Him. Jesus draws us, as it were, to Israel. Paul writes in *Romans 15* that Jesus became a servant of Israel to confirm the promises of God to the fathers. With this, Paul encourages the new believers from Rome to treat His people with respect and love. But when he writes further, he shows that one of those promises is that the Gentiles will glorify the Lord together with Israel. That is what it is all about! The believers from the nations at the side of Israel in the praise of the Lord.

#### King of Jacob

In these days of Advent and Christmas, let us not forget how closely Christ is connected with Israel. Gabriel calls Him the King of Jacob, the angels sing of the joy that will fall upon all the people, Anna and Simeon speak of the consolation of Jerusalem, and Zechariah prophesies that His people will finally be delivered from their enemies. Jesus, the King of kings, was and is Immanuel.

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A Heartfelt Christmas Gift



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## Colophon

*Israel & Christians Today is the premier publication of Christians for Israel*

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Our mission is to bring **Biblical understanding** in the Church and among the nations concerning God's purposes for Israel and to promote **comfort of Israel** through prayer and action.

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# A Nation that Dwells Alone

## ■ Andrew Tucker

International Editor | Christians for Israel

The current conflict between Lebanon and Saudi Arabia (see pages 3-5) reflects major shifts in the balance of power in the Middle East.

Moderate Sunni States in the region, led by Saudi Arabia, are fighting to prevent the hegemony of the radical Islamist powers in the region, represented primarily by Iran and Turkey. Lebanon, dominated by Hezbollah, which is a proxy of Iran, is the meat in the sandwich of this struggle.

It is widely acknowledged that Iran is very close to producing nuclear weapons. This poses an immediate threat to all Western countries, especially Israel. The radical Shiite regime that came to power in Tehran in 1979 remains committed to its Islamist fundamental ideologically-driven goal of destroying the infidels, represented primarily by the Jewish State of Israel and the USA. Iran operates by establishing proxies in the region, which advance Iran's interests. Two of these are Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza - both of which are dedicated to the destruction of Israel.

Traditionally, Israel has been able to rely on the USA to protect it against hostile regimes in the region. Since WWII, a core part of the US policy towards the Middle East has been its commitment to defend Israel. But the US is no longer the global superpower it once was, and it has other priorities. There is a new wind in Washington. President Biden and his Secretary of State Anthony Blinken believe that China, not Iran, is the major global threat today. The Administration believes that diplomacy, not confrontation, is the best way to manage international conflicts.

For decades Israel's dependence on arms from the US has led its security establishment to subordinate Israel's own interests to those of the US, on the assumption that it could rely on bipartisan political support in Washington to defend Israel. That assumption no longer holds true.

As the US withdrawal from Afghanistan indicates, the US is scaling down its military presence in the Middle East. Reflecting the Biden Administration commitment to international diplomacy,



| Photo: Shutterstock

multilateralism and conciliation, it is hoping for a diplomatic solution to the Iranian threat by re-opening talks in Vienna designed to encourage Iran to rejoin the Obama-inspired 2015 JCPOA agreement (from which, under President Trump, the US withdrew in 2018).

According to Iranian-born foreign policy analyst Shay Khatiri, this strategy is hopelessly unrealistic. Diplomacy will not deter the Iranian regime. The fact is that Iran will - unless prevented - achieve nuclear capability. That leaves three options: preparing for a nuclear Iran and learning to live with it; a military operation that would dismantle Iran's nuclear program; and/or regime change before Iran acquires nuclear weapons.

It is not just the Iranian issue that shows that the US is no longer as committed to military and strategic defence of Israel's security as it has traditionally been. Another sign is the Biden/Blinken reversion to the Obama/Kerry policy of pressuring Israel to cooperate in the establishment of a Palestinian state run by the PLO with its capital in 'East Jerusalem'. The Administration decided last May to recommence economic aid to Palestinian institutions. Recently, the Administration announced its intention to open a US consulate for Palestinians in East Jerusalem: a clear statement that the US opposes Israeli control and claims sovereignty over Jerusalem. Israel is resisting this vehemently.

In mid-November, the US abstained from voting on a UN General Assembly resolution granting support to the Palestinian refugee organisation UNRWA. This may seem insignificant, but it is yet another sign of the US change of direction on Israel. The US has always voted against these resolutions. In what has been described as a 'dangerous backslide', the US refused to object to a resolution that supports the Palestinian claim to a 'right of return' - a right enjoyed by no other refugees in the world. The PLO and its allies insist on this right because they know it will result in the destruction of the Jewish State of Israel. The bottom line is that, increasingly, Israel is standing alone on the world stage. It cannot assume that any other world power will guarantee its existence or protect its key interests.

This is not to say that military confrontation is always the best strategy. But it may be necessary to ensure the survival of the Jewish nation. No other nation can be expected to fully understand the nature of the threats facing Israel. At the end of the day, Israel is the only one who can decide whether and when using force is necessary.

Israel need not fear. The Bible says clearly that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is bringing His people home - not in order that they will be destroyed, but that His name will be glorified through them. He 'neither slumbers nor sleeps' and will defend His people from their enemies.

## Prayer Points

By C4I Prayer Team

### Israel

- The Israeli Minister of Interior and the Minister of Aliyah recently joined forces to facilitate the speedy return of some five thousand Jews from Ethiopia. A war is currently raging in Ethiopia, so it is urgent. Pray for a blessing on the plans and a smooth journey to Israel for these people.
- Pray for the Israeli government. The government is made up of parties that usually do not get along but now have to work together anyway. Pray that they will lead the country with unanimity and decisiveness while looking to God for help and wisdom.
- In a large-scale police operation in Arab areas, dozens of weapons were confiscated and dozens of arms dealers arrested. Give thanks that the Israeli police were able to carry out this action and pray that the Arab villages will become safer.

### Israel & the Nations

- Israel is trying to strengthen its relationship with

neighbouring Jordan by promoting trade between the two countries. Israel hopes that this will lead to more stability in the region. Pray for a fruitful cooperation.

- Iran is involved in imperialistic advances in the Middle East. In many countries, it is attempting to expand its power and influence by supporting militant movements, especially in the countries surrounding Israel. Pray that Iran will be stopped.

### Christians for Israel

- Pray for a blessing on all activities of Christians for Israel planned for the new year. Pray that these activities can take place and that they will lead to more solidarity with Israel.
- Many elderly Jews in Ukraine are living in extreme poverty. Koen Carlier and his Christians for Israel team distribute food parcels to these Jews. Give thanks for the work that they do and pray that they will reach many people.

For daily Prayer Points, go to our website [www.c4israel.org.nz](http://www.c4israel.org.nz)

# Lebanon's Arab Identity Battle

## ■ Jacques Neriah

**Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states have caught Hezbollah and its Iranian patron by surprise on an unexpected battlefield.**

Before he was appointed to his current post, Lebanese Information Minister Georges Kordahi granted an interview in which he criticised the Saudi and Emirati involvement in the war in Yemen and defended the Houthis fighters. After the interview aired, Saudi Arabia responded sharply, recalling its ambassador from Lebanon and directing the Lebanese ambassador to leave Saudi Arabia within 48 hours.

In addition, the kingdom declared that it would bar all agricultural imports from Lebanon and accused Hezbollah of exploiting these exports to smuggle drugs into Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. (In one case, more than 5.2 million Captagon pills were hidden in a shipment of pomegranates.) The Saudis also froze the assets of the leading Iranian-Hezbollah financial institution and 'benevolent society', the Al-Qard al-Hassan, designating it as a terror organisation. Al-Qard al-Hassan has been under US sanctions since 2007.

Moreover, Saudi officials have accused Hezbollah of trying to change Lebanon's Arab identity by striving to expand Iranian hegemony and adopting the Iranian Shi'ite theocracy.

The Saudi diplomatic moves were copied by Bahrain, Kuwait and the Emirates, who declared their full support for the Saudi démarche and asked the Lebanese ambassadors to leave while recalling their diplomatic representatives from Lebanon.

Saudi customs in Jeddah Islamic Port foiled an attempt to smuggle 5.2 million pills of Captagon hidden in a consignment of pomegranates imported from Lebanon in April 2021.

The fact that Kordahi's interview was given before he became a government member was ignored by the Saudis, who took note of the recent accusations by Hezbollah leaders that the kingdom maintains relations with the nationalist Christian Lebanese Forces and its chief commander, Samir Geagea. Furthermore, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan accused Hezbollah and Iran of being behind Kordahi's declarations.

In addition, he pointed at Hezbollah's involvement in the war in Yemen in tandem with the Houthis against Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, under the instructions of Iran. "Lebanon needs a comprehensive reform that restores its sovereignty, strength and position in the Arab world," Prince Faisal told *Al Arabiya*. "Hezbollah's domination of the political system in Lebanon worries us and makes dealing with Lebanon useless."

The Saudi and Gulf States' move has shaken the political establishment in Lebanon and divided it into:

- Those who demand the immediate resignation of the information minister (Druze leader Walid Jumblatt and Maronite Archbishop Bechara al-Rahi);
- Those who accuse Hezbollah of trying



The aftermath of a massive explosion that rocked the Beirut port on 4 August 2020. The blast, the cause of which is still under investigation, was apparently felt as far away as Cyprus. | Photo: Flash90

to draw Lebanon into Iran's political hegemony (former Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri);

- Those who declare that Lebanon will not bow to Saudi Arabia at any cost (Suleiman Frangieh, head of the Marada Party, and members of Hezbollah).

In the meantime, France and the US have intervened and asked Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati not to announce his government's resignation, even though it has barely met since its establishment two months ago. It has been paralysed by Hezbollah, which threatened to leave the government if Judge Tariq Bitar's investigation into the deadly Beirut port explosion of 4 August 2020, is not called off.

According to the Lebanese press, the United States has even offered to mediate between Lebanon and Saudi Arabia to find a compromise that would solve the crisis.

The Saudi move has serious implications for the Lebanese scene, which has witnessed three developments since October:

1. The gun battle that erupted in Beirut's Tayouneh neighbourhood on 14 October 2021, followed by the demand by Hezbollah that Samir Geagea and his Lebanese Forces' role in the bloody events be investigated (a demand that, in true Lebanese style, had no follow-up).
2. The withdrawal of Shi'ite ministers from the government as a protest, with the aim of pressuring the premier and the president to remove Judge Bitar from his investigation of the Beirut Port explosion.
3. The Saudi diplomatic move has become the centre of attention of Lebanon's political establishment. The possible results of the Saudi move are such that it has eclipsed all earlier events; in Lebanon, it is considered a game-changer.

Saudi Arabia and Hezbollah have a long history of feud, especially since Hezbollah's battles against Saudi allies in the Syrian civil war. This animosity was increased by the Shi'ite militia's involvement in subversive activities in Saudi Arabia. Local Hezbollah forces have also been involved in missile and drone attacks from Houthi-held strongholds against Saudi targets.

The Saudi move, considered a blatant anti-Iranian act, ignores the ongoing détente discussions between Saudi Arabia

and Iran, described as feckless by Saudi and Arab observers.

The sanctioning of Lebanon by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states has far-reaching significance. In Saudi Arabia alone, more than 350,000 Lebanese reside and send remittances to their families back home. This financial support is what enables those remaining in Lebanon to survive the catastrophic economic situation there. Moreover, freezing the assets of Qard al Hassan in Saudi Arabia and the decision of the UAE to prohibit the travel of Lebanese residents to and from Lebanon will prevent the transfer of funds to Shi'ite accounts in Lebanon designated to—among other things—assist Hezbollah.

Banning the importation of all agricultural products from Lebanon is a far-reaching decision since these products represent 55.4 per cent of all agricultural exports from Lebanon. Lebanese exports to Saudi Arabia amounted to \$282 million in 2019. The 600-plus Lebanese business entities present in Saudi Arabia, with a total value of \$125 billion, are not affected by the Saudi decision—yet. If further punitive measures are adopted by the Gulf Cooperation Council and Saudi Arabia, the collapse of the financial system in Lebanon is inevitable.

Saudi Arabia has chosen to compete in a field where it excels—diplomacy. Hezbollah has been concentrating on the internal scene in Lebanon, assessing that no other political force could derail its efforts to transform Lebanon into an Iranian province. With its surprise move, Saudi Arabia has injected a new element into the equation: an open challenge to Hezbollah and Iran on the Arab identity of Lebanon.

If Lebanon accepts Kordahi's resignation or even apologises to Saudi Arabia for the interview, it would be perceived as a Saudi victory. On the other hand, refusing to force the resignation of Kordahi would worsen the situation inside Lebanon and of those Lebanese in the Gulf states. It would signal a weakness Hezbollah cannot afford in the context of Lebanon's power struggle.

*IDF Col. (ret.) Dr Jacques Neriah, a special analyst for the Middle East at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, was formerly a foreign-policy adviser to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and deputy head for assessment of Israeli Military Intelligence. This article was first published by the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. Republished with permission.*

## Short News

### Tel Aviv's Central Bus Station Closing



The gigantic seven-story bus station in Tel Aviv, which opened in 1993, will be demolished. Construction began as early as 1967, but the work was prematurely halted due to financial difficulties. It took nearly 20 years to finally finish the bus station, and by then station's neighbourhood had become peripheral and impoverished.

The decision to shut down the building was announced in October by Transport Minister Merav Michaeli. Residents in southern Tel Aviv have been complaining for years about pollution, noise and crime in and around the bus station, nicknamed "the monster." It's not a pleasant destination for travellers either; inside the building, it doesn't smell fresh, and it's easy to get lost in there. The plan is to demolish the bus station by 2024. According to architects in Israel, it is virtually impossible to demolish the station's massive concrete shell, and the building will have to be renovated to accommodate another use. | Photo: Roi Boshi, Wikimedia Commons

### Cooperation to New Heights

Israel and UAE signed a historic space agreement in October at the *World Space Week*, which was part of the 2020 Expo Dubai. The countries will collaborate on a number of space projects, including a joint launch of the *Beresheet 2* space mission to the moon. This will be Israel's second attempt to land an unmanned spacecraft on the moon by 2024.

Furthermore, the UAE Space Agency and the Israel Space Agency will enhance cooperation in scientific research, space exploration and knowledge transfer. Spacell's chairman said: "We are proud to be the first project to pave the way for further historic moves as a result of the Abraham Accords."

### Underground Data Centre

Israel has a tough security reality, and this needs serious consideration. The impact of a missile or other calamity could hamper the digital network and disrupt business continuity. That is why an underground data centre was built in Israel, some nine floors deep underground. The place is designed to withstand missiles, rockets and car bombs, says Oracle, the American computer technology company that built the data centre in Jerusalem. A second data centre is being planned that will act as a backup disaster recovery site.

# Israel Outlaws Palestinian NGO's

## ■ Alan Baker & Lea Bilke

**The clear linkage between the six NGOs and the PFLP renders them eligible for criminalisation in accordance with provisions of the relevant UN Conventions and Resolutions.**

On 22 October, Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz designated six Palestinian NGOs as terror organisations linked to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). The PFLP is recognised as a terrorist organisation by Israel, the European Union, the United States and other countries. It was involved in aeroplane hijackings in the 1970s, attacks against Israelis in the Second Intifada, the 2014 murder of five Israeli worshippers at a synagogue in Jerusalem and many more attacks on Jews worldwide.

The Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, the terror arm of the PFLP, maintains operational cooperation with Iran and Hezbollah. Furthermore, the PFLP is a principal partner in the Palestinian National and Islamic Forces (PNIF), the umbrella organisation for Palestinian terror groups.

This article aims to explain the ties between the Palestinian NGOs and the PFLP and establish the legitimacy under international law of the groups' designation as terrorist organisations.



The terrorism-linked NGOs. | Photo: YNET

## The Link Between the Six NGOs and the PFLP

NGO Monitor has published a detailed report on the NGOs' ties to the PFLP, documenting their support, financing and encouragement of the terror group:

### Al-Haq

- Shawan Jabarin, Al-Haq's general director, was convicted in 1985 for recruiting and arranging training for PFLP members. In 2008, he was referred to by Israel's Supreme Court as a 'senior activist' in the PFLP.
- **Funding:** European Union, Sweden, Norway, Ireland, Italy, France and Spain.

### Addameer

- Abdul-Latif Ghaith, Addameer's founder and former chairperson, has been identified as a PFLP 'activist'.
- Khalida Jarrar, Addameer's former vice president, was sentenced to two years in prison in March 2021 for membership in the PFLP.
- Bashir al-Khairi, a member of Addameer's board of directors, is a member of the PFLP's National Council.
- **Funding:** Ireland, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the Heinrich Boll Foundation.

### Defence for Children International - Palestine (DCI-P)

- Hashem Abu Maria, the former coordinator for DCI-P's community mobilisation unit, was hailed by the PFLP as a 'leader'.
- Nassar Ibrahim, former president of DCI-Ps General Assembly, was a former editor of El Hadaf, the PFLP's weekly publication.
- Mary Rock, a former DCI-P board member, was a PFLP candidate for the Palestinian Legislative Council.
- **Funding:** European Union, Italy, Sweden, Netherlands, Broederlijk Delen, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Save the Children and UNICEF.

### Bisan Center for Research and Development

- Ubai Aboudi, Bisan's executive director, was sentenced to 12 months in prison in 2020 for membership in the PFLP.

- Itiraf Hajaj (Rimawi), former executive director of Bisan, was responsible for clandestine PFLP operations and was sentenced to 42 months in 2020.

- **Funding:** European Union, European Commission, Belgium, Italy and Spain.

### Union of Palestine Women's Committees (UPWC)

- Suhair Khader, UPWC's vice president, is a member of the PFLP Central Committee.
- Smira Abdel-Alin, UPWC head in the Rafah area, is a member of the PFLP Central Committee.
- Ismat Shakhshir, head of UPWC operations in the Nablus district, ran for the Palestinian Legislative Council representing the PFLP.
- **Funding:** Basque Government, Norwegian People's Aid and AECID.

### Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC)

- Identified by USAID as the 'agricultural arm' of the PFLP.
- Abdul Razeq Farraj, former UAWC finance and administrative director was arrested in 2019 for recruiting members of the PFLP.
- Samer Arbid, UAWC's accountant, was arrested for commanding a PFLP terror cell that carried out a bombing in which an Israeli civilian was murdered.
- **Funding:** France, Netherlands, Spain (AECID), Norwegian People's Aid, Medico, Grassroots International, Oxfam Solidarité and UN OCHA.

## Relevant Provisions of International Resolutions and Conventions Relating to Terror Activities

In Article 1 (1), the UN Charter sets out the Purposes of the United Nations as, *inter alia*, the maintenance of international peace and security. To that end, states are required to take effective measures to prevent threats to that peace and security. Accordingly, by designating the six Palestinian NGOs as terror organisations, Israel pursues its Charter-protected right to safeguard against an internationally recognised terrorist organisation.

This conforms with the relevant United Nations resolutions and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

## United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1373 (2001)

In its most prominent resolution on terrorism, adopted in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attacks against the United States, the UN Security Council emphasised in the Preamble the "need to combat *by all means*, (...) threat to peace and security caused by terrorist acts." The passage "*by all means*" has in the past been interpreted to allow self-defence measures against terrorist groups. The criminalisation of groups in order to protect the state is a more moderate approach. Consequently, criminalisation must be covered as well.

In Operative Clause 1 b) of Res. 1373, the UNSC decided that states "shall *criminalise* the willful provision or collection, by any means, directly or indirectly, of *funds* by their nationals or in their territories with the intention that the funds should be used ... in order to carry out terrorist attacks." The resolution thereby permits states to criminalise the funding of terrorist groups.

Furthermore, Operative Clause 2 d) obliges states to "prevent those who *finance, plan, facilitate, or commit* terrorist attacks from using their respective territories for those purposes against other states or their citizens."

Israel, therefore, was allowed to protect itself against the supporters of the terrorist group PFLP.

## UNSC Resolution 2642 (2019)

Even though Res. 1373 is the most cited resolution in terms of the prevention of terrorism; more recent ones reaffirm the principles of Res. 1373. Res. 2642, for example, reassures in its Preamble that any acts of terrorism are *criminal* and unjustifiable. In Operative Clause 8, Res. 2642 further calls upon states

to "more effectively investigate and prosecute cases of terrorist financing and to apply *appropriate, effective and proportionate and dissuasive criminal sanctions* to individuals and entities convicted of terrorist financing activities."

As a result of the criminal nature of terrorism, acts that support terrorist groups can and must be criminalised to ensure effective terrorism prevention, which the international community seeks.

## The International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (Financing Convention) (1999) and Israel's counter-terror legislation

According to Article 4 a) of the Financing Convention, each Party shall "adopt measures to *establish criminal offences* under its domestic law."

Israel adopted the Counter-Terrorism Law 5776-2016 to establish those criminal offences. Chapter Two of this Law, Article 3 a), enables the Ministry of Defense to designate a body of persons as a terrorist organisation. Even after a designation, Article 5 a) and 7 b) offer opportunities to submit written arguments or revoke the designation.

Lastly, designated organisations have the option to petition Israel's Supreme Court. Therefore, Israel established a domestic legal basis that is efficient and transparent and is in accordance with the Terror Financing Convention.

## The Jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice (ICJ)

Lastly, the highest court for international law, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), ruled in its infamous Nicaragua Judgement that the United States bore responsibility as a result of its *training, arming, equipping, financing, and supplying or otherwise encouraging, supporting and aiding* the Contra rebel forces. Even though this decision relates to actions by states, it nevertheless shows the line that international law draws with respect to providing support to terrorist groups.

The idea of an absolute prohibition on providing support to terrorist groups, whether financially or by training (as members of Al-Haq and UAWC did), indicates the strictness of international law and thereby provides states with the opportunity to protect themselves against terror threats. This clearly must include criminalising NGOs that provide active and tangible support to such terrorist groups.

## Conclusion

Israel's designation of the six Palestinian NGOs was in full accordance with international legal norms and obligations. Moreover, by designating those organisations, Israel focused on their connection to the PFLP and the resulting *active support* of a terrorist group, which outweighs activities ostensibly carried out by these organisations as a cover for their terrorist activity.

The linkage between the organisations and the PFLP renders them eligible for criminalisation in accordance with provisions of the relevant U.N. Conventions and Resolutions. As a protection against the PFLP's active and ongoing actions to undermine Israel's security and the safety of its citizens, Israel, therefore, is justified in designating PFLP-linked NGOs as terror groups, thereby protecting itself against prevailing threats to peace and security.

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# Peace as a Business Model

## Wim Kortenoeven

The State of Israel was founded in 1948, but organised violence against the Jews in the region began as early as 1920 and is still continuing. During this past 100 years of recurring violence, the international community has made countless attempts to end the conflict. Not because there was so much sympathy for the Jews or the Arabs, but because political, economic, and sometimes even personal interests and/or anti-Semitic emotions were involved.

A characteristic of all these international peace initiatives is that they seek to reduce Jewish territorial rights in the Promised Land. This not only undermines Israel's security but also its legitimacy under international law. In order to place this in the right context, we have to go back to the final declaration of the San Remo Conference of 25 April 1920. In it, the world powers of the time endorsed the Balfour Declaration of 1917 that recognised the right of the Jewish people to establish their homeland in the east of the Jordan River. However, under pressure from Arab violence in the Mandate area, the Jewish territorial rights confirmed to the Jewish people as early as 1921 were steadily reversed.

### Palestine

First, the Jewish right of establishment in 'Transjordan' was withdrawn. The area east of Jordan was then given to a Mecca-based ally of the British. In the decades that followed, Palestinian-Arab violence against the Jews and the British in the area escalated. This led to pragmatic British and internationally negotiated

Jewish roots in the central part of the territory in question.

### Zionism without Zion

Since 1921, the reduction of Jewish territorial rights 'for the sake of peace' or international interests has focused primarily on the cradle of Jewish civilisation: Jerusalem (Zion) and the regions of Judea and Samaria. It is precisely there that Jews are not allowed to settle. But a Zionism without Zion and without, for example, the graves of Israel's patriarchs and mothers in Hebron, is of course, not Zionism. And a Jewish state without its historical territorial base is of course, not sustainable.

### Anchors and Prophecy

Places like Jerusalem, Hebron, Silo and Shechem are the anchors of the Jewish claims to the Jewish homeland. And within those places are, respectively, the Temple Mount; the Machpelah; the place where the Tabernacle stood for 369 years; and the tomb of Joseph. The Jewish people can never - and will never - give up territorial claims to those and other places. For that would be the end of Judaism. After all, are not the prophecies, central to Judaism, that the Jewish people will return to these places and that they will not be driven out again? At this point, Jewish interests clash in an irreconcilable and even existential way with those of the rest of the world.



Bernadotte's partition plan. | Photo: ecg.org.il

borders and without prospects of ever being able to accommodate the millions of Jewish exiles from the nations. What's more, Bernadotte urged this little Jewish mini-state to offer access to the hundreds of thousands of Arabs who had left the area voluntarily or had fled the violence of the war started by the Arabs. Before he could submit his terrible plan to the UN, Bernadotte was liquidated by members of the Jewish Lehi militia. And with him, fortunately, his plan disappeared as well.

### The European Union

The world is in total disarray because of Corona, and imminent wars with, among others, China, North Korea and Iran. But the EU and most of its member states still seem more concerned about 'solving the Middle East conflict'. They want to push through the two-state solution at all costs. The EU, which likes to invoke international law, thereby grossly violates the Oslo Accords to which it is a party. Under those accords, Israel has exclusive jurisdiction in the so-called C areas in Judea and Samaria. But the EU undermines Israel's authority there in every possible way.

### Ego and Ambition or Antisemitism?

What drives all those dogged 'peace activists', past and present, and especially those of the EU? What is their business model? Is it altruism? Is it Nobel Prizes? Is it ego and ambition? Is it fame and the promise of history?

Or is it antisemitism...? If antisemitism's deepest aim is to make the Jewish people disappear, then, of course, anti-Semites would do well to try and destroy the very basis of Jewish identity: cutting the link between the Jews and the Land of Israel. But fortunately, Israel is not alone in fighting these colporteurs of a false peace.

*Wim Kortenoeven is a Dutch author, journalist and former politician.*

## And a Jewish state without its historical territorial base is of course, not sustainable.

'peace proposals' aimed at driving the Jews back into a yet-to-be-founded tiny and indefensible rump state in the coastal plain and Galilee. All proposals, however, were rejected by the Arabs and met with yet more violence. When the Jews declared independence in May 1948, they were also attacked by five neighbouring Arab states the following day.

Miraculously, Israel managed to survive that and also gain territory. The same happened in the Arab war of aggression in 1967. It brought the Jews back to their cradle in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria.

### The Legitimacy of Israel

It has been a consistent feature of internationally-sponsored peace initiatives that they expect only Israel to make territorial concessions. This was true after 1948/49, after 1967 and is still true today, even though the Jewish state was and is systematically threatened with total destruction by Hamas, Hezbollah, Mahmoud Abbas' PLO and Iran, among others. In the process, the peacemakers often suggest that Israel is 'the strongest party' after all and can, therefore, 'afford' to give up strategic territory in exchange for (a paper) peace. And in the process, Israel's legitimacy as a Jewish state is invariably undermined, a legitimacy that is based on more than 3,500 years of

### Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism

The EU, in particular, is adamantly and activistically opposed to Israel's return to the cradle of Jewish civilisation. In that respect, it is downright macabre that European and also Dutch opponents of antisemitism are sometimes the worst enemies of Jewish rights in the Promised Land.

This also applied to the Swedish diplomat Folke Bernadotte, who personally negotiated with SS chief Heinrich Himmler in the final days of the Second World War about the release of thousands of Jews. This may have given him the 'moral right', four years later (after the genocidal Arab invasion of the newly founded Israel) as a UN peace negotiator to 'condemn to death' that very Israel. Bernadotte arrived in Israel after the Arabs had suffered huge defeats. But he demanded that the Jews vacate most of the territories they had miraculously conquered.

### Bernadotte Liquidated

Implementation of Bernadotte's bizarre anti-Jewish 'peace plan' would have resulted in an indefensible Jewish mini-state in the coastal strip and Galilee. A state without Jerusalem, without the Negev, without its own port, without safe

## Short News

### Digital Database Nuremberg Trial Expanded



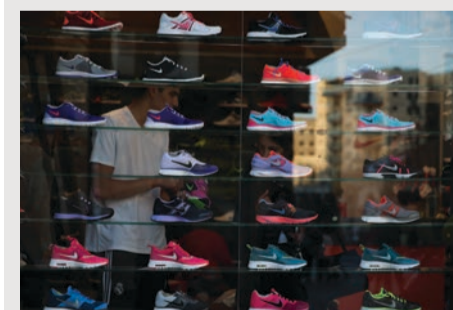
The 75th anniversary of the International Military Tribunal of Nuremberg is marked by Stanford University with a significant expansion of records from the historic trial. The trial came to a close on 1 October 1946, when a group of convicted Nazi leaders were sentenced by the tribunal for crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during World War II and the Holocaust. According to David Cohen, director of the Stanford Center for Human Rights and International Justice, preserving the records and making them digitally available is very important. "Never again" doesn't mean anything unless you know what has happened and why." The additional collection contains over 5,000 trial records.

### Shekel Hits Yet Another 25-Year High

The shekel-to-dollar exchange rate hit a new 25-year-high on 8 November, with US \$1 briefly fetching just NIS 3.08 before closing for the day around NIS 3.11. The shekel has been gaining in strength against major currencies like the dollar and euro, thanks in large part to high levels of foreign direct investment and the strength of the tech sector.

The currency's strength is due to factors including Israel's strong economy, foreign investments in Israeli companies moving capital into the country, Bank of Israel monetary policies, and strong global equities markets, which can cause Israeli financial institutions to sell foreign currency as their exposure rises. The shekel traded at around 3.6 to the US dollar for several years but more recently was in the 3.2 - 3.3 range. | TOI/VFI News.

### No Nikes in Israel



Starting in June of next year, sportswear giant Nike will no longer sell its shoes in Israeli stores. Some people believe that by doing so, Nike is participating in the BDS movement. However, Nike explains that the decision is in line with its global plan to reduce the number of stores it works with and focus on its website and company-owned stores. If consumers buy directly from Nike, the profits increase. Regardless of Nike's motives for this move, it deals a major blow to all sports stores in Israel. | Photo: Flash90

## Mary's Joy over Israel

### ■ Rev Cornelis Kant

Executive Director | Christians for Israel International

As Christians, we celebrate Christmas this month. Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, a city in the Judean hills. In these weeks, we often read the wonderful biblical passages about Mary meeting the angel Gabriel and the priest Zacharias meeting the angel in the temple. After meeting the angel, Mary got pregnant and visited her cousin Elizabeth, who cried out: *'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!'* (Luke 1:42). And then Mary started speaking what has been called in Church history *'The Song of Mary'* or in Latin *'Magnificat'*. Mary praises the Lord: *'My soul exalts the Lord'*. You might expect that a song of a woman who gets pregnant in a miraculous way is filled with gratitude for what has happened to herself.

But, surprisingly, she starts speaking about God, who *'has brought down rulers from their thrones'* (Luke 1:52). Why? It sounds a bit strange, doesn't it? When we continue reading, it is becoming more clear. Mary doesn't only speak about herself, she speaks about what God is doing to Israel, her people: *'He has given help to Israel His servant, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his descendants forever'* (Luke 1:54-55). She knows God's promises to Israel that, some time in the future, He will deliver Israel from its enemies and from all who hate Israel and want to destroy it.

In Mary's days, Israel was being brutally oppressed by the Romans. The Jewish people were intensely looking forward to the deliverance of the enemy and the coming of the Kingdom of Peace on earth under the leadership of the Messiah. That's what Mary was so excited about since she was pregnant with this promised Messiah. And we know that God will fulfil all His promises to Israel. During Mary's lifetime, these promises were not yet fulfilled. Jesus dedicated Himself to His death and resurrection in order to bring us salvation and eternal life. In the End of Times, He will fulfil all His promises and deliver Israel from its enemies.

Mary also spoke about God, who *'has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant'* (Luke 1:48). But later, she spoke about God, who has also *'exalted those who were humble'* (Luke 1:52). By using the word 'humble', she doesn't just focus on herself, but she focuses on Israel and the Jewish people as a whole. As a humble young woman, Mary represents her people Israel in its humble state as being oppressed and persecuted over the centuries. God will in future restore Israel and bring real peace over the world when the Kingdom of the Messiah will come.

So when we celebrate Christmas, let's not forget Israel, and praise God for His faithfulness to both Israel and His Church.

## Jerusalem: the Heart of the Kingdom

### ■ Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer

President | Christians for Israel International

*"In the last days, the mountain of the Lord's Temple [the Temple Mount, Mount Zion, Mount Moriah] will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the Temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths." (Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-3)*

### The Proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom

Jesus once said: *"The Kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation [its date cannot be calculated], nor will people say 'Here it is' or 'There it is,' because the Kingdom of God is within you"* (Luke 17:20-21).

'Within you' can also be translated as 'among you'. Both translations are correct, for both meanings are true: wherever Jesus is, the Kingdom is, and the signs of the Kingdom will be present. Look at all the miracles that occurred during His lifetime: the Kingdom was really present because the King Himself was there in person.

The verse also means that when Jesus is in you by His Holy Spirit, the Kingdom is also present in you. That is why He says that signs and miracles will also accompany believers to such an extent that they will do even greater things than He has done!

### Kingdom for Israel

But the Kingdom of Peace will only come when Christ returns to Jerusalem.

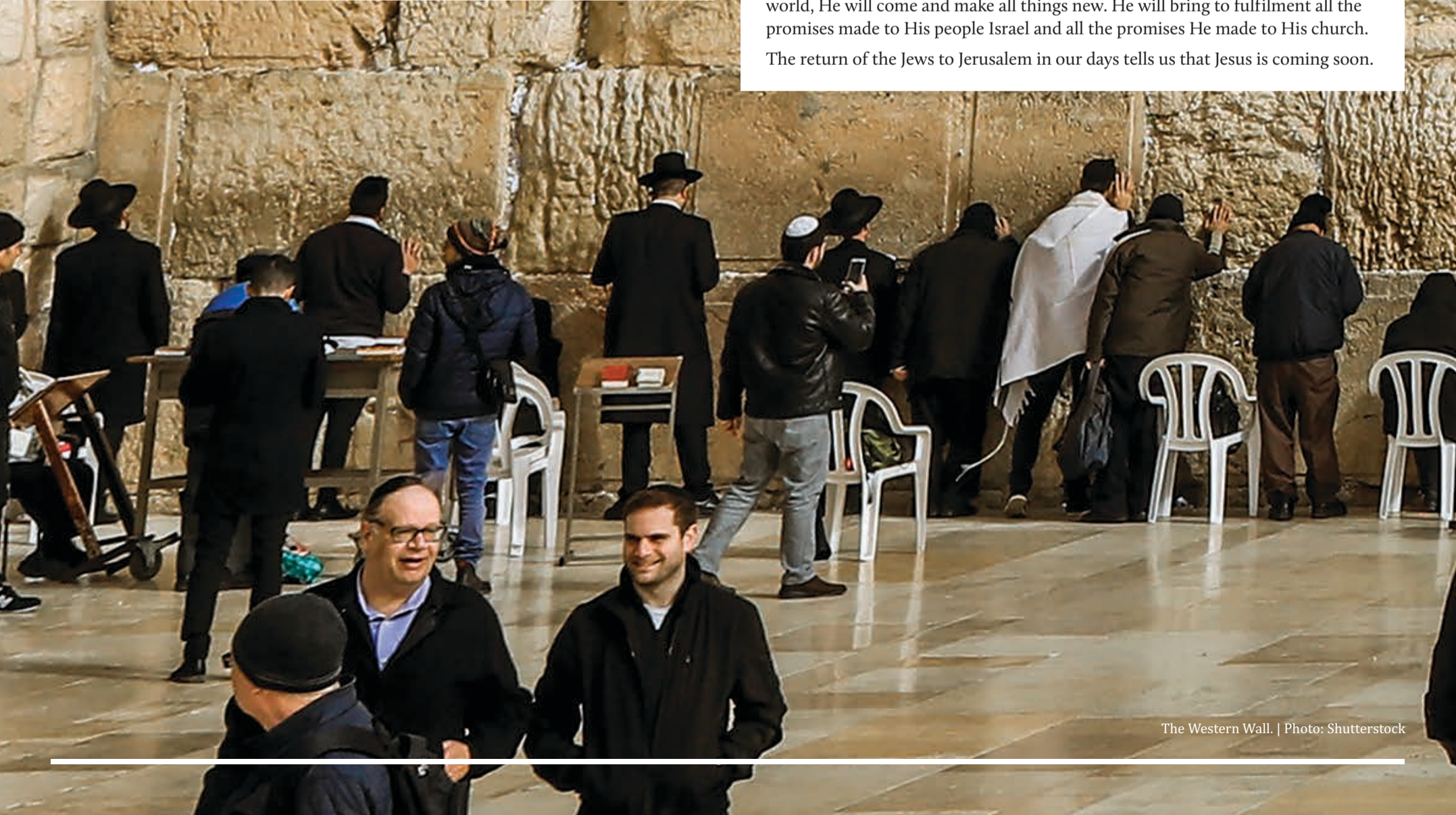
After the Lord Jesus had completed His work on the cross and given His precious blood for the sins (plural) of the world; after He had broken the power of sin (singular), defeating the devil and his powers of darkness; after His triumphant resurrection, and immediately before His ascension, His disciples excitedly asked: "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the Kingdom to Israel?"

The Lord Jesus did not answer: *"What a dumb question!"* No. All He said was: *"It is not for you to know the times or the dates the Father has set by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth"* (Acts 1:3-8).

After the enveloping cloud of God's (Shekinah) Glory took Jesus away, the angels told the disciples: *"Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into Heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into Heaven"* (Acts 1:11). Then His feet will stand again on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. Jesus will come back to Jerusalem.

That happy event will be preceded by God's worldwide trials and judgements, which the great visionary John describes in the book of Revelation. When the demonic powers seem to have almost full control and seem to rule the whole world, He will come and make all things new. He will bring to fulfilment all the promises made to His people Israel and all the promises He made to His church.

The return of the Jews to Jerusalem in our days tells us that Jesus is coming soon.



## The Kingdom of Heaven - on Earth

### ■ Kees de Vreugd

Theologian | Christians for Israel International & Editor | Israel & the Church

In *Matthew 4:17*, we read: "From that time Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" Paul, the apostle, wrote to the believers in Philippi: "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (*Philippians 3:20*). The Letter to the Hebrews says: "But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them" (*Hebrews 11:16*).

What is the location of the kingdom that we are expecting? Is it in heaven or earth?

### Heaven

The word heaven has received connotations that are not necessarily biblical. We tend to understand heaven as opposed to earth. Yet, they belong together in one cosmos, as God created in the beginning of both heaven and earth.

Many Christians tend to understand the heavenly reality as something that is opposed to the physical reality of the earth. Classical Christian theology was strongly influenced by Greek thinkers who tended to see physicality as inferior to spirituality. They thought from the Platonic concepts of the eternal ideas, i.e. the eternal, divine principles of which everything existing is a reflection. They would say that the body is a dungeon in which the soul is incarcerated and from which the soul has to be freed to return to his spiritual origins.

This is not biblical. The Bible tells us that God created man in His image as body, soul and spirit. The spirit has not to be freed from the body. Rather, after the fall, body, soul and spirit have to be freed from decay. That is what Paul is arguing in *1 Corinthians 15* with regard to the resurrection of the dead. "For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality" (*1 Corinthians 15:53*).

God's kingdom in the Bible is always that God reigns over heaven and earth and that His kingship must be accepted by all nations. Ultimately, the establishment of God's kingdom is implied in the restoration of Jerusalem as His dwelling place and Israel as His nation (*Zechariah 14:9*).

In other words, the kingdom of heaven that is gradually realised on earth (and extended to all creation). It has a heavenly origin and an earthly impact.

That is also implied in the words of Paul to the Philippians: "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (*Philippians 3:20*). The Saviour will descend from heaven to transform our bodies into conformity with the body of His glory (*Philippians 3:21*).

Yes, the earthly reality will be transformed, but it will still be earth – a renewed earth under a renewed heaven. Both together will be a unity in the kingdom of God. Our bodies will be transformed, but they will still be physical bodies, though with heavenly qualities. In our present state of humility, we look forward to the day that Christ will appear in glory and subject all things to Himself.

## God is King

### ■ Tobias Krämer

Theologian | Christians for Israel Germany

God is king! For the Old Testament and the Jews, this statement is obvious. God will not become king, He is already. When you look at the world, however, you will not see the rule of God in many places. There is so much that contradicts God! There is godlessness among the nations. God's rule seems to be hidden.

But while God's rule is not obvious, it is real.

### The Gift of the Torah

After the fall, God wanted to establish His rule everywhere. He began with Israel. God chose Israel out of all nations (*Deuteronomy 7:6-8*) so that the nations could see how one lives with God. In this way, Israel was called to become a light to the nations (*Isaiah 60:1-3*). For this purpose, God gave Israel the Torah, His teachings and His regulations.

Unfortunately, Israel all too often broke the covenant and despised the Torah. God sent His judgment to move Israel to repentance. More and more, Israel realised: "We need someone who can help us. A redeemer. A man who will guide us deep into the Torah, who will restore us as a nation and make us a light to the nations!" This man was the Messiah: the great anointed one, who will come in the end of days. Scripture already speaks of Him. So the Jews waited for the Messiah (*Luke 2:21-39*) – and many pious Jews still do so today.

### The Messiah and the Holy Spirit

And the Messiah did come! Jesus of Nazareth is this Messiah. As the Anointed One, Jesus performed His ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit. He healed, and He freed, He taught and explained the Bible, God was establishing His rule in Israel. Many believed in Him, yet also many did not. Finally, the Messiah succumbed to the opposition in Israel and was crucified. Was it all over now? No! God raised Jesus from the dead. And then something decisive happened, in two stages (*Acts 2: 32-36*):

1. God received Jesus to Himself in heaven. Jesus was placed at God's right hand. God handed the rule over to Him and made Him king, Lord, Messiah (the three titles mean the same thing).
2. Jesus sent His Holy Spirit upon the earth. Jesus, who received the Holy Spirit in fullness, gives it to man. That is tremendous. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus is establishing His rule on the earth - in His church, but through her also in the world.

A new era came. On behalf of Israel, Messiah Jesus calls the nations and brings them to God – and millions follow Him. This was seen as such an important event that the church even started to count the years anew.

But the best is still to come: the visible, all-encompassing, eternal kingdom of God that will change the whole world. The kingdom, for which the Jews have been waiting for thousands of years, and that Jesus, too, has preached. The kingdom of peace on earth (*Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 2:14*).

When the kingdom comes, God will assert His claims as king. He will visibly accept the reign and enforce it in the whole world. This will happen for all eyes, and nobody will be able to resist Him.

*Israel and the Church* is a journal for biblical and theological reflections concerning Israel and the Church in God's plan for this world in the light of His coming Kingdom. The editors are aiming at two magazines per year, filled with contributions from all C4I branches from all 'corners' of the earth, to strengthen each other as a worldwide movement.

### Issue 1 | 2021: The Coming of the Kingdom of God



One of the functions of blowing the shofar, the ram's horn, is to proclaim God's kingship. God is King and He reigns! At the same time, in today's life and world, we experience that the belief in God's reign is very often challenged.

Things do not go as they should go. The reality is a reality of sin and brokenness. Yet, we are standing on a solid foundation: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. We are looking forward to the full realisation of God's kingdom, on earth as it is in heaven.

### Issue 2 | 2020: Exile and Restoration



For over two thousand years, a large part of the Jewish people have been exiled from the homeland God had promised them. In our time, we are privileged to see many Jews return to their ancient homeland. The foundation of the State of

Israel in 1948 was a landmark in history, enabling the restoration of the Jewish people in their homeland. Is the exile now going towards its termination?

Both exile and restoration of Israel raise many Biblical questions. In this volume, we try to deal with some of them, centered on what the New Testament has to tell us about exile and restoration.

### Issue 1 | 2020: The Promise of the Land



It is obviously one of the central themes, if not the central theme, in the stories of the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and probably in the Old Testament as a whole: God has promised a land to

the people of Israel. In this edition of the journal *Israel and the Church*, we try to trace the theme of the land promise throughout the Scriptures of Old and New Testament.

### Issue 1 | 2019: Twelve Theses



This issue contains lectures on the Twelve Theses, that were held during our Twelve Theses Summit in February 2018. As an addition, Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer has put the twelve theses in the perspective of the

classical creeds that are known from history, and that are kept in churches of various denominations.

The magazines are available to download FREE on [www.c4israel.org.nz](http://www.c4israel.org.nz)

# 'Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast' in Rome

## ■ Marie-Louise Weissenböck

Christians for Israel Austria

From 13 to 14 October, a historic prayer conference was organised in Rome by the *Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast* in cooperation with Christians for Israel Italy, led by Edda Fogarollo and Chiara Canciani.

The *Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast (JPB)* is a global movement that calls together Christians and Jews, political and faith leaders, to pray for Israel and encourage the nations to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish people.

*JPB's* vision was endorsed by former Israeli President Reuven Rivlin. The first event was held in Jerusalem in 2017 - 50 years after the reunification of Jerusalem - and welcomed 570 delegates from 58 countries. Other *JPB* events have taken place in London, Accra, Orlando, Singapore, San Antonio, Kampala, Basel, The Hague, Helsinki, Canberra and Bloemfontein, South Africa.

The *JPB* Rome started with a meeting in the Italian Senate, where several Italian senators spoke about the importance of supporting the right of the Jewish people to nationhood and equal treatment of the Jewish State of Israel. Some of the senators expressed their hope that Italy would move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem in recognition that Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Israel. Amongst the other speakers were the founder of the *JPB*, Albert Veksler and the two co-founders Michelle Bachmann (former US Congresswoman) and Robert Ilatov (former Knesset member).



The Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast in Rome. | Photo: C4I Austria



Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer speaking at the JPB. | Photo: C4I Austria

Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer, the president of Christians for Israel International, reminded us of Balaam, who blessed Israel, although King Balak had ordered him to curse it. "How can I curse whom God has not cursed? How can I denounce whom the Lord has not denounced?" (*Numbers 23:8*). He also quoted *Proverbs 21:1*, stating that God closely watches our decisions, also the political decisions, which he leads and blesses when the decision-makers depend on Him.

Israeli Ambassador to Italy Dror Eydar, who was also

present in the Senate, shared his dream "to see the Italian flag flying in the eternal city."

"Italy's historic mission, which began at the San Remo conference, on the right of the Jewish people to their land, is not complete," he said. "The Italian Embassy in Israel is not in the capital, in its natural place. The relocation of the Italian embassy to Jerusalem would be a closing of two circles, both in terms of modern Italy and in terms of this place, Rome, from which the troops of the Roman Empire left to plunder Jerusalem."

## Let's S.W.I.M

## ■ Conrado D Lumahan

National Leader | Christians for Israel Philippines

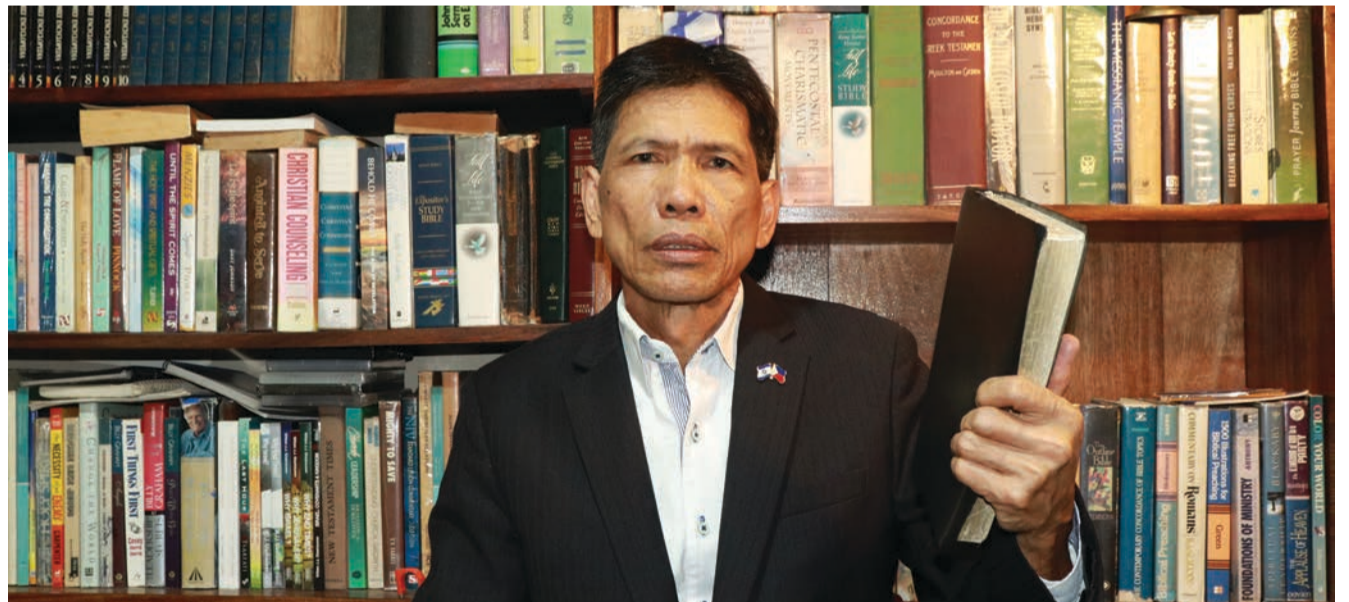
S.W.I.M stands for *Standing With Israel Mandate/Mission*. It is through the *S.W.I.M* teaching programme that the vision and mission of Christians for Israel is shared and spread in the Philippines.

*S.W.I.M* has utilised the high-tech (YouTube) and not losing the high-touch (of God). The *S.W.I.M* programme explains WHY and HOW Christians should stand for and with Israel. There are 12 episodes on the reasons, and two episodes on the means and manner. Let me summarise the why and the how:

1. God gave Israel the Land forever.
2. Israel (and Jerusalem in particular) is the heart and soul of the Jewish people.
3. The Jews are given privileges not found in any nations or people for a divine purpose.
4. Salvation is from the Jews.
5. God blesses those who bless Israel.
6. Jews have priority over the Gentiles in the plans and purposes of God.
7. God hates anti-Semitism.
8. God's gifts and calls to Israel have not been revoked.
9. God Almighty has preserved Israel and will judge nations that harm Israel.
10. God is bringing His people back to the Land of Israel!
11. The times of the Gentiles shall soon end.
12. God raises up intercessors!

God forever stands with Israel because He made a promise that is forever. And as Christians, we have to stand for/with Israel biblically and practically. And how are we going to stand with Israel?

1. *Pray for them.* Why do we pray for the place (Israel) and the people (Jews)? Remember the Scriptures command it, the challenges of the God's people demand it, and the blessings of the Lord require it.



Conrado Lumahan | Photo: C4I Philippines

2. *Love them.* Because of what happened in history, Jews are a bit suspicious of Christians. But if we love them their suspicions will slowly, but surely, be replaced with trust, and a positive relationship will develop. Love is the greatest strategy.
3. *Support them.* Support for Israel is based on God's imperative to bless Israel and to love the Jewish people. Support for Israel is Biblical. Support for Israel is unconditional. Support for Israel is intentional.

Christians, if not WE, who?  
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# God is Still in Control, Not Us

## ■ Bryce Turner

New Zealand Executive Director | Christians for Israel NZ

Welcome to this edition of *Israel and Christians Today*; thank you for joining us.

As this edition goes to print, the whole of New Zealand seems unsettled as we try to make sense of the new Covid 'traffic light' system. Some businesses are finally able to breathe a sigh of relief as they return to operation for the first time in months, while others face even more uncertainty, or are still unable to operate. In Auckland especially, even 'luxuries' such as going to the hairdresser have been off-limits, and salons across the nations' largest city are bracing for a huge rush when they reopen in just a few days. Whilst many businesses have thrived during the lockdowns, so many more are hanging on by the thinnest of threads, whilst others have simply disappeared. Each and every closure represents dreams destroyed, hearts crushed, and lives drastically changed. Yet, whilst we see this happening before our very eyes, other news tells us that supposedly unemployment is down, and GDP up. It is all very confusing.

supposedly so easy to obtain, millions around the world simply hear and believe the lies, deciding that Israel is some sort of evil, oppressive coloniser that has no right to exist. There is no discernment, no actual 'research', just blind belief of whatever narrative supports a person's leaning on the day.

There are some interesting observations to be made as we watch our supposedly proud, technologically advanced society being reduced to levels of fear and confusion by this microscopic virus; or perhaps even just fear of the virus. Given our belief that we are so well-informed, able to 'research' anything at the click of a few keys, why then is there such confusion, such passionately opposing views? Why has our society reached a point where not only are we making decisions for ourselves – 'to vax or not to vax, that is the question' – but many of us are completely unable to handle the fact that others may make a different choice to our own. I observed conversations recently where life-long friendships are really in jeopardy, because one party is vaccinated whilst the other has chosen not to. In other cases, family members are keeping their

are always trying to feel superiority over other humans? In order for our communities, our country, our world to rebuild and move on from this chapter we are going to have to work together. There is no room for division, for racism, for any form of prejudice.

My challenge – to you all – is to research. Forget social media, ignore the latest mutterings of some 'clanging gong', just pick up God's word and read it for yourself. Love God with all your heart, soul and mind, and love your neighbour as yourself. Pretty simple really. *1 Corinthians 13*, for example, makes it pretty clear. All the knowledge in the world is worth nothing if we cannot love each other.

While you're at it, take another look at what God tells us regarding Israel and His people, the Jews. You see, whilst many have written them off and re-written the story to place the church etc at the centre of God's plans, the Bible clearly tells us that God hasn't finished in Israel yet. Scripture tells us that He is bringing His people back to Israel, and that Israel remains central in the next part of the plan. While you're reading, just pause for a minute and remember one very important fact: God is still in control, not us.

In our NZ edition this month we bring you some perspectives on Hanukkah in New Zealand, Keith Buxton continues his series on the Tabernacle, and Joanna Moss brings us a political analysis of the case for Israel- based on Zionism. Perry Trotter shares a brief survey of anti-Semitism in the face of increasing hatred and violence towards Jews.

On behalf of the C4INZ team, I would like to thank our wonderful friends who have prepared articles and shared their wisdom with us all. It has been a tough year for all of us, but still we look forward to what God is doing. We look forward to – hopefully – being able to resume meetings and speaking, and most importantly to finally being able to travel back to Israel.

Thank you for your support and encouragement in 2021.

From the Christians for Israel NZ team, staff and board, have a wonderful Christmas and a blessed new year.



## Suddenly everyone who's heard something on the radio or read it on social media has become a fully qualified epidemiologist! Confusing huh?

At risk of stirring a hornet's nest... there are many issues at the moment that are simply confusing. The voices promoting vaccination are very powerful, and decisions by our government are applying considerable pressure on those who have exercised their choice not to vaccinate. At the same time, the conspiracy theories and amateur science being circulated both for and against the vaccine are becoming ridiculous. Suddenly everyone who's heard something on the radio or read it on social media has become a fully qualified epidemiologist! Confusing huh?

Those of us who support Israel should be used to these phenomena. As the worldwide flow of information has increased exponentially, so has the opportunity to misinform. It is laughable, if it wasn't so tragic, that the history of Israel, Judaea and Samaria, even the whole Middle East, has been rewritten to tell a completely fictional narrative. And in this era where information is

vaccination secret from other family, to avoid ostracism. It is this that breaks my heart. Whilst the economic future doesn't look particularly wonderful at the moment, I have no doubt that we will survive. Somehow. The destruction of relationships, division, mistrust, however... those things leave scars that may take much longer to heal.

So what is it? What is it that makes us incapable of simply loving and accepting other human beings, just as they are? I am reminded of one of the very first stories in scripture, where we see two people making different choices. Two people, not strangers, not even friends, but brothers, present their offerings to God. It's not important to this illustration why one brother's offering was favoured over the other, but what we see straight away is an anger, a fury, so powerful that one brother is able to murder the other. Over some lamb chops. Why is it that we humans

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# Israel's Attraction as a Zionist State



Bnei Menashe Aliyah and Arrival Ceremony at Ben Gurion Airport, October 2021. | Photo: Laura Ben-David

## Joanna Moss

NZ Friends of Israel (NZFOI) | Wellington

In the last issue, we looked at Israel as a refuge nation, thus focusing on the PUSH motive for moving to Israel, such as being persecuted or expelled as well as economic factors, usually meaning being unable to make a living in your home country. In this article, we will focus on the PULL motive to Israel. Clearly, Zionism isn't the only motive drawing immigrants to Israel. Still, it has been the major PULL factor since modern Aliyah began in the early 20th century and continues to motivate Jews all around the world thanks to Zionist programs connecting Jews to the land and the people.

### As Israel becomes more dominant in the Jewish world and the diaspora weaker, more Jews may choose to move to Israel to strengthen their identity.

So what exactly is Zionism? People will tend to say it is the modern ideological movement linking Jews to the State of Israel. Interestingly, in a recent webinar sponsored by thinc, Yitzhak Sokoloff expounded the rationale in a more profound way, suggesting that Jews were called to create a society that is both Holy and Just – i.e. combining the natural and the spiritual. In order to do this, he noted the Jews had to create a political entity to live with those values and preach and act upon them. In other words, it wasn't enough to try and live by those values as minority communities in other jurisdictions. Sokoloff's definition perhaps underplays the yearning in the hearts and minds of Jews for their own state and not just their own state, but their own state in the biblical homeland, no less. Hatikvah, the National Anthem, and the catchphrase *Next year in Jerusalem* at the end of the Passover Seder recited by Jews over millennia have a deeper meaning.

Sokoloff went on to draw the parallel with other ancient peoples like the Chinese and Persian, who are united by a common vision, language and territory that pre-dates 19th-century European nationalism. In the Jewish case, the territory was the one element missing. Europeans tended to define Jews by religion, and yet it was secular Zionists predominantly who erected the early state. The very religious came later. Sokoloff pointed out that the focal point of the national vision was not a racial one as it included non-Jews. Biblically speaking, there was always a place for non-Jews in the Jewish community from the time of the Exodus as long as they agreed to abide by the terms specified. But they remained gentiles. Ruth is always called a Moabitess. He said that part of the national ethos includes how to live with non-Jews.

However, experience has shown that many non-Jews would not accept Jewish sovereignty. This is perhaps one of the aspects that make the Abraham Accords so radical. After 70-plus years, Israel has attained an acceptance and elevated permanence in some Middle Eastern countries.

If Zionism is an ideology that knits the society together, then Zionism must be taught or handed down from one generation to another. Certainly, Zionism was taught in the DP camps after the war to engender a sense of Jewishness and pride in children and young people preparing to leave for Israel or elsewhere. Some of the teachers had even come from Israel and not just to teach Hebrew.

It is the same today for Jews coming out of the former Soviet Union and elsewhere, where Jewishness was suppressed for generations. It is not enough to begin to learn the language and customs, and how-tos of the new land. Zionism involves both cultural and spiritual elements and comes in many forms.

The term 'Zionism' was developed by Nathan Birnbaum in 1890. Most people recognise that modern Zionism was birthed at the first Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897, led by Theodore Herzl with the aim of having a Jewish state within 50 years. A little earlier Russian and Yemenite Jews began arriving in Israel in the first Aliyah as a result of Hovevei Zion (Lovers of Zion) movements. Zionism's political aims were furthered in the Balfour Declaration in 1917, followed by Britain's Mandate for Palestine that came out of the San Remo conference and established a framework for self-rule. Interestingly, 50 years following the Basel conference, nations around the world would recognise Israel's right to exist as part of the partition plan leading to the withdrawal of the Mandate and the formation of the Jewish state in 1948. The dream was indeed realised.

So which countries did the Jews come from that were heavily Zionist and immigrants were motivated by ideology rather than necessity? In reality, for much of Israel's modern history, Israel has been a refuge nation for Jews. However, in the third Aliyah (1919-1923), young ideological pioneers came from Eastern Europe, marking the second wave. Sometimes motives may be mixed, and Zionism makes the difference between moving to Israel over another country.

Ideologically, the Six-Day War marked a turning point in this group because Jerusalem, the ancient Jewish capital,

was now in Jewish hands in another miraculous victory. This was seen as a signal for ideological American, Canadian, South African and British Jews and even some NZ Jews to return. PM Naftali Bennett's parents were in this category, as was Sondra Oster Baras from Christian Friends of Israeli communities. Today the settler movement is dominated by people with Zionist tendencies who want to resettle the ancient Jewish homeland on the mountains of Israel. It is by no means easy, and some return to their home countries being unable to make a living. Technology has meant some are able to work remotely and live out their Zionist dream in a win-win formula even if you have to work strange hours!!

Australia is considered one of the strongest Zionist countries. Many Jews have access to Jewish education from an early age and are strongly rooted in their Jewish identity. Holocaust survivors have helped shape Zionist ideals. Some youth groups are Zionist in nature, sowing seeds from an early age such as Bnei Akiva and Habonim in New Zealand. Birthright tours and military service are other ways to connect young adults with Israel and cement Zionist desires. As knowledge of Israel and aliyah experience has increased, young people have recognised the advantage of making aliyah earlier, thus getting established in Israel when you are young enough to learn the language and without ties.

A documentary on the history of the Jews of Leeds, a declining Jewish community, highlighted the choices people had – to remain or leave for greener community pastures in Manchester or London or for those with interest in Zionism, to migrate to Israel. In many diaspora communities, those with Zionist tendencies have already left.

For the religious, the desire to move to Israel has proved quite strong. Jerusalem is, after all, at the centre of the Jewish faith. As Israel becomes more dominant in the Jewish world and the diaspora weaker, more Jews may choose to move to Israel to strengthen their identity.

Other PULL factors are notably the leading-edge technology sector and entrepreneurial haven. Plus, it's a vibrant and exciting place to live. The climate may appeal to those in snowy Canada, and the desire to be buried there is strong, granting many their last wishes. Jewish education is much more affordable than in the US, so this may be a motivating factor to move for large orthodox families. Also, the cost of higher education in Israel is substantially less than the US and high quality. For many, the allure of Israel as the only Jewish country in the world continues to motivate and keep those Aliyah statistics rising.

# A Brief Survey of Antisemitism

## ■ Perry Trotter

Holocaust and Antisemitism Foundation,  
Aotearoa New Zealand

This is an abridgement of a longer work. To view the full survey, along with comprehensive annotation, please download the Holocaust Foundation App via: [www.holocaustfoundation.com](http://www.holocaustfoundation.com).

**“An antisemite is one who hates Jews more than absolutely necessary.”**

In many cultures, antisemitism is a given. This is exemplified by the above statement, believed to have originated in Hungary.

The fact of antisemitism may be a constant. Its form, however, morphs and adapts from age to age and culture to culture. This article provides a survey of some of antisemitism’s current manifestations and some of the social groups in which antisemitism is prevalent.

By most accounts, the term anti-Semitism was first coined by German journalist Wilhelm Marr in 1879 as a functional equivalent to *Judenhass*—Jew-hatred. While the term is modern, the hatred itself dates back more than 3000 years.

The spelling ‘antisemitism’ is to be preferred to anti-Semitism for at least two reasons:

1. there is no such thing as Semitism;
2. to dull the impact of those who engage in the etymological fallacy by insisting that Arabs cannot be anti-Semites because they too are Semites.

Hostility toward, or discrimination against, Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group, is the definition provided by Merriam-Webster, is included in the full version of this article.

IHRA’s working definition begins as follows: Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

The non-binding definition is significantly strengthened by an accompanying set of examples considered to form part of the definition. The full text of the IHRA definition, along with its examples, is reproduced below.

Antisemitism has proven to be remarkable in its persistence, pervasion, and versatility. It will reinvent itself as the need arises.

### Anti-Zionist Antisemitism

To understand, anti-Zionism one must first define Zionism. While historically it is a broad and non-monolithic movement, Zionism can be seen as:

The movement supporting the return of Jews to their ancestral indigenous homeland and their right of national self-determination in the now established State of Israel.

Among modern antisemites of all stripes, the weapon of choice is frequently anti-Zionism. For that reason, it is mentioned first in this survey.

With the 1948 advent of the modern state of Israel, antisemites were provided a new target for their antagonism. While Jewish individuals and Jewish communities have for centuries been marginalised (and worse), focusing instead on the Jewish state can now lend the ancient hatred the pretence of respectability in the West. It is somehow deemed acceptable to vilify the Jewish state, especially if one first claims to have Jewish friends.

Of course, criticism of the Jewish state is not automatically antisemitic, and definitions such as IHRA’s correctly acknowledge this fact. But criticism of Israel that applies a standard that is applied to no other nation is usually antisemitic.

Anti-Zionism often denies to one people group (the Jews) what it readily grants to others, and as such, is plainly antisemitic. A denial of the right of self-determination in one’s indigenous homeland, or the right of appropriate retaliation against a genocidal enemy, are but two examples that expose the antisemitic core of most anti-Zionism.



| Photo: Perry Trotter

### Far-Right Antisemitism

Today’s white supremacy and neo-Nazism stand in continuity to 1930-40s Nazism. Traditional Christian antisemitic ideas and xenophobic nationalism play an important role along with conspiracy theories and Holocaust denial.

In the UK, Europe, and USA, far-right antisemites pose a significant threat to Jewish communities. A 2018 attack by a white supremacist on Pittsburgh’s Tree of Life Synagogue saw eleven murdered. In the period since the massacre, the city has become a pilgrimage destination for white supremacists who view the perpetrator as an inspiration.

Riding on a wave of anti-immigration sentiment, far-right political parties in France, Germany, Austria and elsewhere, have achieved significant gains and have contributed to a surge in antisemitism.

The rise of ethnonationalism in Eastern and Central Europe has been accompanied by Holocaust distortion in which local perpetrators and collaborators have been recast as national heroes. Antisemitism has risen accordingly.

Laws have been passed effectively exonerating nationals of complicity in the Holocaust and potentially making an accurate telling of Holocaust history a criminal offence.

### Progressive Leftist Antisemitism

Amidst the identity politics, wokeness, victimhood olympics, and anti-liberal “liberalism” that mark the progressive left, antisemitism is readily apparent and too often gets a free pass.

America’s academia and broader culture have been greatly influenced by *Critical Race Theory*, under which, according to Dr James Lindsay, Jews are represented as having ‘an intolerable privilege they need to check’. Ethnic Studies initiatives have promoted BDS and, in the words of one critic, “cleansed Jews from history”. The post-colonialist embrace of anti-Zionism similarly results in difficult conditions for Zionist Jews.

*Black Lives Matter* protests have seen synagogues vandalised and crowds chanting ‘dirty Jews’. Certain leaders of the Women’s March have been reported as openly antisemitic.

Intersectionality brings together disparate causes and has demonstrated great utility in advancing antisemitism. Hatred for ‘the Zionist entity’ seems to function both as a ticket for admission and a glue that binds, as is evident in the red-green axis. Protests over police brutality have, in some cases, led to an upsurge in Jew-hatred.

The uniqueness of Jewish history, culture and identity, resilience despite centuries of oppression, and national self-determination, ill-fit a progressive movement fixated on power structures, grievance, anti-nationalism and sameness of outcome.

Among the many long-held ideals targeted by Critical

Race Theory is a meritocracy. Perhaps because Jews have flourished in societies where they have been granted freedom, they are now assigned to the ‘white oppressor class’ - despite the fact that the majority of Jews are non-white and that Jews are one of history’s most oppressed people groups.

### Islamic Antisemitism

While all societies exhibit antisemitism to some degree, Jew-hatred is disproportionately evident within Islamic communities. In many nations with large Muslim populations, Jews are viewed ‘very unfavourably’ by overwhelming majority. ADL reports antisemitic attitudes at 49% in Germany’s Muslim community as against 14% amongst Christians.

Islamic antisemitism makes use of a full range of themes and tropes, including conspiracies, theological justifications, and racial slurs. Calls for the destruction of Israel and Holocaust denial can be heard in mosques, even in Western nations.

Understanding and responding to antisemitic incidents is sometimes made more difficult by the reluctance of authorities to correctly apportion blame when the incidents are perpetrated by Moslems.

### Christian Antisemitism

Traditional Christian antisemitism relied heavily on the deicide charge and the blood libel. While these may still be in use, the more ‘respectable’ versions of Christian antisemitism will now use anti-Zionism and human rights concerns.

Undergirding Christian antisemitism is replacement theology, or more formally, supersessionism. While it varies in its nomenclature and justification, it always includes the concept that the church has in some way displaced, replaced, superseded, disenfranchised, or fulfilled Israel and Israel’s biblical status and national promises.

Technically, such thinking does not inexorably generate antisemitism. In practice, however, over time, it has done so. Efrogmson, commenting on the theology of Tertullian, observed: “The road from here to Auschwitz is long and may not be direct, but you can get there from here.”

Antisemitic statements made by Luther in 1543 were used by Hitler to justify his mass murder of Europe’s Jews. Today’s most influential Christian antisemites muster theology, professed concern for Palestinians, and anti-Zionism, particularly to undermine evangelical support for Israel.

Prominent examples are the Christian aid agency World Vision and Rev Dr Stephen Sizer, a UK cleric censured by his own Anglican Church for antisemitic activities, and endorsed by former UK Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, also accused of antisemitism.

Continued on page 6...



# The Case for a NZ Embassy in Israel

■ **Ps Nigel Woodley** PhD

For the Protection of Zion Trust | Hastings

I had not given much thought to the fact that New Zealand has never had an embassy in Israel. It was not until the beginning of 2021, after a discussion with a senior diplomat, when I began to do so. Most often, the justification behind operating a physical embassy overseas is economic. If there is enough trade and resulting benefits for New Zealand, then Foreign Affairs will favour such a move. In Israel's case, though, it is a bit different. Whereas there is trade between our nations now, apparently, it is not enough to warrant an embassy. However, I am not sure if this is strictly the rule, and I wonder what the scale and type of trade we are doing with Colombia, where an embassy was opened in Bogota in 2016. As Minister of Foreign Affairs, Murray McCully then justified the move by saying, "Having a dedicated New Zealand presence on the ground in Bogota will help support the development of strong business links, particularly investment in Colombia's agri-business and dairy sectors." Surely an embassy in Israel could be at least as beneficial as the Bogota embassy and even more robust. McCully



went on to say at that time, "The decision to open an Embassy reflects the Government's desire to deepen New Zealand's relationship". We should also be considering the same in our relationship with Israel.

We owe it to the Israelis to show our seriousness in wanting to develop a sincere, honest, and prosperous relationship between our two nations. Particularly after some major blunders along the way. The crazy support for a biased and unfair United Nations resolution against the Jewish State in 2016 by Foreign Minister McCully (UNSC Res.2334) showed that the New Zealand government was out of touch with the reality on the ground in Israel. Why? Because our closest embassy is located in Ankara, Turkey. As I write this article, however, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has just told Ambassador Wendy Hinton along with nine other ambassadors that they are not welcome in Turkey because of a letter they signed calling for the release of a political prisoner in Turkish incarceration. This again reinforces the importance of an embassy in Israel. Our relationship with Israel has been a bit tenuous in the last two decades, and it is time to prove that we are both sincere and serious in our desire to further develop ties with a democracy much like New Zealand's.

As many of those reading this will be Bible believers, we realise it benefits New Zealand to get on with God's covenant partner Israel. The fact that Israel is the only Jewish state in the world, that eighty per cent of her population is Jewish (the descendants of their biblical forebears), that her Declaration of Independence in 1948 and her Basic Law of 2018 both declare "The State of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and the ingathering of the exiles" and that Israel's modern state sits on the same beloved holy ground as it did in antiquity, reinforces the need for Christians to back such a move. From a theological point of view, the Bible points out that it benefits our nation to get on with God's covenant partner. The following are Biblical promises to the Jewish people and their land:

"I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse." *Genesis 12:3*

"For the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will perish; it will be utterly ruined." *Isaiah 60:12*

"I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will put them on trial for what they did to my inheritance, my people Israel because they scattered my people among the nations and divided up my land." *Joel 3:2*

It is in the best interests of our nation to show seriousness and sincerity in this relationship. As far as economic justification is concerned, I think the same opportunity given to the Colombians should be given to the Israelis. "Having a dedicated New Zealand presence on the ground in Bogota will help to support the development of strong business links, particularly investment..."

## Even-handedness and Balance

These keywords apparently shape our foreign policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, many

like me would argue that New Zealand foreign policy toward Israel has been far from even-handed or balanced. UNSC Resolution 2334 is just one example. Also, consider the fact that we currently have seven embassies in nations that historically have been hostile toward Israel and which currently help form a coalition within the United Nations (OIC-Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) to bring unfair and one-sided condemnations against the State of Israel. The OIC is a huge bloc of 57 nations within the UN which gang up against Israel to delegitimise it. If New Zealand wants to show even-handedness and balance in this conflict, then it needs to establish an embassy in the one Jewish State.

## As far as the placement of such an Embassy

It is a big enough challenge convincing the New Zealand government to open an embassy in Israel without putting the huge hurdle of Jerusalem in front of it. Quite frankly, an embassy in Israel's southern Negev Desert would be better than what we currently have. Of course, for people like me, Jerusalem is preferred, but let's win one round at a time.

## Israel has a lot to offer New Zealand

We should have proper representation in a country that has a western-style democracy like ours and believes in values like ours. Israel continues to lead the world in technology, medicine, counterterrorism, land reformation, irrigation, and other areas despite challenging security threats. The spin-off for New Zealand could be great in education, science, technology, viticulture, horticulture, agriculture, and increased trade. Both countries are small, advanced economies and have a lot in common. Israel reopened its embassy in Wellington in 2010, and despite some turbulent times in the relationship, it has remained. It is time for New Zealand to reciprocate.

**Please sign the online petition for the establishment of an Embassy in Israel:**

[www.parliament.nz/en/petitions/sign/PET\\_111792](http://www.parliament.nz/en/petitions/sign/PET_111792)

## Holocaust Memorials at Yad Vashem

In this, the last article in this regular column, we looked at Holocaust memorials at Yad Vashem. Each issue, we featured a different memorial and told the story and message behind each one. We thank Mikaela Hood for her contributions.

### Hall of Names

The Hall of Names commemorates every Jew who perished in the Holocaust. This impactful memorial is the final room in the main museum. Entering the circular hall your eyes are drawn to the huge dome floating above you, which exhibits 600 photos of victims. The Hall of Names holds the extensive collection of short biographies of victims allowing individuals to be remembered. The circular sides of the hall are flanked with 8-metre-high bookcases which store the filings of 2.7million victim's Pages of Testimonies. Each of these one-page testimonies have been submitted by members of the family, friends, acquaintance who have registered the victim's name and some biographical details. The shelves are designed to house 6 million Page of Testimony, many of the shelves are empty, bearing witness to the remaining victims yet to be remembered. In 2019, 18,000 new Pages of Testimony were received and added to the Hall of Names.

To find a name or submit a Page of Testimony go to <https://yvng.yadvashem.org/>



# Israel is Not an Apartheid State

■ **Ps Nigel Woodley PhD**  
For the Protection of Zion Trust | Hastings

One of New Zealand's activists against South African apartheid in the 1980s was John Minto. His voice, along with others, helped to change the apartheid system in that country. Unfortunately nearly forty years later Mr Minto has changed tact from a just cause to a very unjust cause. He is holding meetings (very small in fact) throughout New Zealand maligning the State of Israel as being racist and apartheid. This is completely wrong. When we learned that John was going to be appearing at such a meeting at Napier's McLean Park on 11 October 2021, we were there to confront him and oppose him to his face for his blatant lies and distortions of the facts.

The Flaxmere Christian Fellowship and supporters gathered a team of around 50 people to face it off with what appeared to be a small meeting of no more than 15 people who had gathered to listen to Mr Minto. The report of our campaign is best told in the video, newspaper clippings, and pictures that follow:

## Hawkes Bay Today, Wednesday 25 August 2021 Church protesters to challenge Minto on Palestine

Covid Alert levels willing, the Flaxmere Christian Fellowship and its supporters will be gathered at McLean Park on Wednesday evening to protest John Minto's 'Free Palestine' meeting, where he will be trying to find traction for his campaign, comparing it to the protests he conducted in 1981.

Our protest will have nothing to do with the Springbok Tour of 1981, nor of the issues around that. My father was a police sergeant at that time leading a contingent of officers trying to keep the opposing sides apart.

We will be protesting the statement from Minto that Israel is an apartheid state.

Israel is the only free democracy in the Middle East where Jews, Arabs and other minorities have equal status.

There are no separate buses or cafes or park benches in Israel, as there was in South Africa.

To give you a sample of what honest Palestinians have to say about the Jewish State, this is what Khaled Abu Toameh, an Arab journalist who calls himself an 'Israeli-Arab-Muslim-Palestinian' says: "I am an Arab Muslim living in Jerusalem... If I were given the choice, I would rather live in Israel as a second-class citizen than as a first-class citizen in Cairo, Gaza, Amman or Ramallah."

Covid Alert willing, we will be there to challenge Minto. (Abridged)

**Pastor Nigel Woodley**  
Flaxmere Christian Fellowship

Originally set for August 25, Minto's gathering was changed to 11 October because of the Covid lockdown.

## Hawkes Bay Today, Saturday 28 August 2021 Confusing the Bible's Israel with the modern state

Kia ora. There is no need for Pastor Woodley to protest outside our meeting when we discuss stepping up the fight against apartheid in Israel.

He is welcome to bring his supporters inside to listen and learn because Pastor Woodley is confusing the Israel of the Bible with the modern political state of Israel.

The connection is in name only.

South African leaders such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela have called out Israeli policies against Palestinians as apartheid and this year they have been joined by major human-rights groups.

In January B'Tselem, the largest and most respected human-rights organisation in Israel, released a report called 'A regime of Jewish supremacy from the Jordan

*River to the Mediterranean Sea'* – This is apartheid! and an April Human-Rights Watch, the large Nobel Peace Prize-winning US human-rights group, accused Israel of crimes of 'apartheid and persecution'.

I look forward to Pastor Woodley giving his supporters the chance to learn why international boycotts of Israel will help bring justice for Palestinians as they did for South Africans.

**John Minto**  
National Chair Palestinian Solidarity Network

## Hawkes Bay Today, Tuesday 28 September 2021 Achieving justice for the Palestinians

In reading John Minto's letter it is obvious he has never read my book *Modern Israel is still Biblical Israel*. He is completely wrong. Eighty per cent of the modern State of Israel is made up of the Jewish people—the descendants of their biblical forebears who settled and possessed the land they again inhabit. Bassem Eid is a prominent Palestinian living in Israel who has an extensive career as a Palestinian human-rights activist. He said in June about the new diverse Israeli Government that includes an Arab-Muslim Party in the governing coalition:

"This government represents the strength of Israel's democracy, a rarity in the Middle East. It also reflects the diversity of the people of Israel. This new diverse government truly makes a mockery of the absurd 'apartheid' label."

The biased views of Tute, B'Tselem and Human Rights Watch are politically motivated and do not match the reality on the ground. For example, in 2016 on the West Bank I asked Tagrid, a Palestinian woman living and working there, "Do you prefer Palestinian Authority governance of that of the State of Israel?" Her answer was very direct as she told me most Arabs including the Palestinians want Israeli governance. She said they trust the Israelis more than the Palestinian leadership: "The Israelis treat us better than our own leaders."

Justice for the Palestinians will be achieved when the unjust and corrupt Palestinian leaders are exchanged. (Abridged).

**Pastor Nigel Woodley**  
Flaxmere Christian Fellowship

For some strange reason it took Hawkes Bay Today a whole month to publish my response to Minto. 'Modern Israel is still Biblical Israel' can be purchased as an eBook from [www.fortheprotectionofzion.com/category/resources/](http://www.fortheprotectionofzion.com/category/resources/)

The following is the handout handed out by For The Protection of Zion at John Minto's rally:

## Israel is NOT an Apartheid State

"We do not agree with John Minto's 40th Anniversary Tour because it falsely accuses Israel of being complicit with South Africa as an apartheid state. **This is wrong!**

Mr. Minto urges his followers to come and 'support Palestinians suffering under Israeli apartheid'. The main reason for Palestinians' suffering is the brutal and heartless leadership they are subject to—a corrupt Palestinian Authority and the terrorist government of Hamas. It is a wonder that Minto is not targeting the real culprits in this conflict."

## Israel is a Liberal Democracy

"The accusation that Israel is an apartheid state is false. It is fabricated by people with a political agenda. There is no comparison between Apartheid South Africa in the last century to the Modern State of Israel today. Although there is tension in the region, part of that is due to Palestinian leaders refusing to recognise Israel as a Jewish State. Hamas still calls for the complete destruction of the State of Israel. However, there is still plenty which is fostering good relations between Jewish and Arab sectors of the population. Y. H. is an Arab citizen of Israel. He says:



Nigel Woodley confront John Minto over a megaphone

"How dare they say that I, an Arab Israeli who served along with Jewish soldiers in the Israel Defence Forces and managed hundreds of Jewish employees, live under an apartheid regime? How can anyone say our society is living under an apartheid regime when among us you will find doctors, judges, and even lawmakers. I am not here to claim that everything in Israel is perfect. Some things need to be fixed, and now. But show me a country where everything is perfect. I look around at our neighbours in the region and thank God I was born in the State of Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East."

Salem Joubran was an Arab Supreme Court Justice in Israel and presided over the bench 2003-2017. Another Arab judge in Israel, George Karra, presided over the panel of judges which brought the gavel down on a former Israeli president for rape in 2011. The United Arab List (Ra'am), a political party led by Mansour Abbas, became part of the ruling coalition government in Israel after the March 2021 elections. There are Arab and Muslim diplomats, university professors, doctors, and politicians all serving the State of Israel today. These are not the occurrences of an apartheid state. Khaled Abu Toameh is an Israeli Arab journalist who calls himself an "Israeli-Arab-Muslim-Palestinian". He says:

"I am an Arab Muslim living in Jerusalem. I am also an Israeli citizen... we have no problem being Israeli citizens. I mean many of us are even proud to be Israeli citizens. If you go to Ramallah and Gaza once, and you come back into Jerusalem or Tel Aviv, you will see what I mean. Sometimes I say, 'thank God we have Israel.' Israel is a wonderful place to live, and we are happy to be there. Israel is a free and open country. If I were given the choice, I would rather live in Israel as a second-class citizen than as a first-class citizen in Cairo, Gaza, Amman or Ramallah."

The sentiments of a Kuwaiti writer aired on a Kuwaiti TV channel in 2017, speak honestly of the historical record of the Middle East:

"When the State of Israel was established in 1948, there was no state called 'Palestine.' Like it or not, Israel is an independent sovereign state. It exists, and it has a seat at the United Nations, and most peace-loving and democratic countries recognise it. The group of states that do not recognise Israel are the countries of tyranny and oppression. There is no occupation. There is a people returning to its promised land. Are you aware that the history of the Israelites is ancient, predating Islam? Therefore, we Muslims must acknowledge that the Israelites have a right to that land, and that they have not plundered it."

In a Twitter poll run by an Al Jazeera television host in 2020, Faisal al-Qassem asked Twitter users to vote on whether they thought Israel, or the Arab regimes were more democratic. Eighty-two per cent voted that Israel was more democratic than the Arab regimes. The poll was run in Arabic.

**Pastor Nigel Woodley Ph.D.**  
Rally Spokesperson

You can find more truth about ISRAEL and newspaper articles protesting John Minto's rally at [www.fortheprotectionofzion.com](http://www.fortheprotectionofzion.com).



April 2021

To Christians for Israel, worldwide.

Dear friends, all of us at Hineni would like to express our enormous gratitude, for your tremendous support, and friendship throughout the year 2020.

It was your donations that gave us the opportunity to provide the poor, and disadvantaged of Jerusalem about 90,000 meals throughout the year 2020.

Your support enabled us every day to provide prepacked meals to hundreds of people, especially during the many Covid-19 lockdowns Israel experienced.

In addition, Christian volunteers made the daily home deliveries to hundreds of homebound Survivors of the Holocaust, left alone without food and care due to numerous Covid-19 restrictions, and many lockdowns.

It was due to your compassion that these Holocaust Survivors, and needy received food, blankets, and some clothing, instead of being left alone, cold and hungry.

Together we gave meaning to the prophetic words of *Isaiah 58:7*, which inspires Hineni's programmes of: aid, compassion, education, prayer, in the service of Hashem.

***"Share your food with the hungry and open your homes to the homeless poor. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear, and do not refuse to help your own flesh... Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and He will say: 'Hineni' Here am I."***

Dear friends, may Hashem bless you all for your support and friendship. May He grant us the opportunity to continue to help, and strengthen Israel, until Messiah ben David will bring the final redemption in the hope that we can stand together and witness how ***The Law will go from Zion, and the word of Hashem from Jerusalem. Micah 4.2***

With gratitude, greetings and blessings from Jerusalem.

Benjamin Philip  
Director of Hineni Jerusalem

## First Baptist Church BETHLEHEM

April 2021

Dear friends and partners in Christ, greetings to you from the City of David, the birth place of our saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ.

We want to thank you for your kindness and generosity to support the ministry for His glory! We appreciate your love, your sacrifice and help to make this possible!

We are thankful for your kindness, your love and for your partnership with us! We appreciate all those who have heart for us to support us with the projects we have in the ministry and to stand by us as we endeavor in His field!

We want to thank our friends from Australia, New Zealand, Austria, Switzerland and the Netherlands for their part in the ministry! We want to tell you, that words are not enough to express our gratitude to you for being our friends and for uplifting us with this need!

We know and feel, that whatever you can do, it comes from the heart and it is appreciated! This is love in action and we are very grateful to have friends like you! We thank the Lord for all those who stand by us, as we work for His kingdom! We are grateful to you for your love in action!

Thanks a lot again and we pray that the Lord will bless all of your efforts, work and sacrifice toward this ministry we have in His city! We pray too, God's blessings upon you, for your willingness to share your blessing with others in any way you can!

It is His divine arrangement to put you in our path to stand by us and uplift us, as we face the challenge to keep this work going for His glory!

Shalom to you all and we need His real peace in this world, as we live day by day! Thanks for blessing our ministry for His Kingdom!

Amen

In His Service,

Elvira &amp; Pastor Naim Khoury

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### Human Rights Antisemitism

Human rights organisations currently provide one of the most effective vehicles for antisemitism.

The Boycott Divestment Sanctions movement (BDS) is transparent in its goal to see the elimination of the Jewish state. BDS critiques of Israel frequently compare her conduct to that of Nazi Germany, with the 'apartheid Israel' charge being equally popular. BDS has been designated 'antisemitic' by Germany, and numerous American states have passed anti-BDS resolutions or laws.

The UN exhibits a severe bias against Israel and has a remarkable record of anti-Israel resolutions, in many cases issued under the pretext of human rights concern for the Palestinians.

London based Amnesty International is another human rights body that has been shown to have a strong antisemitic record.

### Racial Antisemitism

Most prevalent in Nazi and Muslim circles, racial antisemitism may now be less common in the West, having been displaced by other forms of Jew-hatred.

References to Jews as 'descendants of apes and pigs' remain common within Islamic rhetoric along with such descriptors as 'the scum of the human race, the rats of the world'.

The Darwinian theories of the time lent justification to the view that the Nazis must 'exterminate' the Jews in the interests of Aryan racial purity.

The Khazar theory remains popular. It attempts to sever the link between Jews of the biblical period and the present day by asserting that Ashkenazi Jews are largely descendants of Turkic peoples who converted to Judaism over a thousand years ago.

### Economic Antisemitism

William Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* portrays Shylock 'the Jew' as avaricious and cruel. Jewish

stereotypes of this kind have persisted in literature and discourse to the present day and readily cross-pollinate other categories of antisemitism presented in this survey.

Jews are held to be excessively wealthy (such wealth achieved by dishonest means and ignoring the many Jews of modest means), greedy and mean (despite Jews being disproportionately represented amongst philanthropists), and use their wealth to further expand their covert control of media, international politics, world opinion, et al. The incoherence of this form of antisemitism sees Jews accused of driving both capitalism and communism. Nation of Islam leader Farrakhan provides an example of economic antisemitism: "The Rothschilds financed both sides of all the European wars. They always wanted to get their hands on the Central Bank of America. And they finally did."

### Conspiratorial Antisemitism

Many conspiracy theories feature Jews front and centre. Accusations of Jewish control of media, orchestration of financial crises and wars, paedophilia rings, and more flourish on social media and in far-right groups.

Twenty per cent of Britons apparently believe Jews concocted the Covid pandemic for financial gain. Throughout the world, many have blamed the Jews for 9/11. Jews have even been held responsible for the Holocaust.

The Protocols of the *Elders of Zion*, 1903, set out a blueprint for global Jewish domination. Despite being demonstrated to be a fabrication in the 1920s, it has remained a key document in fuelling antisemitic conspiracy theories to this day. Henry Ford funded and distributed 500,000 copies in the USA, and translations of The Protocols continue as important texts for antisemites in Muslim nations.

### Universalist Antisemitism

The uniqueness and distinction of the Jewish people, their sacred texts and history, longevity and non-assimilation, religious and social separateness, and especially their moral and ethical legacy, have long been a thorn in the side of universalism. A significant theme of

19th-century German philosophy was a determination to break the shackles of particularist religion: "...the hegemony of revelation had to be broken. Jews and Judaism were linked to that precise biblical revelation that the Enlightenment wanted to free itself of..."

Most riling of all is the concept of Jewish chosenness. Despite the Hebrew Scriptures creating at the outset an inextricable link between Jewish chosenness and benefit to all nations, chosenness has been construed as elitism, supremacy and arrogance.

The repudiation of uniqueness and particularity by some Jews has done little to alleviate antisemitism. Those Jews who became enamoured with German culture and embraced assimilation in early 20th century Germany, even converting to Christianity and de-Judaising their names, were no less likely to be found in the cattle trucks destined for Auschwitz.

In the modern period, Israel and the Jews remain distinct. Even those who wholeheartedly embrace progressive leftist causes can find themselves ostracised if they retain a commitment to Israel.

### Jewish Antisemitism

There is often a reflexive rejection of the assertion that Jews can be antisemitic. Examples, however, are not difficult to find.

Karl Marx, one of the most influential individuals of the last two centuries, was both Jewish and transparently antisemitic. And Marx is but one in a long lineage of anti-Jewish Jews.

'Non-Jewish Jews' or 'self-hating Jews' serve an important role for non-Jewish antisemites. It is assumed, for example, that the hatred espoused for the Jewish state is somehow validated by the presence of Jews in the ranks of haters.

In the present day, there are many Jewish individuals and groups who support the antisemitic BDS movement.

Not all Gentiles are antisemites, and not all antisemites are Gentiles.



## Apartheid accusers 'peddling in unhinged hate'

■ Dr Sheree Trotter

Author | Indigenous Coalition For Israel

Apartheid is a potent term and one that occupies a special place in New Zealand's social and political memory. Many New Zealanders remember the passion of the 1981 Springbok tour protests. Rugby lovers grumbled about sport and politics being mixed, while many students enthusiastically joined the protests. New Zealand has taken pride in the fact that it stood at the forefront of opposition to South Africa's apartheid regime.

Seeking to exploit the 40th anniversary of that achievement, John Minto, former HART national organiser, is yet again seeking to demonise Israel via the fallacy of false equivalence.

Minto's claim that Israel practises apartheid is demonstrably untrue. In fact, Judge Richard J. Goldstone (former Justice of the South African Constitutional Court, who led the United Nations 2008-9 fact-finding mission on the Gaza conflict), stated, "The charge that Israel is an apartheid state is a false and malicious one that precludes, rather than promotes, peace and harmony."

Human Rights Watch employed the apartheid accusation in a report earlier this year, prompting international human-rights lawyer Arsen Ostrovsky to label it "Anti-Semitic 'blood libel' against the Jewish state". According to Ostrovsky the report, "...is replete with malicious lies and gross distortions of law while peddling in unhinged hate, incitement and racist stereotypes."

There is in fact a long history of the propagation of the 'apartheid smear'. It first appeared in the 'anti-Zionist' campaigns waged by the Communist states during the Cold War. A second key phase came in 1975 when a coalition between the Soviet Bloc, the Arab states, and the 'Non-Aligned Movement' emerged. This bloc used its majority at the UN General Assembly to pass Resolution 3379, equating Zionism with racism. This was rescinded in 1991.

Then in 2001, the Durban Conference, (the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Intolerance and Xenophobia), ostensibly convened to address racism and xenophobia, turned into an antisemitic hate-fest. Anti-Israel activists organised a parallel NGO Forum and used it to launch a concerted campaign to label Israel a 'racist, apartheid state'. The international community was called upon to impose a 'policy of complete and total isolation of Israel as an apartheid state' and 'the full cessation of all links (diplomatic, economic, social, aid, military cooperation and training) between all states and Israel'.

New Zealand, in recognition of the contentious, hateful and unproductive nature of the conference, has not supported subsequent Durban conferences and prior to the 20th commemoration this year, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated,

*"New Zealand remains strongly committed to combatting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Consistent with our long-standing position, New Zealand will not attend the 20th anniversary of the Durban Declaration conference in New York on 22 September 2021."*

This is an indication of a small shift for New Zealand, in what has been a trend of anti-Israel stances in international fora, since New Zealand's 2016 co-sponsorship of UNSC Resolution 2334.

Meanwhile there have been seismic shifts in the Middle East that signal a growing optimism for the region. It's been just over a year since the signing of the Abraham Accords between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, later joined by Bahrain, with Sudan and Morocco also agreeing to normalise ties with Israel. The change of



Anti-Springbok tour demonstration, Willis Street, Wellington. | Photo: National Library of New Zealand

mood is highly significant. According to key negotiator for the accords, Dr Tal Becker, Arab states are for the first time showing a willingness to acknowledge that Jews are indigenous to the Middle East and that they share a common ancestor in Abraham. He sees the normalisation of the idea that Israel is an integral part of the Middle East as an important pushback against the campaign to delegitimise Israel.

Perhaps it's time for John Minto and his ilk to 'read the Middle Eastern room' and also move on from their fixation with demonising Israel.

While Israel is far from perfect, any visitor to the land will note the remarkable degree of diversity and co-existence. All citizens are guaranteed equal rights including the right to vote. Israel's robust justice system counters discrimination. The absurdity of the apartheid charge is vividly illustrated by the fact that when Israeli President Katzav was convicted and imprisoned, his trial was presided over by an Arab judge. Israel's Arab minority participates fully in the political process and the recent elections saw the Arab Ra'am party win four seats - it now participates in the government.

Israel's universities are integrated and there's a thriving Arabic media, literature and theatre scene. Many Israeli towns and cities are mixed Arab-Jewish and there are no legal restrictions on movement, employment or sexual or marital relations. Freedom of speech and assembly is upheld and the Government's opponents may form political organisations. All are free to criticise the authorities and many do so vociferously. Twenty percent of medical teams in Israel - be they doctors, nurses, or paramedics, are Arab. Many Palestinians from the West Bank (and some from Gaza) work and study in Israeli hospitals.

The Israel Apartheid smear is in fact an insult to black South Africans who suffered under that racist regime. In the words of South African MP Kenneth Meshoe, "This ridiculous accusation trivialises the word apartheid, minimising and belittling the magnitude of the racism and suffering endured by South Africans of color."

Antisemites have long traded in moral inversion and the apartheid charge is a prime example. If anything akin to apartheid does exist in the region it can be found in the Palestinian Territories. Jews are forbidden to enter and do so at risk of their lives. Palestinian negotiators have treated as a given that any future Palestinian state would be free of Jews.

Apartheid can also be found across the border in Lebanon, where Palestinians are refused basic civil rights, barred from numerous professions and from owning land. Many live in ghetto-like settlements, sometimes surrounded by segregation walls, barbed wire and military surveillance. Where is the outcry for these Palestinians? Or for those in Syria, suffering a lack of medical aid, food and water, and caught between Syrian forces, Russian influence and the Iranian desire to build a military zone?

The chasm between reality and the anti-Israel narrative is vast. Ignored, too, are the complex security challenges Israel faces. Iranian-backed Islamic fundamentalist groups are intent on Israel's destruction yet Minto prefers to ignore Israel's security needs. Indeed, terrorist attacks are often deemed justified by anti-Israel activists.

Little effort is made to address the real cause of Palestinian woes - the inability or unwillingness of a corrupt leadership to work for a solution for their people. Rather than build a thriving, functioning state, energies are focussed on demonising Israel and cultivating a culture that celebrates death and martyrdom.

The reality is that Jews are the indigenous people of Israel with more than 3,000 years unbroken connection to the land. After banishment from their homeland, centuries of persecution, discrimination, and multiple expulsions from foreign lands, the Jews returned and re-established themselves as a nation. When, in the nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire became open to immigration, persecuted Jews began to join a remnant who had kept *ahi kaa* (kept the home fires of hope burning) in the land. As an indigenous people, Jews have the right to assert and protect their distinctive identity in their ancestral homeland. Their self-determination as a people and the revival of their ancient language is a remarkable inspiration to indigenous peoples everywhere.

The Jewish people have endured existential threats for more than three thousand years. The apartheid smear is merely one manifestation of ancient Jew hatred, applied to the Jewish state. What scholar Robert Wistrich called "the longest hatred" must be called out whenever and wherever it occurs. It is time for Aotearoa New Zealand to choose the right side of history and say no to antisemitism.

Dr Sheree Trotter is co-founder of the Indigenous Coalition For Israel [www.indigenouscoalition.org](http://www.indigenouscoalition.org)



# The Festival of Light - Hanukkah

## Joanna Moss

NZ Friends of Israel (NZFOI) | Wellington

*"I am the Son of God, was revealed to the people during Hanukkah in the Temple."*

Let there be light, and there was light. Light shines in the darkness. Light illuminates our path and gives us revelation. *Hanukkah* is the festival of light. It falls late in the year, around December, when it's cold in Israel, bringing a welcome glow. This year *Hanukkah* begins in November, so I suggest you follow the devotional below in December leading up to Christmas.

The Jews light a 9-branched candlestick called a *Hannukiah* that they often place in street-facing windows lighting one additional candle per night. Does a scripture come to mind? The *Hannukiah* is shaped like a traditional menorah but with an extra branch. That word 'branch' should ring a bell. It's a description of the Messiah, and yes, you guessed it, seven references found in *Zechariah*, *Jeremiah* and *Isaiah* and of course in *Matthew's Gospel*. In the middle of the *Hannukiah* lies the smaller servant candle, the *shamash* that is used to light the others.

I pray that the servant candle will light your path and give you revelation this *Hanukkah* season as we study the I AM statements found in *John's Gospel* where incidentally *Hanukkah* is found (*Feast of Dedication, John 10*). Additionally, look for the imagery found in the *Tanakh* for additional insight (Text, Context and Co-text). Notice how these I AM statements build on one another. Genius!

### Evening - Lighting the Shamash

The servant imagery is found in the middle of *John's Gospel* in *John 12.26*. *Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, my servant also will be. My father will honour the one who serves me.*

**Reflection:** Am I really the servant God wants me to be? Am I the good and faithful servant? What do I need to change in my heart, my mind and my actions?

### Day 1 - I AM the Bread of Life

The first I AM statement is of such importance it's repeated four times from *John 6.35* onwards. The revelation comes in the context of the miraculous feeding of the 5,000 from very little. People need feeding. It's a basic need and an ongoing one. Jesus reflects upon the Manna that came down from Heaven (*Ex 16, Deut 8.3 and*

of Jesus as the Bread of Life. Do you trust him to provide your basic needs? Can you stand on the word in tough times – you may need to?

### Day 2 - I AM the Light of the World

This statement comes in the context of the healing of the blind man, light in the miracle of sight first in *John 8:12-30*, then in *John 12:34-36*. The purpose is shown in v29; examine it. People need light. The pillar of light by night was provided in the wilderness (*Ex 13:17-22*), and a light to the Gentiles to open blind eyes is prophesied (*Is 42.6*). Greater light was promised in the Messiah in *Micah*.

**Reflection:** Is there light on my face? Looking over the past year, has my revelation and light increased? If not, what is the blockage? What am I going to do about it?

### Day 3 - I AM the Door of the Sheep

The Door or Gate imagery of *John 10.7* is used to highlight the only way in and out of the sheepfold. In ancient times the shepherd lay across the entrance at

### Day 4 - I AM the Good Shepherd

Appropriately the next image is the Good Shepherd (*John 10.11 and 14*) we are so familiar with in Psalm 23. Once in the flock, the shepherd tends the sheep and fights for their safety.

**Reflection:** Do you know him as your Good Shepherd? Do you hear His voice? Celebrate what he has done for you. Can you tell a good shepherd from a bad one?

### Day 5 - I AM the Son of God

Building up a picture of his character using I AM statements lies His identity statement. Interestingly, found in the context of *Hanukkah*. I am the Son of God is played out in *John 10:22-36* as the only one who can forgive sin. *John 8.58* notes, *before Abraham was, I AM* suggesting deity. Many other Bible verses focus on the son of God theme.

**Reflection:** Jesus' life on earth can be seen as two parts. First, the example of how to live a godly life and secondly, as the son of God, the perfect man who gave his life to redeem us from Satan's clutches. His deity matters. What is it to you?

### Day 6 - I AM the Resurrection & the Life

Next, we see the imagery focus on what happens next in the revelation of Jesus and in your life. You are resurrected (born again) and have new life in Christ by his victory *John 11.25* both on earth and in Heaven.

**Reflection:** Am I fully born again? Is my new life significantly different? Is it life in Christ or in the flesh?

### Day 7 - I AM the Way, the Truth & the Life

In this summary statement, *John 14.6*, Jesus focuses on three aspects. He is the way, and there's only one way. He is the true meaning, the source of truth and trustworthiness. Our lives must be based on truth for them to be fruitful. Society needs truth. Finally, He reiterates the promise of life – a life more abundant.

**Reflection:** Do I believe this statement and embrace it fully? Truth is absolute. Do I see the biblical foundation in society based on

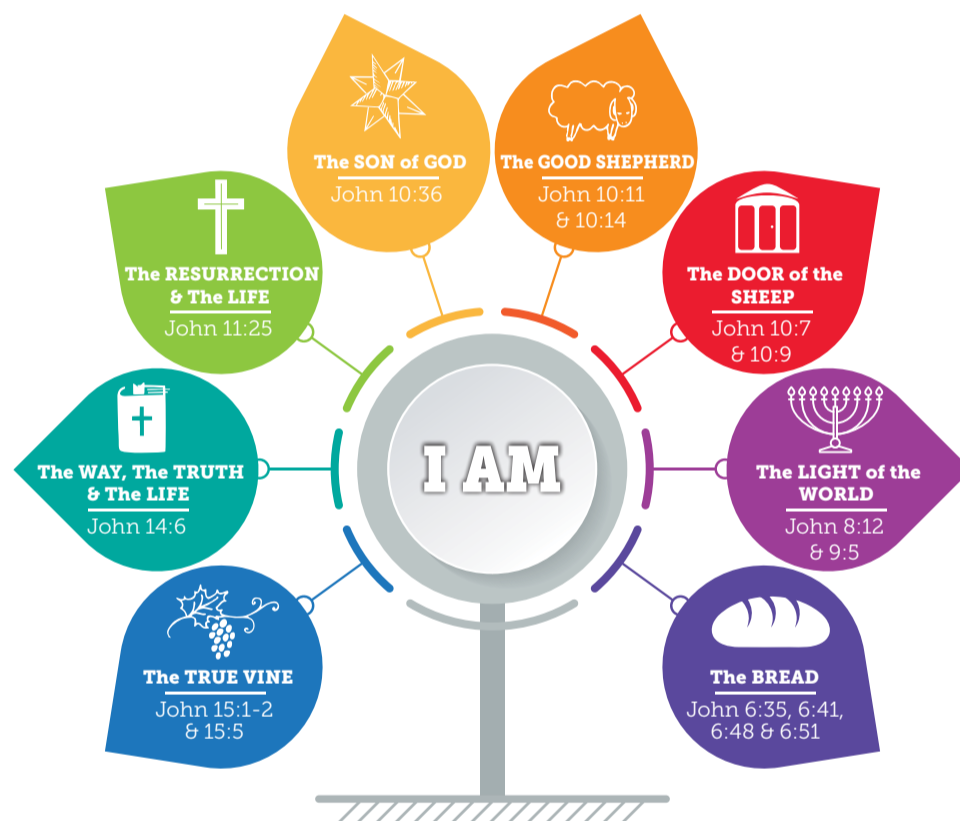
truth falling away? What does it mean for the future? Reflect on *John 17:17*.

### Day 8 - I AM the True Vine

Read *John 15:1-8*. Seemingly out of place as an I AM until you see the context in *John 15:1-2*. Here the I AM statement shifts solely from the identity and function of Christ to add his connection with his Father, thus completing the bigger picture. Jesus is the vine, and His father is the vinedresser. We are the branches on the vine and thus dependent. The vine produces the fruit and more so when pruned. Pruning can be severe but necessary.

**Reflection:** Do I know the Father and the Son? Do I understand the relationship between them and me?

In conclusion, *John's Gospel* gives us the I AM statements to identify Christ, his character and role. I hope you find this study useful and it builds you up ready for 2022.



night to keep the sheep safe. It was a sacrificial gesture since it was hardly comfortable. People could climb in, but they are called thieves and robbers; they don't protect. The door/gate and sheep imagery is widely used in *Num 27:15-18, Ps 118:20, Eze 34, Jer 23, Is 40:10-11 and Micah 5:4*.

**Reflection:** God wants no one to perish, but he gives them free will. The door is the access way. He's the Door of the sheep who hear His voice and respond. But people have to come via the Door. What does this mean to you?

## The Jews light a 9-branched candlestick called a Hannukiah that they often place in street-facing windows lighting one additional candle per night.

*Ps 78:23-25*) as both provisions in the desert, but with a deeper meaning. He is the word made flesh. His bread satisfies; it gives life on earth and eternal life.

**Reflection:** Take hold of the importance of the repetition

## EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST NOW INVITED

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Please email [info@c4israel.org.nz](mailto:info@c4israel.org.nz) with your name(s), and contact details, with 'EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST' in the subject line.

We will keep you informed as details of the tour are confirmed.







## Challenges and Encouragements from the Story and Miracle of Hanukkah

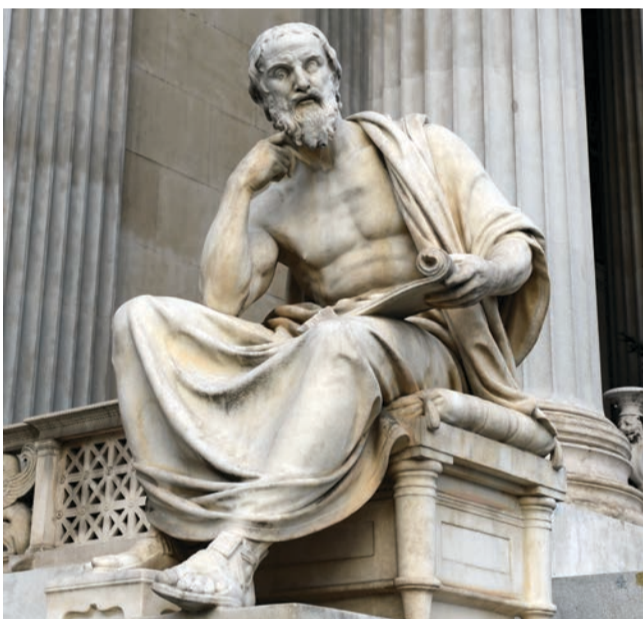
### ■ Keith Buxton

Former National Director | Bridges for Peace Australia

The eight-day festival of *Hanukkah*, also known as the *Festival of Lights*, or *Feast of Dedication*, has become an integral part of the sequence of Jewish holidays celebrated annually, this year from sunset on 28 November to sunset on 6 December.

As a Jew, Jesus would have celebrated *Hanukkah* regularly, thereby affirming His Jewish identity and continuity with His heritage. We read in *John 10:22-23* that there was a feast of dedication during the winter: "Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the Temple, in Solomon's porch."

*Hanukkah* is an inspiring story of incredible faithfulness to God and a story of awesome courage. This holiday is about a people who refused to give in and go against God's Word. *Hanukkah* celebrates the rededication of the Temple for God's people as well as their victory against a far mightier enemy, a victory that only God Himself could secure. In significant ways, it is a holiday commemorating God's miraculous care of His people.



Sculpture of Herodotus of Halicarnassus. | Photo: Shutterstock

To help us understand this miraculous story, I have drawn on a wide variety of sources in summarising the important historical context of *Hanukkah*. In the 4th century BC, the great military general, Alexander the Great, conquered the whole known world, and one of his overriding goals was to introduce the world to everything Greek: Greek education, language, thought, custom and philosophy; Greek theatres, chariot races, gymnasiums and stadiums.

The land of Israel was no exception. Sad to say, many Jews submitted to the lure of Hellenism and embraced the Greek culture. Alexander the Great died in 323 BC - but the Greek culture lived on, continuing to spread and to influence and control the minds of the people.

After his death at just 32 years of age, Alexander's empire split into four parts, his four generals dividing all his conquests among themselves. One of his generals took control of the area, that later became Syria, where several generations later, Antiochus IV came into power. Antiochus IV declared himself 'Epiphanes', which means 'god manifest'. So he was stating that he was divine, he was god - hardly the most humble man of the year!

In 167 BC, Antiochus ordered Jerusalem to be destroyed. Houses were burned and the city walls broken down, and thousands were killed or sold into slavery - even including those who embraced Antiochus' ways. All up, he killed forty thousand inhabitants and sold forty thousand more as slaves.

The Temple on Mount Zion was stripped of its golden vessels and treasures, and Antiochus defiled it by erecting an idol of Zeus on the holy altar and then sacrificing a pig on the altar and sprinkling its blood in the Holy of

Holies. Only swine were thereafter permitted for sacrifice in the converted shrine.

In further attempting to achieve his goal of abolishing every single trace of the Jewish religion, Antiochus issued orders forbidding circumcision, *Sabbath* observance, kosher diets and the study of the *Torah*. Any Jew who was discovered attempting to live out the *Torah* was immediately put to death. Sadly, but not surprisingly, many Jews gave in and, in order to survive, chose to comply with the new laws. There were others, however, who stood fast and refused to yield, who paid with their lives.

Jewish history records many courageous acts of faithful devotion. Hidden away in the mountains was a man named Mattathias along with his sons, a priestly family from the line of Aaron. From this family's influence, a small army soon formed. Before he died, Mattathias passed on the leadership of this small band to his son Judas. Judas and his freedom fighters came to be called the Maccabees. Maccabee was not his last name. Maccabee means 'hammer'.

When the men feared for their lives, Judas encouraged them with some amazing words that we would do well to meditate on - "It is easy for many to be overcome by few; in the sight of heaven there is no difference between deliverance by many or by few; for victory in war does not depend upon the size of the army, but on the strength that comes from heaven. With great presumption and lawlessness, they come against us to destroy us and our wives and children and to despoil us; but we are fighting for our lives and our Torah laws. He Himself will crush them before us, so do not be afraid of them."

In 164 BC, this small group of faithful Jewish fighters won an incredible victory against the mighty Greek army, took back Jerusalem and cleansed the Temple, and then established an independent Judea, which remained independent for over 100 years until conquered by the Romans. The Maccabees knew, of course, that they were vastly outnumbered, but they trusted implicitly in God.

Having regained control of the Temple, the Maccabees began to purify it. The defiled altar was torn down and rebuilt, and the Temple was restored and reconsecrated. The rebuilt altar of incense and table were then brought back into the Temple. They burnt the incense on the altar and put the shewbread on the table, and hung the curtains. In every way they could, they prepared the house of God for His presence.

Everything was ready - except one thing. They found only one small cruse of oil. Just enough to light the menorah lamps one day - but it would take eight days to prepare new oil in the proper way. They decided to light it anyway. Amazingly the menorah miraculously burned for eight days until new oil could be prepared!

The *dreidel game* is a well-known *Hanukkah* tradition - a *dreidel* is a spinning top with a different Hebrew letter inscribed on each of its four sides. Jews play it as a way of celebrating their history and having fun with friends and family. On each of the *dreidel's* four sides is a Hebrew letter which together stands for 'a great miracle happened here.' It is a popular way of helping children to remember the great miracle.



Dreidels. | Photo: Keith Buxton

It was God who enabled and empowered the Maccabees to prevail and, in so doing, to preserve the Jewish heritage. Had it not been for our God of miracles, it is quite possible that there would have been no more Judaism and no more Jewish people or nation, and therefore no Christianity proclaiming the fully Jewish Jesus as the promised Messiah.

All through history, the Jews have faced battle after battle to maintain their very existence and have survived - in the face of persecution even from Christians. Truly we must be faithful in our calling as Christians to reach out to and bless the Jewish people. And as we are reminded this *Hanukkah* of God's miraculous faithfulness to the Jewish people, let us rededicate ourselves anew to be faithful to Him as we reflect on some personal challenges and encouragements.

### Anything that has our attention more than God does is idolatry

It has been said that Hellenism worshipped the holiness of beauty; Hebraism worshipped the beauty of holiness. Hellenists glorified the human body both in sport and in art. They were humanists worshipping man instead of God, in effect making men into gods. Judas Maccabeus and the people who saved Judaism opposed the enforcement of Hellenist worship, seeing it as a fundamental betrayal of Israel's - and their - unique covenant with God.

Unfortunately, many Jews convinced themselves that they would be accepted if they compromised and became part of the crowd. We can learn much from the miracle of the oil. Have you ever seen pictures of oil spillages from tankers? Oil is unique in that it does not mix or blend with other liquids, like all other liquids do, but separates and rises to the top. The influence of Hellenism ceased with a miracle that involved oil, a powerful symbol of that which refused to assimilate.

And so the light burned in the Temple for eight days. The light that shines in our lives as followers of Jesus Christ does not come from us; it comes from our Father God. But we all know that sometimes we have things in our lives that hinder or dim that light. We are prone to set up idols in our temples, and so we need regularly to rededicate our lives to the One who has given us life.

### As believers in Jesus, we must be a clear light in the darkness

We cannot shut ourselves off from our increasingly godless world. The Maccabean rebellion really began only after the Greeks defiled the Holy Temple. There are times in life, and in the turmoil of social change, when the line has been crossed, and we must resist. Knowing where and when those moments have arisen is an ongoing challenge and drives us to seek God's guidance and wisdom.

At *Hanukkah*, Jews place the menorah by the window or door for others to see - in other words, it isn't enough to not assimilate. Jews - just like Christians - must be willing to show that they aren't ashamed of being who they are. Every believer should be an uncompromising and clear 'light in the darkness.' As Jesus said in *Matthew 5:16*, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." We are living in days when our children and grandchildren will need to know how to stand and not back down.

Also, during *Hanukkah*, Jewish families light an additional candle each evening so that the light grows stronger and brighter through each of the eight nights. Let us be those who keep the light burning, not just for eight days or for a month, but throughout the year, every year. We are all called followers of Jesus to bring the light wherever and whenever there is darkness. Don't let your light grow dim!

Continued on page 11



# Seventh Encouragement:

## We learn from the *Booths of Tabernacles* that we *belong together*

### ■ Keith Buxton

Former National Director | Bridges for Peace Australia

In *Leviticus 23:2*, the Lord said to Moses, “*These are My appointed feasts, the appointed feasts of the Lord*”. The Lord was speaking of all the seven major feasts in the Jewish calendar that He then went on to outline and which are recorded in the rest of *Leviticus 23*.

The *Feast of Tabernacles* is the final one of these feasts, and as we well know, is marked by much joy and thanksgiving as God’s chosen covenant people remember and celebrate His greatness, His grace and His goodness.

We should note that they are the Lord’s feasts appointed by Him. At the very least, that should alert us to the fact that there are important things for us Christian believers, who have been grafted into the olive tree, (namely Israel), to learn. Our roots are Hebraic, and we are both unbiblical and unwise to forget that.

An intriguing aspect of the four species mentioned in previous articles - the palm, myrtle, willow (the *lulav*) and citron, which the Jewish people are commanded to bind together and wave in the *sukkah*, is the fact that these are in Jewish literature, likened to different parts of the human body.

The palm - a man’s spine; the myrtle branch - his eyes; the willow - his lips; and the citron - his heart. From this, we can be reminded that all parts of the body are to be united in offering dedicated service to the Lord. As Paul said, “*offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship*” (*Romans 12:1*).

And so, as Christians, we may remember at the *Feast of Tabernacles* that we are all part of one body - the body of all those who believe in Jesus. We belong together, we need one another, and we need to guard our unity as the people of God. Satan is always out to destroy our unity if he could.

At the same time, we also celebrate our spiritual connection with the Jewish people. Remember what Paul wrote about our being grafted into our Jewish root in an important section in *Romans 11:11-24* - “*I am talking to you Gentiles.... You, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root... You do not support the root, but the root supports you... Do not be arrogant....*”

We need to reaffirm this today when reports of increasing antisemitism - triggered by arrogance, hatred, misinformation and outright bias - are featured in all sections of the media. The Executive Council of Australian Jewry releases a report every year on antisemitism in Australia. In its 2020 report, there was a decrease in reported antisemitic incidents compared to the previous year (probably due to pandemic restrictions). Still, there was a worrying increase in serious incidents such as physical assaults, intimidation and verbal abuse, including being accused of causing the current pandemic.

As Christians, it is vital that we continue to declare and demonstrate our unity and solidarity with the Jewish people, for we really do belong together as covenant people. Our roots as Christians go deep into Jewish soil, and we ‘*share in the nourishing sap from the olive root.*’ That speaks of shared life!

As we reflect once more on the week-long living by Jewish people in the *sukkah* or booth, it doesn’t take much to see how this would break down all kinds of barriers between people. Booth-dwellers become more aware of the things that bind them together than the things that may separate them.

Think about it for a moment. As they pass the week in their fragile and temporary booths, Jewish people are brought face to face with their own frailty. Young and old, rich and poor, student and businessman, unemployed and retired, they all come and sit in their *sukkah* - their



Traditional symbols of Sukkot: Etrog, lulav, hadas and arava. | Photo: Shutterstock

own agendas take a very definite back seat. They are bonded together in their relationship with one another and also with the Lord and in His agenda for their lives.

I guess it is a bit like going on a camping holiday or staying for a week in a caravan on the beachfront. Barriers come down. Your fellow holidaymaker’s wealth and status are secondary when compared to the fact that you are having a break and letting your hair down a bit. You have long talks about the footy or cast a fishing line or two together, and the demands and pressures of the world are (hopefully!) forgotten. You relate to others - and to God - in a new way. Sadly we can easily forget all that when we return to our regular jobs and our daily activities. But just maybe we catch a glimpse of how things can and should be in our relationships with one another...

As Christians, we should celebrate the things that bind us together far more than the differences that may separate us. May our churches be known for genuinely serving their local community rather than primarily reflecting a denominational distinctive. I don’t think that is being idealistic - I think it is close to the heart of our Father.

Peter touched upon this when, writing “*to God’s elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia*” [in other words, believers all over the place], he said, “*you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light*” (*1 Peter 1:1, 2:9*). A chosen people - one people!

Look around you! You are not surrounded by great statesmen or scholars or sports idols, and so on - we are, in reality, a collection of nobodies. But we are people of the Spirit! That’s the way Paul said it would be. That is the way God designed it:

“*Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.... so that no one may boast before Him*” (*1 Corinthians 1:26-27,29*).

Perhaps our celebration of Tabernacles will encourage us to open our hearts to and accept one another in a new way. It is one of the unique works of the Holy Spirit within us to do just that. I am always encouraged by evidence of the increasing breakdown of barriers between believers and between groups of believers.

*1 Thessalonians 4:9-10* is particularly instructive here: “*Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more.*”

We can never say we have too much love or too much unity. There is always more we can do. May the reminder of all the varied customs and practices of the Feast of Tabernacles and the experience of celebrating Tabernacles help us to love each other - and our precious Jewish brothers and sisters - even more. May we learn from the booths of Tabernacles that we really do belong together.



| Photo: Pxhere



## Israel's Embassy Goes to the Movies

Usually, the Embassy's annual flagship community event is *Hannukah in the Park*. But this year, with Auckland in lockdown and restrictions in Wellington, it was not to be. But undeterred, the Embassy pressed on with two new events, the brainchild of Patricia Deen, Director of Cultural and Public Affairs. First, *A Tower of David* evening at the Penthouse cinema on 23 November, which brought Jerusalem to Wellington and was then sent around the country. Nothing like seeing it on the big screen!

You can view the event recording yourself here: [https://zoom.us/rec/share/pRBeaciNYeJhuHfaG4ygGJ7yQPg8XjjqKgAyyZF6DNGPI\\_\\_5VZVQeVweB-QRFJh.C7pYZQLKU-ezWG-A](https://zoom.us/rec/share/pRBeaciNYeJhuHfaG4ygGJ7yQPg8XjjqKgAyyZF6DNGPI__5VZVQeVweB-QRFJh.C7pYZQLKU-ezWG-A). Access Passcode: m3%eZhJQ

Whilst Israel has been closed to tourism, much restoration work has been done to the Citadel of David and not without cause as it was badly cracked in places. Using fabulous graphics, the history of the citadel unfolded before your eyes from the First Temple period up to the British jail era during the Mandate. Something for every visitor's taste and interest. The event included an overview from the main archaeologist involved and interviews and Q&A with the Tower of David museum's curator Eilat Lieber and PR advisor Caroline Shapiro, both of whom were keen to praise the work that Rabbi Ariel Tal had done there with the Christian groups before he came to New Zealand.

It isn't just restoration being done, in fact, a whole new entrance and visitor complex will be built near the Old City wall by the Jaffa Gate. In another project, the same architects are designing links that develop the area outside the wall and link Teddy Park below to the Jaffa Gate by an underground passage with a museum turn-off. The whole museum will be revamped, including an innovation lab based on the one used in Te Papa to be launched in November 2022.

The Embassy also co-sponsored the Israeli Film Festival at the Penthouse Cinema in conjunction with Wellington's Temple Sinai and the Jewish Community Centre over *Hannukah* (28 Nov -5 Dec) with free tickets and *sufganyot* (doughnuts) plus the lighting of the *Hannukiah*. Billed by the Ambassador as something for everyone, it even includes animation and a children's movie. Most are award-winning films such as *Working Woman and Princess*, not for the faint-hearted. Documentary lovers will be keen to see *Incitement* about the radicalisation of Yigal Amir, Rabin's assassin that will shed more light on what motivated him. For comic relief,

*The Wedding Plan*, the story of a groom that bolted and a bride with a 30-day plan to find a replacement showcases Israeli humour at its best.

It's been a season of Israel-themed movies with *Breaking Bread*, the story of the Israeli food challenge in Haifa launched by Dr Nof Atamna-Ishmael, the first Muslim Arab to win Israel's *Masterchef* competition. Now showing around the country, the movie pairs Arab and Jewish chefs in a celebration of Israeli food. Previously, as part of the International Film Festival was delayed by the lockdown, the Israeli documentary *Til Kingdom Come* aired. It's the story of American evangelical support for Israel as told by those involved in their own words. Centred on the role of the Bible belt in shoring up Trump's political support base, it showcases the involvement of a poor, rural Kentucky church and their pastor who teaches on Israel. They faithfully give to Israel's poor based on the principle found in the Abrahamic Covenant (*Gen 12.3*). The documentary features key players like Rev Johnnie Moore, John Hagee of CUFI and the late Rabbi Eckstein and his daughter Yael representing bridge organisations as well as the Jewish left opposed to it. It's worth reflecting on what a similar documentary made on NZ Christian support for Israel would look like and how it would differ from the American model.



View of the Tower of David in the Old City, Jerusalem. | Photo: Shutterstock



Continued from page 9

### No cause is hopeless, so don't give up!

The Maccabees did something that was seemingly hopeless - they had enough oil for one day, and that was that. But they lit it anyway. Something amazing happened because the Maccabees took an action that seemingly had no hope of achieving its goal. The miracle of their victory is a message of hope to those who feel helpless. No cause is hopeless.

The message? If you believe you are right, then persevere with all your strength to win your goals even though there is no evident hope of winning. Some day you may see the barriers fall. On a more personal level, many of us have experienced seemingly overwhelming difficulties of one kind or another. Financial worries, illness, depression, children in trouble, loneliness; each and all of these can seem unending and insurmountable.

The encouragement of *Hanukkah*, of light in the midst of darkness, is: "Don't give in to despair; don't give up; never stop trying." Carry on. Keep working. Keep dreaming. And even if nothing seems to change, the very fact that you keep on keeping on builds your dignity, and then... who knows? Miracles may begin to occur, flow through us and light up the world.



Children celebrating Hannukah. | Photo: Shutterstock

### When we stand on God's Word, He gives the victory

Because they were willing to stand and not compromise, God gave the Maccabees victory. When we stand up for God's Word and refuse to compromise, no matter how hard it seems at times, our faithful God will see us through. As Paul says in *1 Corinthians 16:13*, "Watch, stand fast in the

faith, be brave, be strong." When you have done all to stand, continue to stand. The small army of Maccabean fighters trusted God and was able to regain Jerusalem.

### Miracles may begin to occur, flow through us and light up the world.

*Hanukkah* encourages us to stand and be of good courage. We can overcome with God. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (*Romans 8:31*). The Maccabean fighters consisted of ordinary people: farmers, workers, servants. So often, it is ordinary people who are willing to stand up for what is right. Many people, not all but many who have great prestige and wealth, are unwilling to lose what they have in this world - so they compromise God's Word.

When I think of the oil miracle, I am reminded that little really is much when God is in it! When we decide to take one small step of faith, God can do miraculous things in our lives. At *Hanukkah*, Jews all over the world proclaim to the world the faithfulness to His people of the one true God. May we, as believers in Jesus, be continually challenged and encouraged to let others know how great is our awesome God of miracles!



# Southland Cyclist Signs With Israel

■ **Aimee Wilson**

[www.whatsoninvers.co.nz](http://www.whatsoninvers.co.nz)

Southland cyclist Corbin Strong has been signed with the Israel Start-Up Nation as he moves up the professional ranks.

Announced by the SEG Racing Academy, the 21-year-old, who just raced for the NZ Olympic team, was excited to make his step up, and switch his focus from the track onto road.

“The last two years have been far from what I had imagined with being in New Zealand preparing for the delayed Olympics, this has just made me really motivated and hungry to prove my talent on the road.”

Over the past two seasons, the Academy has monitored and guided Corbin throughout his different goals, resulting in a dominant performance by the young talent.

He has proved to be dominant not only in the UCI Oceania Tour, where he won a stage, and the overall of the New Zealand Cycle Classic in 2021 and two stages of the Tour of Southland in 2020, but also at worldwide level as he became World Track Points Champion in Berlin last year.

“I’ve been extremely lucky to have the guidance and support of the Academy over the last two seasons. They’ve really elevated my profile and continued to accelerate my development in a multitude of ways. Being in the Academy isn’t just about racing, it’s the whole



Corbin Strong winning gold at World Champs in 2020. | Photo: Reuters

package and I’m really grateful I have been able to benefit from all the programmes and specialists within the team”.

A long-term deal with the Israeli World Tour squad will allow the talented rider from New Zealand to keep on developing and to properly transition to road racing.

“For now I look forward to making road my priority and gaining experience in Europe. Then eventually become a winning rider in the pro peloton. I’m really humbled to be given this opportunity with Israel Start-Up Nation, I can’t wait to prove my talent and reward the academy and all my supporters for their help in my journey so far.”

## SUPER SUMMER Christmas Deals

Christians for Israel New Zealand would like to thank you for supporting us through yet another difficult year, by offering the following resources for only

For further information on each resource, go to [www.c4israel.org.nz](http://www.c4israel.org.nz)

**\$10**

Don’t miss out! These \$10 deals are only available during December 2021 and January 2022.

 <p><b>Until – Fourteen Prophetic Horizons</b> By Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer <b>only \$10</b></p>	 <p><b>Why Israel?</b> By Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer <b>only \$10</b></p>	 <p><b>Why is it So Difficult for Jews to Believe in Jesus</b> By Rev Cornelis Kant <b>only \$10</b></p>	 <p><b>70 Questions About Israel</b> By Chan Siew Fong <b>only \$10</b></p> <p><small>NB: Size of book differs from image</small></p>
 <p><b>Living a Life in Victory</b> By Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer <b>only \$10</b></p>	 <p><b>Why Jerusalem?</b> By Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer <b>only \$10</b></p>	 <p><b>San Remo 100-Pathway for Peace</b> Commemorative Edition <b>only \$10</b></p> <p><small>NB: Size of book differs from image</small></p>	 <p><b>Israel Magazine - 70 Years Anniversary</b> Commemorative Edition <b>only \$10</b></p>
 <p><b>The Signs of the Times</b> By Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer <b>only \$10</b></p>	 <p><b>Why End Times?</b> By Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer <b>only \$10</b></p>	 <p><b>Israel: Covenants &amp; Kingdom</b> By Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer <b>only \$10</b></p>	 <p><b>Towards the Establishment of the State of Israel</b> By Prof Edda Fogorollo <b>only \$10</b></p>

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# Roger van Oordt Appointed Honorary Consul in the Netherlands



Deputy Ambassador Hila Stern presents Roger van Oordt (right) with the official documents of his appointment as Honorary Consul.



Following the swearing-in of Roger van Oordt as honorary consul, the Israel Centre (HQ of C4I) now also functions as the consulate of Israel.

## Christians for Israel Staff

On 4 November 2021, Mr Roger F.G. van Oordt was appointed honorary consul in the Netherlands for the State of Israel.

Van Oordt was executive director of Christians for Israel Netherlands until 2020. He is the son of the founder of Christians for Israel, Karel van Oordt, and has been involved in the organisation and the Israel Products Center since its establishment in 1980.

Van Oordt: "I consider this a special recognition of the deep bond that we as Christians for Israel have with Israel. Thousands of volunteers, staff and supporters worldwide have been committed to Israel for over forty years. By supporting all kinds of humanitarian projects for both Jews and Arabs, by organising trips to Israel with tourists, journalists, pastors and politicians, and by providing Biblical teaching in churches about God's faithfulness to Israel."

Hila Stern, deputy Israeli ambassador in the Netherlands, described Roger during the ceremony as a true friend of Israel and the Jewish people, and someone who always stands up for the truth about Israel. The title honorary consul is a voluntary position in which trade and international relations between the Netherlands and Israel are promoted. The honorary consul also devotes himself to representing Israel in the Netherlands in all kinds of ways. The Netherlands now has four honorary consuls of Israel, whereas worldwide there are two hundred. Each honorary consul fulfils his role in his own way.

The position fits in well with the current role of Van Oordt, who has handed over the role of Director of Christians for Israel to his younger brother Frank. Now, Roger van Oordt is the leader of the Business Club of Christians for Israel Netherlands, a growing group of hands-on entrepreneurs who support all kinds of humanitarian projects in Israel.

Van Oordt: "For forty years, we have supported Israel in words and deeds, and at the same time, we are committed to combating antisemitism in the Netherlands. In this new role as honorary consul, I see it as my mission to continue to speak up for Israel with enthusiasm.

My motivation comes from *Isaiah 62:1*:

**'For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet, till her vindication shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch.'**

This is such a beautiful verse. This is my mission, and this is what we want to do. Not just me, but everyone who is a Christian for Israel. As watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem, until the glory of Jerusalem shall be complete."

The honorary consulate will be located in the Israel Centre in Nijkerk, Netherlands. | Photos: Willem Jan de Bruin Photography



Signs of Faith  
By Kees de Vreugd

## Circumcision

In this series, 'Signs of Faith', objects that express Jewish faith are explained and discussed.

Circumcision is the physical sign par excellence of God's covenant with Israel. This is what God had commanded Abraham: "And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations" (*Genesis 17:10-13*). So there are two signs of God's covenant with Israel: circumcision and the Sabbath (*Exodus 31:13*).

On the eighth day after his birth, a Jewish boy is circumcised (unless there are compelling reasons to

postpone it, e.g. health complications). So circumcision can also take place on a Sabbath. It is also the day on which a boy receives his name (*Luke 2:21*). Because it is about a covenant, the Hebrew term is *brit milah*, the 'covenant of circumcision'. Just for the record: only boys are circumcised. Female circumcision is absolutely not Jewish.

The instruments for the circumcision (a little clip and knife) are usually stored in an adorned box. The circumciser (*mohel*) is somebody with special training. Today, it is usually a (para)medic professional.

Circumcision can take place at home, or in the synagogue, or – what I also have witnessed – in a festive hall. It is a festive happening with many guests and good food. The boy is lying on a

circumcision pillow, preferably on his grandfather's lap, who is sitting in a special chair. There is a symbolic empty chair for Eliah, who is believed to be present when a Jew is accepted into the covenant. After a blessing, the *mohel* cuts part of the foreskin of the penis so that the glans becomes bare. He also immediately sucks away the blood. The piece of foreskin is buried.

On the eighth day, the operation is much less painful than it would be later. The wound quickly heals within three days.

The ceremony is concluded by a blessing over a cup of wine: "Just as he has entered into the Covenant, so may he enter into Torah, into marriage, and into good deeds."

## Recommended Reading

### Eurabia – The Euro-Arab Axis by Bat Ye'or

Farleigh Dickinson University Press (2005)

This foundational book describes how, during the 20th century, Europe and the Western world evolved from a Judeo-Christian civilisation, with important post-enlightenment secular elements, into a “post-Judeo-Christian civilisation that is subservient to the ideology of jihad and the Islamic powers that propagate it.”

The new European civilisation in the making can be called a civilisation of dhimmitude. The term dhimmitude comes from some the Arab word ‘dhimmi’. It refers to subjugated, non-Muslim individuals or people who accept the restrictive and humiliating subordination to an ascendant Islamic power to avoid enslavement or death.”

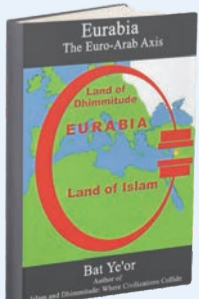
Bat Ye'or is famous for her groundbreaking work in understanding the concept of ‘dhimmitude’ and its influence in the West, in her many books, including *The Dhimmi – Jews and Christians under Islam (1985)* and *Islam and Dhimmitude: Where Civilisations Collide (2002)*.

In *Eurabia*, Ye'or traces in detail how, since the 1970s, a Euro-Arab culture has permeated and overwhelmed all levels of western European society. Under the euphemism of ‘the peace process,’ the EU has made Israel the cornerstone of its relations with the Arab states and its own security - a quid pro quo against Islamic terror. Under Arab pressure, the EU has willingly made Israel hostage to its own pro-Arab policies in advance of its quest for security and global influence.

In order to appease the Arab world, the European Economic Community entered into the Euro-Arab Dialogue (EAD) with the Arab countries in the 1970s. In late 1973, the Arabs had imposed an oil boycott on all European countries that supported Israel in the Yom Kippur War (1973). There was also a wave of terror attacks throughout Europe, instigated by the Palestine Liberation Organization under the leadership of Yasser Arafat. The EAD was a comprehensive, well-funded and well-organized programme approved by the highest European elite, some of whom had had ties with the Nazi regime. The deal was that the Arabs obtained access to universities and educational institutions in Europe (hence the many Islamic histories and religious schools in European universities today). The Arabs, in turn, promised to lift the boycott and persuade Arafat to stop the terror in Europe.

*Eurabia* is an absolute classic and a must-read for anyone interested in understanding how the Western world has shifted, in the course of only one

generation, from support of Zionism and the Jewish State of Israel in the mid-20th century to the almost fanatical support of the Palestinian cause.



# God's Power Unto Salvation



| Photo: Shutterstock

## ■ Johannes Gerloff Theologian, Journalist, Lecturer & Author

**This is the second article of a series of articles on Romans 9-11, based on the book *Rejoice, You Gentiles, with His People* by Johannes Gerloff, which is expected to be published in early 2022.**

Context is critical if we wish to understand any statement properly. We have to know the framework within which the author communicates. For that reason, to understand Paul's discussion of Israel in *Romans 9-11*, we need to get an overview of the first eight chapters of his Epistle to the Romans.

*Romans 1-8* provide answers to the questions:

- How can I be justified before God?
- How do I enter into a relationship with my Creator?

The starting point is his assessment in *Romans 1:20-21*:

“For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made.”

Thus, the Apostle reaches a conclusion: “So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

The Jewish people have an advantage over non-Jews because: “To them, the words of the [one and only] God were entrusted” (*Romans 3:2*). However, considering their way of life, Paul has to reproach his kinsmen: “You teach others, but you do not teach yourself... You boast in the law (Torah), while [at the same time] you disgrace the [one] God by transgressing the law. For the name of the [one] God is being ridiculed because of you among the Gentiles” (*Romans 2:21-24*).

Paul, known among his contemporaries as Rabbi Sha'ul of Tarsus, knew that: “Circumcision is useful if you practice the law. But if you violate the law, your circumcision has become invalid” (*Romans 2:25*). He realised that, concerning the problem of sin, there is no difference

between Jew and Gentile. “...for all have sinned. They lack the glorious presence of the [one, true] God” (*Romans 3:23*).

The way out of this dilemma is the fact that a person is justified through a trust-relationship with God. “...since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith”. (*Romans 3:30*). Paul explains to his readers step by step how they are able to enter into peace with God. The outstanding example is Abraham, the Father of our faith (*Romans 4*). Today, our faith is in the sacrificial death and victorious resurrection of Messiah Yeshua – our Lord Jesus Christ (*Romans 5*). He has provided the way to a life with God through His victory over sin and death on the cross of Calvary (*Romans 6*).

Paul, however, does not evade reality. He knows about the struggles in the life of a believer: “I do not understand my own actions. Not what I want I do, but what I hate is what I do” (*Romans 7:15*). To his disciple Timothy he writes, “Messiah Yeshua has come into the world to save sinners,” without forgetting: “of whom I am the first” (*1 Timothy 1:15*). He does not state that he once was a sinner. Even after his justification he does not emphasise his own righteousness, but points to the One who saved him. Paul is completely aware that there is nothing within himself that might qualify as ‘good’. “I do have the ambition to do good things”, he writes, “but I am not able to produce the good” (*Romans 7:18*).

Despite this ‘catch-22 situation’ which Paul describes in chapter seven, he knows that: “There is no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Yeshua” (*Romans 8:1*). The decisive point is that: “Those who are led by God's Spirit, they are God's children” (*Romans 8:14*). Recognising that, he concludes; “The sufferings of this present time are nothing in comparison to the future glory that will be revealed in us” (*Romans 8:18*).

Summarising, we conclude: *Romans 1-8* focuses on the individual human being, his helplessness, his separation from God, the work of Messiah Yeshua for man's sake, God's grace, and the way to salvation from sin and death.

Chapters 12 to 16 describe how believers fit into their society - be it into the Church or into a secular environment. He addresses the following questions:

- How does this newly found relationship with God fit into the social environment?
- How should believers live together?
- How can a child of God live responsibly in a secular society?

These last five chapters of *Romans* describe everyday life as service to God. They also address topics like; life in the Church, spiritual gifts, love and serving one another (*Romans 12*). Relating to governmental authority comes up (*Romans 13*), as do relations within the community of believers as they live in a secular world that does not want to know God (*Romans 14*).

Paul summarises all these instructions with the words: “None of us lives to himself and none dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord. If we die, we die to the Lord. Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's” (*Romans 14:7-8*). Both the purpose and the objective of our salvation is; “that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah” (*Romans 15:6*).

In *Romans 1-8* Paul focuses on the salvation of the individual person, expressing the missionary or evangelistic concern. If we want to fit this into today's church-political landscape we could simply say: He expresses the motivation and concern of most of evangelical Christianity, with the saving work of Jesus Christ being the central focus.

In *Romans 12-16* Paul discusses the question of the Church, the relationship of its members among themselves, and their stand as believers in society. In a caring way, he speaks as a church-builder. In summary we could say: Here the more “charismatic” aspects are being addressed, with life in the Holy Spirit being more central.

Now that we know the context, in the next instalment, we will start our examination of *Romans 9-11*.

## Abraham & David: Keys to Understand Current Events & Prophecy

### ■ Kameel Majdali

Director | Teach All Nations Inc.

In our last article, we briefly discussed current events, particularly affecting Israel and the Middle East. We mentioned key Bible characters, Abraham and David, called 'prophets' in the Bible. In this article, we are going to see why they are referred to as prophets and how they are key to understanding Bible prophecy.

The Lord uses ironies to convey His principles. For example, if you want to receive, learn to give; if you want to have friends, learn to be friendly; if you want a promotion, learn to be humble; if you want to be first, practice being last; if you want to save your life, lose it for the cause of Christ.

Here is another irony: if you want to understand the future, learn from the past, particularly from the prophets and patriarchs. We learned that Abraham was a prophet (*Genesis 20:7*) and also a patriarch (*Hebrews 7:4*); David also was a prophet (*Acts 2:30*) and a patriarch (*Acts 2:29*). As prophets, they present keys to understanding the future; as patriarchs/fathers, they are the head(s) of the chosen people and Messianic lineage.

### Key to Understanding the Future? Covenant!

One principle I learned in Dwight Pentecost's seminal book on eschatology, entitled *Things to Come*, was the notion that to understand future prophecy, one needs a grasp of Biblical covenants. Bible books like *Genesis*, the rest of the *Torah*, *2 Samuel*, *1 Chronicles 17*, and *Jeremiah* all hold keys to comprehending the future and Bible prophecy.

Which leads to the question: what is a covenant? It comes from the Hebrew word *brit*, used 280 times in the Old Testament and the Greek word *diatheke*, used 33 times in the New Testament. The Latin Vulgate word for covenant is *testamentum*, which is why our Bibles have two parts: an old covenant or testament and a new covenant or testament.

A covenant is a strong binding treaty or agreement between two parties, normally with God and man, or God and a group of people. When the terms of the covenant are kept, there is great blessing; when violated or broken, it can be disastrous. When, in the key terms of a covenant, God says "You will", the covenant is conditional, but when He says "I will", then it is unconditional. Covenants were ratified by the shedding of blood, referred to in Hebrew as *Karith ha Brith* or 'cutting of the covenant.' The sight of blood demonstrates that the covenant is deadly serious.

Today, in an age of falling standards of decency, morality, and ethics, the notion of a strong binding agreement is

becoming increasingly foreign to many westerners. The closest thing to covenant is marriage, which is meant to be permanent and lifelong, but increasingly is not. Yet consider this: if we are rightly and wonderfully connected to the living God by the gospel and new birth, we are in covenant with Him. God does not operate in *de facto* relations but *de jure*. We are recipients and beneficiaries of the new covenant, not of the letter but the Spirit.

### Key Covenants Summarised

Here is the link between the ancient covenants and the future last days:

1. God makes an unconditional promise through a Biblical covenant;
2. Some parts, but not all, of the promise have been fulfilled;
3. God's promises are immutable and sure;
4. His character is beyond reproach;
5. **Conclusion:** The promises that are yet to be fulfilled will come to pass in the future last days prophecies. Ancient covenants become part of the doctrine of last things.

### Abrahamic Covenant

**Reference:** *Genesis 12:1-3, 7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-21; 22:15-18.*

It is the first and foundational of all Biblical covenants. This agreement between God and Abraham has ramifications that are still felt to this day.

1. **Land:** "Get out of your country... to the land that I will show you". God is promising to give to Abraham and his descendants the land of Canaan (*12:1, 5-7; 13:14, 15, 17; 15:18-21; 17:8*). Abraham's land would have specific borders, such as the river of Egypt to the Euphrates river. The extent of that land has not yet come to pass.
2. **Seed:** "I will make you a great nation" (*12:2, also 13:16; 15:5; 17:1, 2, 7; 22:17*). God promised an ageing, childless Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. It would take a miracle, but that's what God is so adept at doing.
3. **Universal Blessing:** "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you, and in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (*12:3; 22:18*). Eventually, Abraham would become the father of Israel, but the blessing would be spread to all peoples and nations.

Abraham is the great Old Testament prototype of two wonderful goals to which every believer should aspire: a man of faith and friend of God. If you want to grow in these areas, a study of Abraham's life in the Bible is



| Photo: Shutterstock

recommended. God truly did give him a son, Isaac, but it is the latter son Jesus by whom all nations of the earth have been blessed.

Paul speaks of the Abrahamic covenant in *Galatians 3:16-17, 29*.

As the Apostle to the Gentiles, Paul assures them that the blessings of Abraham belong to all the nations of the earth because Abraham's seed, namely Jesus Christ, is the conduit of that blessing.

If there is a literal and eternal fulfilment of this unconditional covenant, it will have major repercussions in the latter days.

### Davidic Covenant

**Reference:** *II Samuel 7:11-17; I Chronicles 17:10-15; Psalm 89:3-4; Jeremiah 33:22, 25-26*

Key terms of the covenant included:

1. **An Heir:** Solomon, who was destined to be David's heir apparent, would be established on his father's throne (*II Samuel 7:12; I Chronicles 17:11*);
2. **Everlasting throne:** The throne of David would be established forever (*verses 13 and 16; I Chronicles 17:12*).
3. **Son of God:** Almighty God would be Father to the son of David (*verse 14; I Chronicles 17:13*);
4. **Messiah:** The Anointed of the anointed, the everlasting universal king will come from the House of David (*I Chronicles 17:11*);
5. **Everlasting Kingdom:** Messiah's reign is everlasting (*I Chronicles 17:12-14*).

## What Advent and Hanukkah Have in Common



### ■ Paola (24)

Isreality Netherlands

A Jewish celebration and a Christian celebration. Around the same time that we celebrate Advent and Christmas, Jews celebrate Hanukkah. Are the two related to each other?

### The Hope of Hanukkah

Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights. Jews light the menorah (eight-armed candelabra). It is a celebration of hope. Hope of the coming of Messiah, the Light of the world, Who will reign in Israel. When He comes, He will reunite the tribes of Israel, restore the Jews to the land of Israel, and rebuild the Temple and bring peace.

A prisoner in a concentration camp said, "A person can live a long time without food. But a person

cannot live a single day without hope. This menorah is the fire of hope. Don't let it be extinguished!"

### Cosiness or Expectation?

Christians at the moment are in the midst of Advent, the weeks leading up to Christmas. Advent means 'expectation'. Many see it as preparation, a time to give special attention to the birth of Jesus. Christmas is often so filled with family, food, and cosiness that I also find it beautiful to think about and look forward to Jesus' coming in advance.

Christmas, Jesus, the Messiah, is born! Do we still reflect on the miracle that He was willing to humble Himself by coming to earth for sinners? That He gave up His divine glory to be born, grow up and live in a world where He was not welcome? When you realise that, we can't help but be amazed.

### Hope of Christians vs Hope of Jews

What about the hope and expectation Christians have? One day Jesus, the Messiah, will return. How often do we think about that? Are we actually thinking about it? Jesus instructs us in *Mark 13* to be focused on His Second Coming.

Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. *Mark 13:33*

Jews firmly believe and hope in the coming of Messiah. I think we can learn a lot from that. Let us pay particular attention to this during Advent and pray for the coming of Messiah. Let us live in this hope and expectation, despite the hectic pace of life, which sometimes swallows us up completely. The day will come! Jews look forward to the coming of Messiah. How about you?

# An Arab with Love for Israel

## ■ Marijke Terlouw

Christians for Israel Netherlands

Can anything good come out of Nazareth? That is what Nathanael asked himself when Philip told him that the Messiah would come from this city. A moment later, Nathanael recognised Jesus as the Messiah: "Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel." (*John 1:47-50*)

Almost two thousand years after the encounter between Nathanael and Jesus, something miraculous happens in the life of Saleem Shalash, an Arab resident of Nazareth. He grew up in a Roman Catholic family and is destined to become a priest. However, things turn out differently: Saleem wants to lead an 'ordinary' life and becomes a police officer. Until a friend of his dies at the age of 19. She was a Christian and often talked about Jesus. Saleem wondered why 'her God' had allowed this accident to happen. Then he heard a voice: "Someone has died, someone else is born again." Although Saleem did not understand this at first, he began to read the Bible from then on.

"I felt the desire to know more about God and started studying at Bethlehem Bible College," says Saleem. Almost everyone there believed in replacement theology,



Saleem Shalash with his wife (left), and with his family.

and we only read from the New Testament. A friend of mine invited me to do my Master's at the Israel College of the Bible in Netanya. I studied there together with Jewish and Arab pastors. We also read the Old Testament. There my eyes were opened to God's plan for Israel."

Today, Saleem Shalash is the pastor of a Christian congregation in Nazareth, where Messianic Jews meet regularly with Arab Christians. Shalash likes to preach

from the Old Testament and speak about God's promises to Israel. For many people, it may sound remarkable that an Arab supports the State of Israel, but for Shalash, it is only natural: "Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, and it is a safe haven for the Jewish people, the growing Christian population and other minorities. Israel is the promised land of God, and He has a plan for His people."

# Bethlehem - Where it all Began

## ■ Yaakov Nof

Israeli Tour Guide

Having not been to Bethlehem for years, we went to visit our 'neighbours' again in October 2021. We live in the south of Jerusalem, not far from Bethlehem. It was complicated to enter Bethlehem, as Israelis are not allowed to enter the city. We parked our car just outside the checkpoints, where friends from Bethlehem came to pick us up so that we could drive through the border control with a car displaying a Palestinian number plate.

The city of Bethlehem is, of course, the birthplace of Jesus. That is the main reason for pilgrims to visit the city. Over the years, the city has not changed much. I met many old friends, who were happy to see me. The town looked deserted. The square in front of the Church of the Nativity was almost empty, except for a bored-looking policeman.

The Church of the Nativity is in the centre of the city. Millions of tourists go there every year. Before the corona epidemic started, there were long queues of tourists wanting to enter the church. A lot of money has been invested in restoring the old medieval church with its mosaic floor and walls. Where people used to stand in long queues to catch a glimpse of the star indicating the place of birth, only two Franciscan monks stood. This scene was repeated at what is called Shepherds Field,



A beautiful sunrise in Bethlehem. | Photo: Shutterstock

sculptures for visitors to the city. But now I sit here on my own and hope for better times". The people of Bethlehem make a living out of tourism, and olive wood carvings are something visitors like to take home as souvenirs.

## Most people associate Bethlehem with the New Testament and the birth of Jesus. But let us not forget that we read about Bethlehem much earlier in the Old Testament.

which reminds us of the event in *Luke 2:8*: "Not far from here the shepherds spent the night in the field...". We saw four nuns in habits walking out of the place; nobody else was to be seen. The area around Shepherds Field is being built up. The shepherds with their flocks, who pasture here after the first rains, cannot be seen very well.

During our visit to Bethlehem, we visited an olive wood workshop. Attala Zachariah was working alone at his worktable. His workshop was under his house, where piles of olive wood stumps could be seen everywhere in the garden. "We used to sit here with five people working hard to keep up with the demand for olive wood

Most people associate Bethlehem with the New Testament and the birth of Jesus. But let us not forget that we read about Bethlehem much earlier in the Old Testament. Bethlehem in Hebrew means *house of bread*, and in Arabic, *house of flesh*. In the book of Joshua, we read about another Bethlehem, a city in the area of the tribe Zebulun. "Other cities are Kattat, Nahalal, Simron, Jidala, and Beit-Lechem" (*Joshua 19:15*). Nahalal and Simron are most likely found in the valley of Jezreel, and we assume that the Bethlehem spoken of by Joshua was on the border of low Galilee and the valley of Jezreel. Bethlehem in the area of the tribe of Judah, the

Bethlehem we know today, is first mentioned in *Genesis 35:19* and *Genesis 48:7*, where we read that Rachel was buried on the way to Ephrat, now Bethlehem. But when we then read *Jeremiah 31:15* or *1 Samuel 10:2*, archaeologists wonder if the grave is indeed in Bethlehem. Perhaps it is in Ramah, north of present-day Jerusalem, and Rachel weeps over the exile to Babylon? In early biblical times Jerusalem was a small, pagan city that lay north of the great and important Bethlehem.

A famous story from the Old Testament that takes place in Bethlehem is the story of Ruth, Naomi and Boaz. Naomi was originally from Bethlehem, and when she returned with Ruth from Moab, they returned to Bethlehem. "So they went on, as far as Bethlehem" (*Ruth 1:19*). Here Ruth met Boaz. The marriage between Boaz and Ruth makes a connection to the New Testament because King David was born of that lineage, from which, according to the New Testament, Jesus was descended. "Solomon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth" (*Matthew. 1:5*).

Bethlehem, a city with such a rich history, is definitely worth a visit. After all, this is the place where it all began.



## The Scoop of Blessing



| Photo: Shutterstock

### ■ Kay Wilson

Israeli Tour Guide | Author | Cartoonist

In July 2021, the ice cream company *Ben and Jerry's* made a racist decision and informed their customers that they would be boycotting Judea and Samaria. With Israelis now checking other options for their sweet tooth, the less pretentious *Häagen-Dazs* unexpectedly leapt into the limelight. The murky *Ben and Jerry* scoop brought an astonishing act of kindness into the light. There is a link between *Häagen-Dazs*, competitors of *Ben and Jerry's* and the rescue of Denmark's Jews during the Holocaust.

78 years ago, in 1943, on the eve of the Jewish New Year, the people of Denmark carried out a unique national act of courage in support for the Jewish people throughout the whole of World War II. While every other nation overwhelmingly acted as bystanders, or worse, perpetrators, Denmark and her citizens refused to remain silent and executed a plan to save the country's Jews.

The universities closed for a few days to enable students to help with the daring operation overseen by the resistance. In

addition, the Danish police also refused to cooperate with the Nazis, and Chief Rabbi Marcus Melchior was secretly informed of the imminent Nazi roundups. This meant that when the Jews gathered in the synagogue for the Jewish New Year, he cancelled the important service and ordered his people to leave their homes and flee for their lives. But not without the help of the Danish resistance, who had prepared hiding places and arranged for fishermen to transport 99% of the Jewish community in small fishing boats to nearby neutral Sweden.

Danes and Jews financed the daring operation and this nationwide effort, which saw over 7,000 Jews evacuated to safety. Less than 500 Jews were unable to escape. These few elderly and sick were too frail to run and were caught by the Gestapo. They were sent to Theresienstadt, a ghetto and concentration camp in Czechoslovakia. Even while they were there, the Danish public continued to voice their objections and sent food via the Red Cross to their Jewish citizens.

### Now to the Ice Cream

A decade before the outbreak of World War II, Reuben and Rose Mattus, two

Polish immigrants, independently arrived in the USA, where they met, married and started making ice pops and ice cream bars. Years later, as the ice cream market flourished, Reuben began to make a new, richer and creamier kind of ice cream to outwit his competitors. 13 years after the Holocaust had ended, the couple were so successful that they had already started formed a new ice cream company.

For the name of their enterprise, they chose the Danish-sounding name *Häagen-Dazs* as a tribute to Denmark's exemplary treatment of its Jews during the war. They even added an *umlaut* (absent in Danish) and put a map of Denmark on the carton. And best of all, the name *Häagen-Dazs* actually means nothing. Reuben simply chose it as a thank you to the nation of Denmark for their exemplary courageous rescue of Jews.

The *Ben and Jerry's* racist scoop turned out to be a blessing in disguise. It has led more Israelis to become aware of the amazing deeds of Denmark. So whenever we lick our *Häagen-Dazs* ice cream, we will remember the courage of that nation and always be thankful for those amazing friends.

### Short News

#### Ford to Install Israeli Water-From-Air System in Vehicles



Ford has approached Israel-based Watergen, one of the world leaders in atmospheric water generation, to collaborate as facilitators for Ford off-grid adventure recreational vehicles. The project will result in Watergen's Mobile Box, the world's first vehicle on-board water generating system, to be pre-installed on Ford vehicles.

Watergen's innovative Mobile Box device is the world's first vehicle on-board drinking system capable of effortlessly extracting clean water from ambient air.

The Mobile Box can generate up to 25 litres per day of fresh drinking water, removing the need to carry bottled water and reducing plastic waste. The unit simply needs a 12V power supply and access to fresh air to produce the highest quality drinking water. Ford will mount the Mobile Box unit, which is fitted with sturdy wheels for ease of transport, on the flatbed of the Ranger, where it will occupy minimal space due to its compact dimensions. | INN/VFI News.

#### Korean Investors Discover Israel's Start-ups

More and more Koreans want to invest in Israeli innovations. To this end, the *Seoul Investors Club* was founded in South Korea, a network of Korean investors and companies looking for investment opportunities in Israeli innovations. In October, a Zoom meeting between Koreans and Israeli start-ups was held for the first time. Emphasis was placed on the fields of digital medicine, information technologies and agriculture with Artificial Intelligence.

#### Israel to Build a Cypriot Surveillance System

Cyprus signed an agreement with Israel's military to build an electronic surveillance system to monitor activity along the United Nations-patrolled Green Line across the divided Mediterranean island. The system can provide images around the clock. The 180-kilometre demilitarised Green Line has divided the island from east to west since 1974. It separates the European Union-recognised Republic of Cyprus from the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which is recognised only by Ankara. The surveillance system will monitor activities such as smuggling and illegal migration and provide military intelligence.

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# “In Israel, You Can Be Nothing But Hopeful”

## ■ Rita Quartel

Christians for Israel International

“I try to see Israel as a miracle every day.” For Danielle Mor, the existence of the State of Israel is much more than an isolated fact from a history book. Her own family story is amply intertwined with the age-old longing for a Jewish homeland. With roots in Iran, Belarus and America, she knows Jewish diversity. There is the grateful wonder of the scenario that so often unfolds before her very own eyes: the return of Jews from around the world to Israel.

Danielle was four years old when she moved from America to Israel with her parents and older brother. By now, she has been working for the Jewish Agency for 21 years, where she is fully involved in *Aliyah* and other projects. Of the fifteen million Jews worldwide today, almost seven million live in Israel. And more are arriving daily. The motivations of people who return to Israel are diverse. “We hear more and more from Jews from Europe and America that they no longer want to live in a country where anti-Semitism is so strong and rampant. Faith is also a factor or the feeling that Jewish identity can be fully experienced in Israel. And sometimes, there are economic or security motives. So, it varies enormously. I am reminded of *Isaiah 60:8*, a Scripture that was often quoted by our previous Chief Rabbi: “Who are these who fly along like clouds, like doves to their nests?”

### Fortunate

Danielle is aware that her homeland is not a string of coincidences but part of a larger plan. “I try to see Israel as a miracle every day. Some days that is hard, but then I'm reminded of the beautiful story of the Israelites during the Exodus walking through the parted sea. Each one of them could only see the bent back full of sweat of fear from the person walking before them. Sometimes, even when you are in the middle of a miracle, you cannot actually see it. Like when there are missile attacks, and we have to go into the shelter. Then I remind myself of what *Psalms 23* says (‘Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil’) because we are living in a bigger plan and in a place where miracles have happened and are happening. We are fortunate to live in these times and do our best to fill whatever small role we can.”

### Trust

According to Danielle, the newcomers (*olim*) are well prepared for their new life in Israel and thus the terror threat. “I am amazed sometimes by how new *olim* respond to this reality. When they arrive in Israel, they

are often surprised to find that it is much quieter and safer than they thought. And even when there are times of sirens and tensions, life goes on. And that realisation gives them strength. They know that the Israeli government and army will do everything they can to protect the civilians. They feel that they are in a society where they can trust the people around them and where they can trust the government.”

### Uniqueness

Like many other countries, Israel did not escape a lockdown. And that situation, too, according to Danielle, confirmed the miracle that is Israel. “Globally, so many countries were in lockdown, and thousands of flights were cancelled, but *Aliyah* did not stop. Of course, we have had all kinds of special *Aliyah* missions in the past, such as the Jews from Yemen, Operation Moses and Operation Solomon (Ethiopia), rescuing Jews from a besieged Kosovo or the Jews from Donetsk (Ukraine). I think the way *Aliyah* continued during COVID-19 will also become one of these stories in the future. We are too often in the position of seeing the sweaty back of the person in front of us to realise that this is special.” Yet, the lockdown also provided a uniqueness in another way. In the hitherto unbroken cadence of 73 years of *Aliyah*, for the first time since 1948, there was a period of four or five days when newcomers could not enter Israel. Something that had never happened in all those years. Even wars or other situations have never been able to stop *Aliyah*. And that does say something about the value Israel places on bringing the Jewish people home. Danielle: “It is a holy mission. This is part of the very essence of why Israel exists, and therefore *Aliyah* cannot stop.”

### Jewish Identity

The Jewish Agency works closely with the Israeli government on many fronts. Still, much of the cost of *Aliyah* is co-funded through cooperation with organisations like Christians for Israel. Something for which Danielle is immensely grateful. Due to the many elections held in Israel over the past two years, the budget is still uncertain. And that has financial consequences for organisations that depend on the government for support. The Israeli government now consists of a coalition that includes an Arab party. Danielle: “It says something about the democratic system in Israel because this has never happened before, and therefore it is also a somewhat historic moment, regardless of how you look at it.” According to her, there are more challenges ahead for the government. In



| Photo: Danielle Mor

addition to the continuous terror threat from Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas, there is the spiral of violence within parts of the Arab community in Israel. “Also, Israel should do more to help Jews around the world to make them feel that Israel could be their home; that Jewish identity is something to embrace and to be proud of and to encourage people to take actual steps, whether *Aliyah* or something else.”

### Change

Looking to the future, Danielle is hopeful. “In Israel, you can be nothing but hopeful. There is a difference between optimism and hope. Optimism is a state of mind. An optimist looks at everything with rose-coloured glasses, but that is not always realistic. A hopeful person knows that reality is challenging and is not yet as it should be, but you view it with hope because you believe that there are tools to address it, whether they come directly from above or whether they are man-created with guidance from above.”

*Danielle Mor is Director Christian Friends of The Jewish Agency and Vice President Israel and Global Philanthropy. The family of her father made Aliyah from Iran in 1949. Her mother's family (Belarus) fled the pogroms at the beginning of the twentieth century. They were denied entry into Palestine and settled in the USA.*



## A Heartfelt Christmas Gift *Christmas parcels for the less fortunate in Israel*



Various products that make up Christmas parcels for the less fortunate in Israel. | Photo: Saleem Shalash

Christmas is the time of year when many people want to brighten someone else's Christmas. This is also true for our Arab pastors, Rev Saleem Shalash (Nazareth) and Rev Naim Khoury (Bethlehem). Each year they distribute specially compiled Christmas parcels to the less fortunate in their cities.

### Nazareth

"This year, we are distributing Christmas packages to around 200 Arab families," explains Rev Shalash. "Each package contains various products like pasta and sauce, instant coffee and some sweets." That's not all this Christmas. "We are also handing out a surprise package to a thousand children, containing a

colouring book, pencils, a present and chocolate. We do this on Christmas Eve, during a big celebration in Nazareth where many families come. By doing this, we reach many Arabs from Nazareth and surrounding towns, with the Gospel."

### Bethlehem

"We are approaching the yearly Christmas celebration, but again this year we will not observe the blessed occasion of the birth of our Saviour under normal conditions", says Rev Naim Khoury. "We have been wondering what to do with the needs of the families in Bethlehem in this difficult time. Because of the pandemic and the restrictions in the

Bethlehem area, and the uncertainty, many people are without jobs as they cannot go to Jerusalem to work. They need a special permit which is more difficult because of Covid-19. People have been struggling, and the situation is getting harder! We hope that you are able to sponsor some of the needs and be a blessing this coming Christmas."

Your support for the Christmas parcels in Nazareth and Bethlehem is greatly appreciated. The average cost of a Christmas parcel is NZ\$56 and a surprise parcel for the children costs NZ\$16. To donate, complete the coupon on the back page.



Rev Naim Khoury at a children's meeting in Bethlehem.



Saleem Shalash preparing one of the parcels.



Rev Saleem Shalash in Nazareth.



## Overview of our projects

Part of our mission is to comfort Israel and the Jewish people through prayer and action. If you would like to support one of our projects you can complete the coupon on page 16 or make an online donation. Thank you very much for your support!

### Aliyah

Aliyah is the Hebrew word for the return of the Jewish people to Israel. We support Aliyah mainly from Ukraine (and the former Soviet Union), but also from India and France. Furthermore, we help new immigrants (in Hebrew: olim) to integrate into Israeli society.



### Hineni Soup Kitchen

We help the poor of Israel, by providing them with food. We do this in partnership with the Hineni Center in Jerusalem, headed by Benjamin Philip. Your gift for the soup kitchen goes directly to the purchase of food.



### Holocaust Survivors

We support impoverished Holocaust survivors in Israel and Ukraine through various projects which provide assistance to survivors of the Holocaust. Those survivors are elderly and will not be among us for long, and there is a growing demand for practical assistance.



### Christian Friends of Israeli Communities (CFOIC)

You can support the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, the heart of Biblical Israel. The main purpose is to encourage the people in the Biblical Heartland and to show them that there are Christians throughout the world who support them and share the belief that the areas of Judea and Samaria are part of Israel's inheritance.



### Food Parcel Campaign Ukraine

We distribute food parcels amongst Jewish people in Ukraine. These parcels are handed out to Holocaust survivors, needy families, and the sick. Those food parcels are a sign of friendship that demonstrates your support for our Jewish brothers and sisters and that they are not alone.



### Arab Christians

Life for Christians in Bethlehem is often not easy. Christians for Israel supports the First Baptist Church of Rev Naim Khoury in Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The members of this church spread the gospel among Arabs and share their love and heart for Israel and the Jewish people.



For country-specific or further information on our projects, go to our website, [www.c4israel.org.nz](http://www.c4israel.org.nz)

# Winter Food Parcel Campaign



Dear friends of Israel and the Jewish people,  
The team of Christians for Israel Ukraine regularly visits 88-year-old Aaron in Krivog Rog, a heavily polluted industrial town in eastern Ukraine. Aaron was born in 1933, and when he was 8-years old, the Nazi's invaded Ukraine.  
His father was drafted by the Soviet Red Army to defend the country. Aaron, his mother, and his younger brother were constantly on the move, trying to escape from the horrors of the war. Killing squads of the German SS, often assisted by local Ukrainian police, went town by town and forced Jewish families to leave their homes and line up at previously dug out mass graves to be shot. An estimated 1,700,000 Ukrainian Jews were killed.  
Aaron, his mother and younger brother, were moving toward the east of the country together with thousands of panicking refugees. During this time, Aaron's younger brother died, and so did his father while serving in the army. Aaron and his mother barely survived the war.

Later in life, Aaron became a physics teacher.  
Like Aaron, there are many other poor Jewish elderly who have to survive on a small pension. We cannot erase what happened to them in the past, but we can show them love today. Every time Aaron receives a food parcel, it is a festive day for him. He is not forgotten!  
Greetings on behalf of the whole team in Ukraine,



**Koen Carlier**  
Aliyah Fieldworker  
Christians for Israel Ukraine

Will you join us (again) in making the food parcel campaign a great blessing this winter? We buy the products cheaply at a local wholesaler, who is aware of what we do for charity. You can complete the coupon on the back or make a donation online.



Thousands of Jewish elderly still live in great poverty in Ukraine. Like Aaron, who spends the winter alone. The food parcels provided by the Christians for Israel Ukraine team are very much necessary to make it through winter. This winter, we hope to spread 40,000 food parcels in Ukraine to poor Jewish families and survivors of the Holocaust.

Will you please donate a much-needed gift towards these food parcels?

- One food parcel contains:**
- 1 kg of sugar
  - 2 kg of flour
  - 1 kg of rice
  - 1 kg of grits
  - 1 kg of bulgur
  - 2 kg of pasta
  - 1-litre oil
  - 500 gm oatmeal
  - 1 tin of peas
  - 1 tin of corn
  - 1 tin of condensed milk
  - 1 tin of chicken
  - 1 pack of coffee
  - 1 pack of tea

**"For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink". Matthew 25:35**

## YES! I Want to Support Christians for Israel

### CHRISTIANS FOR ISRAEL NZ MINISTRY

My donation for ministry costs, print & post

### ALIYAH - BRING THE JEWS HOME

- One person (Ukraine) - \$300
- One family (Ukraine) (5 people) - \$1250
- One bus (Ukraine) (25 people) - \$6250
- First Home in the Homeland
- Bnei Menashe (India) (1 person) - \$1460

### SOCIAL WELFARE PROJECTS

- Food Parcel Campaign Ukraine - \$17 per parcel
- Christmas parcel: Nazareth and Bethlehem - \$56
- Christmas gift for the children - \$16
- Hineni Soup Kitchen - \$10 per meal
- Holocaust Survivors
- Christian Friends of Israeli Communities (CFOIC)
- Arab Christians
- For Zion's Sake
- Israel Alzheimer's Centre: Bladder Scanner

**TOTAL DONATION \$.....**

### DONATION

\$.....

### ESSENTIAL RESOURCES

- Christians for Israel NZ Calendar 2022 **New** ..... \$19.95
- Christians for Israel NZ Israeli & Friends Cookbook **New** ..... \$34.95
- Calendar and Israeli & Friends Cookbook **Bundle Deal** ..... \$49.95
- Until - Fourteen Prophetic Horizons by Rev Willem Glashouwer **Sale** ..... \$10.00
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