

ISRAEL

& Christians Today

NEW ZEALAND
and
SOUTH PACIFIC

February 2022
Adar I - Adar II 5782

CHRISTIANS FOR
ISRAEL
NEW ZEALAND

Understanding Israel and world events from a Biblical perspective

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Sunset with a panorama of the Old City Jerusalem. | Photo: Shutterstock

Not the Tail, but the Head

■ Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer

President | Christians for Israel International

The Holocaust stands alone among the massacres of mankind throughout the centuries. Six million Jews were slaughtered - not for what they had done, but for who they were: Jews!

27 January is the annual *International Holocaust Remembrance Day*. It is the date on which Russian soldiers liberated the Auschwitz concentration camp on 27 January 1945. The sad culmination of centuries of persecution of the Jews in Europe.

Today, the Jewish State of Israel is in the dock. On 27 May 2021, the UN Human Rights Council adopted the most outrageous resolution ever on Israel. The world sheds tears at the *Holocaust Memorial Day* and then turns around and gives today's Israel and the Jewish people a slap in the face - or worse.

A Jew once cries out to the Lord: "O God, do not remain silent; do not turn a deaf ear, do not stand aloof, O God.

See how your enemies growl, how your foes rear their heads. With cunning, they conspire against your people; they plot against those you cherish. "Come," they say, "let us destroy them as a nation so that Israel's name is remembered no more." (*Psalms 83:2-5*)

The world sheds tears at the Holocaust Memorial Day and then turns around and gives today's Israel and the Jewish people a slap in the face – or worse.

And the Lord says: "But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, you descendants of Abraham, my friend, I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, 'You are my servant'; I have chosen you and have not rejected you. So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. All who rage against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish." (*Isaiah 41*)

"Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they will fear you. The Lord will grant you abundant prosperity ... The Lord will make you the head, not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the Lord your God that I give you this day

and carefully follow them ..." (*Deuteronomy 28*)

The Elijah who was to come says, "The axe is already at the root of the trees..." (*Matthew 3*). "For our God is a consuming fire," says the Letter to the Hebrews (*Hebrews 12:29*).

One day, from Jerusalem, peace will spread over the whole world. (*Isaiah 2*)

Then Israel, God's people, will no longer be the tail but the head.

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Colophon

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Mission

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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UN's Worst Attack Ever

■ Andrew Tucker

International Editor | Christians for Israel

The UN Human Rights Council's recent creation of a permanent 'Commission of Inquiry' (COI) into Israel, and the General Assembly's decision in December 2021 to fund it, represent the worst and most violent assault by the United Nations against the sovereignty of any UN member state. It is an outrage and must be challenged.

Ever since their last failed military attack on Israel in the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the Arab/Islamic world has been – purposefully, openly and in concert with Soviet/socialist countries, and more recently left-wing policy-makers in the West – manipulating the UN system to undermine the secure existence of the Jewish State of Israel.

They have two primary weapons: the demand for creation of a State of Palestine within the '1967 lines' and the allegation that Israel is an 'apartheid' state.

The claim for Palestinian statehood has been remarkably successful. In 2012, the Arab/Islamic/Socialist world managed to procure a resolution in the UNGA granting Palestine UN 'non-member observer state' status. This technical decision proved a watershed. It has been used to launch a massive campaign to demand Palestinian statehood – without agreement, conditions or limitations – covering the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza, as well as the right of all 5 million so-called Palestinian refugees around the world to 'return' to Israel (a non-existent right that is not claimed by any other refugees). Israel insists on the cessation of terror and a negotiated agreement that ensures its security. In 2021 the International Criminal Court capitulated to the Palestinian demands, holding Palestine to be a 'State Party' for the purposes of the ICC's Rome Statute.

The claim that Israel is an 'apartheid' state has been made ever since the 1970s by the Soviets and by anti-Semites like Bishop Desmond Tutu. It has recently gained momentum as a result of reports by left-wing NGOs like Human Rights Watch, supported by a myriad anti-Israel organisations and States and non-State actors, who question the legitimacy of the existence of a Jewish state. By claiming



Meeting room of the United Nations Human Rights Council (Geneva, Switzerland).
| Photo: Ludovic Courtès, Wikimedia Commons

that Judaism is a race, the argument is made that the Jewish State structurally and systemically discriminates against non-Jews. This is, of course, a lie.

Today, the apartheid claim is primarily being played out in the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC). Established by the UN General Assembly in 2006, the UNHRC had an anti-Israel bias (the infamous 'Agenda item 7'). There are 47 UNHRC members. Membership rotates, but at any given time, most of them are not Western democracies, many of them members of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). In May 2021, the UNHRC established a permanent Commission of Inquiry (COI) that will investigate all alleged Israeli violations of international law. When Hamas launched rockets on Israel, including Jerusalem, and Israel responded by attacking Hamas military targets in Gaza Strip, Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC) called on the UNHRC to hold a special session to investigate Israel's breaches of international human rights law. No mention was made of investigating Hamas' blatantly illegal attacks on Israel, its use of human shields, etc. On 27 May 2021, the Council adopted a resolution that has been described by one commentator as one of the "most outrageous ever adopted by the United Nations".

The resolution was adopted by a vote of 24 in favour – with nine against and 14 abstentions. More than half of the states voting in favour were Islamic states. Not a single Western democracy voted in favour of the resolution. Twenty-two of the 24

states voting in favour of the resolution are not even considered to be 'fully free' democracies on the Freedom House scale.

It has the mandate to look into all aspects of the State of Israel, including the root causes of the tensions. The COI will entertain both of the Palestinians' main claims: that 'Palestine' is a State and that Israel is an apartheid state.

The Commission has a massive budget and staff – \$12 million in its first three years, and \$5 million per year thereafter – and 18 permanent staff members, including a legal team – far exceeding any other inquiry or committee.

All the Committee's three members have a demonstrated bias against Israel.

Evidence obtained by the Commission will be fed through to the ICC, which may use it in taking proceedings against Israeli leaders.

Of course, Israel is subject to international law and should be held accountable for violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law. But it is unacceptable to consistently select one state and pick on it while ignoring major violators of international law. What about China in Tibet, Turkey in Northern Cypress, or Russia in Ukraine?

It is time for the Western world to realise that the system they established after WWII to promote world peace and security has been hijacked by the enemies of Western democracies. Western states should respond by withdrawing their funds from the UN Human Rights Council.

By C4I Prayer Team Prayer Points

Israel

- "The Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all" (*Psalms 103:19*). Give thanks that the ultimate power on earth does not lie with men but with God. Pray that more people will confess this.
- Like many other countries, Israel is still struggling with Covid-19. Pray for wisdom for the Israeli government as they continue to combat Covid-19, that they will take the right steps and make the right decisions. Pray for a blessing on all the research being done to develop medicines against corona (and other diseases, there is much ground-breaking research).
- Israeli Foreign Minister Benny Gantz hosted Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas. The meeting was met with both praise and criticism within Israel. Pray that steps will be taken towards peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

Israel & the Nations

- Unemployment and poverty is high in Gaza, with any development being delayed by corruption. The difference between rich (politicians and terrorists) and poor (ordinary citizens) is extreme. This is one of the reasons why people take out their anger on Israel. Pray that the situation in Gaza improves, and pray for the protection of Israel against the rage from Gaza.
- In the last two years, 50,000 Jews emigrated to Israel. Give thanks that despite all the restrictions surrounding Covid-19, so many Jews were able to make *Aliyah* and return to Israel.

Christians for Israel

- Nowadays, antisemitism is on the rise, often in the form of anti-Zionism. This is also happening among Christians. Pray that people will change their minds about this.

For daily Prayer Points, go to our website www.c4israel.org.nz

Russia Makes its Move

■ **Micha Gefen**

Israel Unwired

With rumours of an imminent Russian invasion of Ukraine becoming more and more real, Vladimir Putin has ordered the Russian air force to joint patrol with the Syrian air force near Israel's Golan Heights.

The sudden move has sent shivers down Israel's defence establishment, which has made it clear that free movement inside Syria is critical to Israel's defences. Israel's strikes in Syria target Iranian advanced weapon systems deliveries to Hezbollah. Without a free hand, Hezbollah would be able to wreak far more havoc on Israel in a potential war.

The Russian move is part of a larger push by Putin to regain the prestige that was lost by the fall of the Soviet Union. However, for Israel, the move by Putin



Israeli reserve soldiers patrol on the border with Syria, in the Golan Heights, 25 January 2022. | Photo: Flash90

puts the Jewish State in a very precarious position. It can no longer assume it has free movement, and any mistakes that result in the downing of a Russian jet will give Putin what he needs to clamp down on Israel's sense of independence.

With an invasion of Ukraine possibly only days away, one wonders what other military excursions Putin has planned.

Micha Gefen is a foreign affairs expert and a subject matter specialist on Middle East insurgencies and how they pertain to Israel's security.

Short News

Israel Approaches 9.5 million residents



At the end of 2021, Israel's population was close to 9.5 million — 9.449 million, to be exact. This number can be roughly divided into 74 per cent Jews, 21 per cent Arabs, and 5 per cent are neither. The population was slightly lower at the end of 2020, at 9.3 million.

| Photo: Flash90

No US Consulate for Palestinians

If it is up to Prime Minister Bennett, there will be no US consulate for Palestinians in Jerusalem. "My position, which has been presented to the Americans by myself and by Foreign Minister Lapid, is that there is no place for an American consulate that serves the Palestinians in Jerusalem," Bennett said. "Jerusalem is the capital of Israel alone." The US administration sees the opening of a consulate for Palestinians to restore relations between the US and the Palestinians.

After a cabinet meeting, Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh declared: "The reopening of the American Consulate in Jerusalem is the most important issue for the Palestinians. We are focusing on the consulate because we want an American address that will take care of Palestinian affairs and form the nucleus of an American embassy in Palestine and express the recognition that Jerusalem is occupied Arab land." Shtayyeh said.

Syrian Bunker Uncovered in Golan



An old Syrian bunker on the Golan Heights was recently uncovered after it had been abandoned following the 1967 Six-Day War when Israel captured the plateau from Syria. The bunker still contained hundreds of artillery pieces from the time of the Six-Day War. It was decided to detonate the munitions on site for security reasons instead of moving them to a blast site. The bunker was discovered during a government project aimed at locating and clearing old mines in order to make certain areas of Israel safely accessible to the public.

| Photo: Flash90

We're Prepared for the Worst



■ **Koen Carlier**

Aliyah Fieldworker | Christians for Israel Ukraine

The situation in eastern Ukraine bordering Russia is becoming increasingly tense. We are trying to prepare ourselves for the worst.

Recently, I read the article about Holocaust survivor Louis Polak, who was in hiding in seventeen different places. A Bible verse unknown to me caught my eye. The verse came from *Isaiah 16:3*, which says: "... hide the outcasts; betray not the fugitive."

Perish the thought that this verse could materialise again in the near future in Ukraine! In 2014 in eastern Ukraine, war against Russia broke out, which we didn't see coming. As a result, more than one and a half million Ukrainians fled to the middle of the country and to the major cities. Since the escalation, more than 8,000 Jews have left for Israel via our hiding place in Kiev.

Dark Clouds

Tensions are running high again in eastern Ukraine at the borders of neighbouring Russia. Still, everything is uncertain. The question is whether there will be an escalation, and if so, when and how big will this escalation be? We cannot answer these questions, unfortunately, but we do see that dark clouds gather over the land of the north. It doesn't look as if the situation will brighten in the short term.

The prophet Zachariah speaks a clear language when he says: "Up! Up! Flee from

the land of the north, declares the Lord. For I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens, declares the Lord. Up! Escape to Zion, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon." (*Zachariah 2:6-7*).

Uncertainty

Do the Ukrainians worry about these tensions in the East? Yes and no. Many civilians try to make ends meet every month and pay their housing costs. It is difficult enough to make ends meet again every month.

Still, these gloomy messages reach them as well. People think about what they are going to do and where they possibly might go to, should the situation get out of hand. People wonder whether the government and the army are capable of protecting them. There are many examples of looting and massacres when the war started in 2014. Many Jews made sure that they have their documents handy. Many of them who planned to make aliyah this year will try to move their journey forward. In the meantime, we will continue with our work. We help Jews with practical matters in making aliyah, but we are also busy packing and handing out food parcels. These food parcels are intended for poor Jewish elderly and families in need. Our campaign *Meals on Wheels* still continues, in which elderly people receive a meal at home.

We prepare for the worst and take precautions. In 2014 it became difficult for us to obtain large quantities of food supplies. Also, in March 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic broke out, a 60,000-kilo

order was blocked. We received delivery only after a week of tough negotiations.

We want to avoid these situations and therefore are already planning to purchase extra food supplies. We hope to prepare some 12,000 food parcels during the coming weeks. They can be handed out in eastern, south-eastern and southern Ukraine. The packing is done by volunteers. This is reasonably easy, although sometimes it is a bit awkward because of long distances and the severe wintery conditions.

We hear from Jewish elderly people who receive a food parcel regularly that these food parcels are a tremendous support in these dark and exciting days. Therefore we bravely continue to carefully pack these food parcels and hand them out with a big smile!

Friendship

The food parcels are regularly distributed among Holocaust survivors, poor families, Jewish refugees, children and the sick. A food parcel is more than a bag of food. It's a sign of your friendship and your support, a testimony to our Jewish brothers and sisters that they are not alone.

Will you help?

Koen Carlier is an Aliyah field worker for Christians for Israel in Ukraine. Christians for Israel support the Jewish community in Ukraine and calls upon them to hear God's call and return to the Promised Land. When Jews decide to make Aliyah, Koen and his team help them with transportation to the embassy or the consulate for exit papers and ultimately transport them to the airport to leave for Israel. Koen is married to Ira. They have three children and live in Vinnitsa.

The Escalating War Against Israel

■ **Caroline Glick**

Israel has no choice but to fight the UN's new permanent inquisition against it, and any business, government or judge that uses its reality-free reports.

At the UN General Assembly last month, a large majority of member nations voted to lavishly fund a permanent inquisition against the Jewish state. The member states funded the operation of an 'ongoing independent, international commission of inquiry' against Israel.

The commission, run by outspoken haters of Israel with long records of demonising it and its people, was formed by the UN Human Rights Council in a special session. Its purpose is to deny and reject Israel's right to exist, its right to self-defence, its right to enforce its laws and its citizens' rights to their properties and to their very lives.

The Council's decision to form its new permanent inquisition constitutes an unprecedented escalation of the UN's political war against Israel for the past 50 years. To grasp the danger, it is necessary to understand how Israel's foes operate at the United Nations and how their partners in Europe and Israel itself operate.

We begin with the United Nations. In 2005, acting on pressure from the Bush administration, then - UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan disbanded the UN Human Rights Commission. The Bush administration's chief complaint was that the commission was antisemitic.

The UN Human Rights Council was founded in 2006, and its members and UN staff wasted no time making it clear that they intended the new council to be even more antisemitic than its predecessor.

Shortly after the HRC was established, it determined that demonising Israel would be a permanent agenda item. Item Number 7 is the only permanent agenda item that deals with a specific country. And like the council's nine other permanent agenda items, Item 7 is discussed at every formal council session, which discusses "Human rights violations and implications of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and other occupied Arab territories."

However, having a permanent agenda item dedicated to specifically demonising Israel wasn't enough to satisfy the HRC's obsession with attacking the Jewish state. So, since 2006, the council has convened nine special sessions to expand its focus on Israel. To get a sense of just how overwhelming the council's focus on Israel is, the council has convened just 19 special sessions to deal with every other country on the planet in the same period.

The council's template for demonising Israel has been fairly consistent through the years. Immediately after each Palestinian terror campaign against Israel comes to an end, the Holocaust-denying, terror-sponsoring PLO chief Mahmoud Abbas has his UN representatives ask for a special session to discuss the 'war crimes' and 'crimes against humanity' Israel supposedly carried out against the Palestinians. No one ever mentions that every single missile launched against Israel by the Hamas terror regime in Gaza constitutes a separate war crime. No one ever mentions Hamas at all.

In short order, the council accedes to the PLO's request and convenes the special session. On cue, the member nations' representatives rise, accuse Israel of genocide, ethnic cleansing, apartheid, operating a killing machine, targeting children and any other crime they can think of. Then a majority of the members vote to form a new 'commission of inquiry,' led and staffed by 'independent' investigators, nearly all of whom believe that Israel has no right to exist and that Jews have too much power.

At the end of its 'in-depth investigation,' the commission issues a report which determines that Israel conducted war crimes and crimes against humanity.

This brings us to the second arm of the international political war against Israel: Europe. Every HRC resolution to form a commission of inquiry includes a call to non-governmental organisations and other parties to submit



UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. | Photo: Shutterstock

testimonies' and 'reports' that will substantiate the council's blood libel that Israel committed war crimes and is inherently and incurably evil. NGOs registered in Israel, the PA, and Western countries answer the council's call. And the final reports issued by each of the inquisitions include hundreds of citations from 'testimonies' and reports submitted by these NGOs as proof of Israel's inherent venality.

These organisations are not independent actors. European governments fund them and direct their operations. If they operated in the United States, nearly every NGO involved in the HRC's witch hunts against Israel would have to register as a foreign agent of European governments. As Knesset member Amichai Chikli put it, "Europe is waging a war against Israel."

The reports the HRC publishes at the end of each fake commission of inquiry against Israel form the basis for the various boycott efforts against Israel that European bureaucrats carry out. For instance, based on one such report, EU member states stopped recognising Israeli veterinary certificates relating to agricultural exports from Jewish farmers in Samaria.

This brings us to the third arm of the international political war against Israel: Israel's European-influenced, progressive legal establishment. Last weekend, *Haaretz* published an interview with the former attorney general and recently retired Supreme Court Justice Meni Mazuz. Between the lines, Mazuz explained the legal establishment's methods for transforming anti-Israel UN documents into 'law'.

A significant portion of the interview dealt with Mazuz's campaign from the bench to block military demolitions of homes of terrorists.

Mazuz told *Haaretz* that for many years, including during his tenure as attorney general, he "thought that house demolitions were an immoral step, in contravention of the law whose effectiveness was dubious."

But when Mazuz served as attorney general, he lacked the authority to end the practice. As he explained, "I couldn't tell the government that it is prohibited when dozens of Supreme Court decisions say that it is permitted."

But the minute Mazuz was appointed to the Supreme Court, he began legislating his political views from the bench. To substantiate his position regarding the demolition of terrorists' homes, Mazuz said that he relied on 'the positions of legal scholars' in Israel and abroad and on the decisions of the UN Human Rights Council.

"The demolitions cause us international damage," Mazuz said. "Do you think that these things stay here? That they don't come up every year at human rights councils in Geneva and international forums?"

In other words, Mazuz made clear that along with several of his colleagues on the bench, he used the anti-Israel reports generated by the obsessively anti-Israel HRC to

justify his rulings, which denied Israel the right to act in accordance with Israeli law in a manner that the duly elected government, and the duly constituted leadership of the IDF, deemed necessary in their efforts to quell Palestinian terrorism.

Aside from a limited category of UN Security Council resolutions, UN actions and decisions are devoid of international law significance. Like those of all other UN bodies, decisions by the HRC are political documents without any legal weight.

Mazuz and his colleagues in the legal fraternity exploit the public's ignorance and the impotence of the government and Knesset to transform these political documents into 'law' through their judgments and legal opinions.

And this brings us to the HRC's permanent inquisition, whose operations a large majority of UN member nations voted to fund last week at the General Assembly.

As Professor Anne Bayefsky explained in a detailed report published last week by the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, the commission of inquiry's mandate is effectively limitless. The commission is empowered to rewrite the entire history of the Arab conflict with Israel and determine that Israel's birth was an original sin that must be undone. The commission is empowered to carry out an 'investigation' based on 'testimonies' which EU-funded anti-Israel groups will supply, describing fraudulent 'war crimes' that will form the basis of indictments of Israeli elected leaders, IDF commanders and line soldiers, and Israeli civilians who reside in Judea, Samaria and unified Jerusalem. The UN's political 'courts', in turn, will agree to try them for these made-up crimes.

Moreover, as Bayefsky noted, the commission is charged with making "recommendations on measures to be taken by third States to ensure respect for international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem...[to ensure] they do not aid or assist in the commission of internationally wrongful acts."

A similar statement is made in the resolution's preamble regarding 'business enterprises.'

The message in both cases is self-explanatory. The reports the inquisition will publish will serve as the basis for economic boycotts of Israel to be enacted by both government bureaucrats and businesses. Israel has no choice but to fight this commission and any business, government or judge that uses its reality-free reports. Israel must ensure that the antisemitic propaganda the commission puts out does not turn into 'law' through the actions of radical justices and government attorneys. Israel must reconcile itself to the fact that the EU bureaucracy and much of Europe is waging war against it and launch a vigorous counter-assault.

Caroline Glick is an award-winning columnist and author of 'The Israeli Solution: A One-State Plan for Peace in the Middle East'. Abridged by Managing Editor. The full article can be found here: <https://www.jns.org/opinion/the-escalating-international-war-against-israel/>

Abbas Shows True Colours

■ Hillel Frisch

It took the head of the Southern Branch of the Islamic Movement's United Arab List party (Ra'am) to show that PA leader Mahmoud Abbas has no intention of making genuine peace with Israel.

Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas's condemnation of Ra'am Party head Mansour Abbas last month for saying that the Jewish state is here to stay illustrated, yet again, that the Palestinian leader has no intention of making peace with the Jewish State.

The Israeli left, including former security officials and many European officials, are all united in the hope that Abbas is a peace-maker. This hope may have been one of the reasons behind the meeting last week between Abbas and Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz in the latter's home in central Israel.

Mansour Abbas, the head of the southern branch of the Islamic Movement's United Arab List party (Ra'am), entered the governing coalition led by Naftali Bennet and Yair Lapid with the aim of removing Benjamin Netanyahu from the premiership.

For an Israeli Arab politician to state that Israel was born and will remain a Jewish state, and to insist that the Arab public be realistic and strive for a role in that state, is a welcome turn of events. (Though the Islamic Movement, the Muslim Brotherhood offshoot in Israel, is known to say what its audience wants to hear in Hebrew while providing its supporters in Arab with a different message.) Mansour Abbas went way beyond the dovish Israeli Arab stance of working within the Jewish state to turn it into a state of all its citizens or into a bi-national state.

Mahmoud Abbas reacted with vociferous denunciations, expressing the Palestinians' "refusal and disgust" at the Ra'am leader's acknowledgement of the Jewish state. These "irresponsible remarks



PA leader Mahmoud Abbas. | Photo: Flash90

fuel the extremist right-wing groups in Israeli society," which "run contrary to [the Islamic] religion, the legacy of the Palestinian people that extend from the beginning of time," and strengthen the "imperialistic Zionist project," said the PA leader. The remarks also increased the resolve of settlers to "defile" the Al Aqsa Mosque with their presence, he added.

Abbas, of course, was referring to the Temple Mount as a whole since he well knows that Jews are not allowed into the mosque itself.

Considering that the Temple Mount is the site of the two destroyed temples, the first destroyed by Nebuchadrezzar II of Babylonia and the second by the Romans, one wonders what kind of peace the PA leader intends to make.

Of course, this is nothing new for the Israeli public, who know that Mahmoud Abbas has a doctorate in Holocaust denial. More recently, the Palestinian leader attacked Arab leaders who dared to normalise relations with Israel as part of the Abraham Accords.

Of course, questioning Mahmoud Abbas's potential peace-making role goes beyond ideological positions and rhetoric. At 86, Abbas can hardly soften his perception that the Jewish state is illegitimate. So even if he were to surprise the world with a change of heart, he could probably not muster the strength to lead Palestinians to follow.

At present, he is busy trying to subdue any voice speaking of peace.

The Israeli left widely subscribes to the thesis of missed opportunities from the days of Foreign Minister Moshe Sharrett. PM David Ben-Gurion presumably quashed their peace probes in the years before the Yom Kippur War. Again, according to this thesis, Israel likely missed another opportunity for peace during the talks between former Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and King Hussein of Jordan in 1987.

Fortunately, Mahmoud Abbas's reaction to Mansour Abbas's remarks serves to warn the Israeli public from being duped.

Hillel Frisch is a professor of political studies and Middle East studies at Bar-Ilan University and an expert on the Arab world at Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security.

Short News

Israel Exports Hit Record



Exports from Israel soared to record levels last year. With an increase of almost 20%, the total amount will reach between US \$ 135 and US \$140 billion. The ministry said that some 39% of exports go to European markets, followed by American markets at 33% and Asia at 25%. | Photo: Flash90

Internet Use Increase

Internet use among ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel is rising. Research has shown that their use has doubled since 2008. In 2008, about 28% of the community used the internet; now, it is 64%. Members of the ultra-Orthodox community are gradually integrating internet use into their lifestyles. The internet is mainly used for e-mail, looking up information, digital banking, work and government services.

Cleantech Aims at Developing World

An Israeli company has designed an off-grid household water purification system that is sustainable, cheap, easy to use, and could provide millions of households in developing countries with clean drinking water. The system called Miriam's Well, is powered by solar energy, and is fitted with advanced ultraviolet technology that kills viruses and bacteria. The device is lightweight, and purifies each litre of water for less than half a cent.

Hamas Seeks to Divide Jordan

■ Pinhas Inbari

Hamas's attempts, led by Saleh al-Arouri, to infiltrate the West Bank worry not only Israel but also Ramallah and Jordan. Hamas's efforts are currently the common denominator for the cooperation required of Israel and Jordan. Israeli and Palestinian Authority forces are already operating in the Jenin region of the West Bank.

Developments there should be troubling Jordan's King Abdullah II. Although Jordan is currently calm domestically, the Jordanian parliament is stressing the king. According to comments from journalists close to the palace, the king views the Muslim Brotherhood (Hamas's umbrella organisation) as the source of the unrest.

In mid-December, the Jordanian parliament challenged the government's far-reaching water and electricity agreements with Israel.

Then, on 28 December 2021, a brawl took place while the lawmakers discussed changing the fundamental laws to ensure gender equality. When it deliberated whether to attach the Arabic feminine form of the word 'Jordanian' alongside the masculine form, the resulting uproar included swearing and an exchange of blows. Eventually, a compromise was reached.

The parliament passed amendments that enabled the king to appoint top public security and judicial officials, along with the grand mufti and royal advisers. An amendment was also approved to establish a National Security Council controlled by the king, which would handle all issues related to defence and security. But it came at a price. In an unprecedented move, the parliament removed the king as the head of the parliamentary security committee.

Jordanian journalists close to the royal palace accused the Muslim Brotherhood of planning the provocations in parliament.

The veteran leader of the Muslim Brotherhood branch in Jordan, Laith Shubeilat, did not hesitate to accuse the Brotherhood's new generation of having ties to foreign entities—namely Iran. Shubeilat is no lapdog for the Hashemite regime; he had a strained relationship with King Hussein and was arrested several times.

Jordanian publicist Ahmed Salama reported that when King Abdullah allowed Hamas leaders Khaled Mashaal and Ismail Haniyeh to attend the funeral of a senior member of the Brotherhood, Ibrahim Ghosheh, in August 2021, they exploited this humane gesture to persuade mourners to recognise the two Hamas figures as leaders of Jordan's own Islamic faction. "The funeral turned into a pledge of allegiance to Hamas

and its leaders," Salama wrote. Moreover, their incitement "was an embarrassment to the government's alliance with the Ramallah authority."

The goal of the Brotherhood, according to Salama, is to fragment Jordan as they have divided the Palestinians. Its logic is clear: just as they opened the door to Iran in Gaza, they want to divide Jordan to allow Iran's infiltration there as well.

Arouri's attempts to infiltrate the West Bank are understood in Jordan as part of an Iranian mission also to infiltrate the 'East Bank.' Faced with this Hamas strategy, Jordan must coordinate with Israel and the PA.

Pinhas Inbari is a veteran Arab affairs correspondent who formerly reported for Israel Radio and the Al Hamishmar newspaper. He currently serves as an analyst for the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

This article was first published by the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. Republished with permission.

The Legacy of Mendel Glick



Mendel Glick passed away in 2017, leaving a legacy of more than 170 children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren - he left the world a sweeter place. | Photos: Nechama Bendet

■ Nechama Bendet

Daughter of Mendel & Sarah Glick

My father, Mendel Glick, was born in a small town in Poland in 1924 and was one of ten children.

During the Holocaust, he endured untold horrors in four different concentration camps, where he was starved, beaten, left in freezing conditions and forced into slave labour simply because he was a Jew. My father lived on tiny scraps of food, eating grass to survive. He weighed less than 30 kilos at the end of the war. Dad was liberated by American soldiers who literally picked him up off the floor of his bunker as he was too weak to walk.

Rather than being angry and bitter about his unimaginable suffering, Dad often spoke of the many miracles he experienced during the war. He spoke warmly and positively about all God did to help him to survive. One such miracle was when Dad's foot was swollen, and he received permission to see the doctor at the camp. There was a long line of people ahead of him, and he queued for many hours. Just as it was Dad's turn to be seen, the doctor said he was going to lunch and would be back in an hour. As my father's foot was hurting him, he decided to take a short walk around the doctor's clinic while he waited for him to return. At the rear of the clinic, he saw a truck piled high with the dead bodies of all the patients who had been ahead of him in the line. He quickly realised the 'doctor' was killing the patients who came for medical care, so he ran back to his bunk and saved his life.

In a heart-warming story, my father spoke about Boruch Baker, a man occupying a bunk next to my father in the camp, who risked his life to sneak a piece of clothing from the crematorium, which he fashioned into a blanket so that he wouldn't freeze to death during the harsh winter. Mr Baker would have been shot if he was caught, but miraculously, managed to return to the bunk undetected and, in an act of great kindness, tore the makeshift blanket in two and gave half to my father. Both men survived the Holocaust and moved to Melbourne. Seventy years after the war, Mr Baker's grandson began dating my daughter. Telling my father about their engagement, seeing my father dance at their wedding, and, just over a year later, kiss their child, remains one of the highlights of my life.

Despite the depravity and torture my father suffered in the hands of the Nazis, he never complained and always spoke of his great love and affection for God,

referring to Him as his 'best friend.' He often quoted his grandmother, who he recalled sitting with his mother and aunt before the war, discussing the rise in antisemitism, saying that God is correct and His judgement is always perfect.

My dad often said not to talk about either good or bad things that happen to you. He was a humble man focused on living a productive, happy and quiet life. Whenever anyone asked him how he was, he invariably answered 'good, always good.'

My father met my mother Sarah while peddling goods in Poland and married her in November 1945 in what is believed to be the first Jewish wedding in Poland after the war. My father knocked on a house that my mother was staying at with other orphaned girls after the war, and when my mother answered the door, he said that no lights were necessary, as her beauty lit up the room. He immediately proposed to her, and she accepted. I remember my father saying that after he proposed, he was so taken with emotion that he was unable to speak for a few minutes, but once he found his voice, he asked my mother what her name was.

They were married for 72 years until Dad died and were completely devoted to each other.

My father recalled walking along the streets of Poland after the war and meeting a Rabbi who blessed him with 120 children. My father was very troubled by this, worrying how he could possibly fulfil this blessing. After some time, it occurred to him that the 120 children could include all direct descendants that he and my mother would have together. It was not his custom to 'count' family members, but he was deeply grateful to have had nine of his own children and to see five generations of descendants during his lifetime, including children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren, totalling far more than the 120 descendants he was blessed with. It was a source of great comfort to my parents, both of whom were sole survivors from their families, having both lost their parents and all their siblings, that they lived to see their grandchildren have grandchildren.

In 1948, an aunt in Australia helped my father settle in Melbourne. With his wife by his side, and despite not being able to speak any English or have any savings, he established *Glick's Cakes and Bagels*, an iconic bakery, bearing his name that still operates today, selling bagels and traditional *Shabbat Challah* loaves.

My father lived in a small world, made up of his family, synagogue, and shop. He worked until his last day and was always cheerful and happy. He is my inspiration.

Thank you to Nechama Bendet for providing the article and photos of her late father.



Mendel Glick, founder of Australia's largest and finest kosher bakery chain, *Glick's Cakes and Bagels* in Melbourne.



Mendel and his wife Sarah, moved to Melbourne in 1948, where they opened their first bakery in the late 1960s.

Wannsee and the Education Myth

■ Perry Trotter

Co-founder of Holocaust & Antisemitism Foundation, Aotearoa, New Zealand

On a Winter's day in the early 1940s, fifteen men gathered in a grand estate in one of Germany's most cultured cities. Among them were some of the best educated leaders of Europe's most advanced society. Indeed, more than half of the men present held doctorates earned at the finest European universities.

The date was 20 January 1942 and the meeting was what became known as the Wannsee Conference. Nazi leaders had gathered to plan the execution of *The Final Solution*. A strategy was established by which the eleven million Jews considered to be within reach of the Nazi regime could be efficiently eliminated. The best of German technology would be applied to a task considered essential to the advancement of society. Such goals were consistent with the prevailing ideology and would enjoy support from many within the educational institutions, the church and society more broadly.

As we mark the 80th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference we must confront the oft-heard mantra and myth: *the answer to antisemitism is education*. Certainly in the case of Nazi Germany, education did nothing to prevent the rise of a genocidal regime and the subsequent murder of six million Jews. Indeed, it seems clear that many of the philosophical assumptions underlying the education of the time only propelled Jew hatred.

But What of the Present Day?

Recent surveys both here in New Zealand and overseas have revealed alarming trends. Of particular concern to our present topic is the finding that antisemitism, specifically anti-Zionism, is somewhat disproportionately present amongst academics and at institutions of learning. (Elsewhere we have made the observation that anti-Zionism is the weapon of choice for Western antisemites. It may also be the form of Jew hatred most likely to go unchallenged.)

The statement "*the answer to antisemitism is education*", is, in its unqualified form, quite unhelpful. It ignores the reality that all educational endeavours proceed on the basis of certain worldview assumptions - and those assumptions are seldom declared.

Let me be clear: our *Holocaust and Antisemitism Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand* is an educational trust. We do indeed believe that Holocaust education can be exceedingly valuable, and we strive to produce outstanding resources in the form of exhibitions, events, websites and an App. But my point is this: none of us proceed from a position of neutrality - the notion of unbiased education is a fantasy. Whether our worldview is declared or undeclared it guides us today just as it guided the well-educated Wannsee fifteen who planned the industrialised murder of Europe's Jews.

Those of us committed to keeping Holocaust memory alive have choices.

Will we take the politically lubricated path that sanitises and universalises the Holocaust, presenting it as merely one among many forms of racism and unkindness, harnessing its power in service of other causes? Or will we take the more difficult road and insist on antisemitism's uniqueness and particularity, daring to declare that the Holocaust, taken in its broader historical context, did not and arguably could not have happened to any but the Jews?

It is our underlying worldview that will answer that question. And that in turn will determine the fidelity of our educational and memorial efforts, and whether they will be fit for purpose and truly able to challenge hearts and minds.

www.holocaustfoundation.com



| Photo: Auschwitz-Birkenau incinerator 2019 © Perry Trotter, Holocaust Foundation

We Remember

Ingeborg Woolf (nee Ponger) QSO Z"L: 1934 - 2021

Inge, born in Vienna, Austria in 1934, was the daughter of Evzen and Grete Ponger. She was only four years old when the Nazis marched into Austria during the Anschluss. She remembered vividly her neighbours happily putting out the Nazi swastika flag to welcome



Hitler's troops as they marched down their street, and the fear she felt. This memory forever shaped her life and her mission of combating hate and antisemitism.

Inge, along with her mother and father, left Austria and moved to Czechoslovakia in 1938, seeking refugee status in the United Kingdom in 1939. They were able to leave Czechoslovakia for the United Kingdom after going through a conversion to Christianity, but her family always remained committed to their roots.

Inge and her family would make the decision to emigrate to Wellington, New Zealand in 1957 and begin rebuilding their lives. It was in New Zealand that Inge met her future husband, the late Ronald Woolf, and with whom she helped set up the successful photography business *Woolf Photography*.

Inge was instrumental in establishing the *Holocaust Centre of New Zealand (HCNZ)*, becoming Founding Director and Board Member. Inge's passion was educating students on the lessons of the Holocaust.

Throughout the years since, she has been an active volunteer and educator at HCNZ. Inge was a living embodiment of the HCNZ mission to educate all students in New Zealand and to ensure that we *Witness, Remember, Educate, and Act*.

Inge was the proud mother to Deborah Hart, current Chair of the Board of HCNZ, and Simon Woolf, current Wellington City Councillor. She was an adored grandmother, and great-grandmother.

Loved and respected by many, Inge's legacy lives on in the thousands that have heard her speak and give her testimony. She was a bulwark against hatred and antisemitism, challenging students, and adults alike to not be bystanders when hatred rears its ugly head.

"Today the lessons of the Holocaust are poignant to combat increasing intolerance and racism, to teach the value of human rights and the celebration of diversity." (2019)

Paul Seideman Z"L: 1928 - 2021



On 13 November 2021, after a brief illness, aged 93 years, Paul Seideman passed away.

Born in Prague, and as a young Czech Jew, Paul managed to survive the Lodz Ghetto, several concentration and labour camps, including Auschwitz, and a death march, during World War II. He was liberated at Dachau, aged 17. After liberation, Paul emigrated to Australia, and then New Zealand. Sadly Paul's father and mother died in the Lodz Ghetto, in 1942 and 1941 respectively.

To commemorate the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau by the Soviet Army on 27 January 1945, Paul funded an annual Holocaust essay competition for New Zealand secondary students. This was established in 2014 under the administration of the *Holocaust Centre of New Zealand (HCNZ)*.

Originally for years 10 - 13 students, the *Paul Seideman Holocaust Essay Competition* grew into the *Paul Seideman Annual Composition Prize*, and students submit entries in a variety of formats to answer the questions posed.

HCNZ is honoured to carry on Paul's legacy and continues to administer this competition, which annually engages hundreds of students across the nation in Holocaust education.

He was a generous benefactor and supporter of Holocaust education and remembrance in New Zealand.

*Thank you to the Holocaust Centre of NZ for providing these articles. www.holocaustcentre.org.nz
In Jewish writing, Z"L is referenced after a person's name who has passed away, meaning, "Of blessed memory, may he/she/they rest in peace."*

Miraculous Visit to Ivory Coast



Rev Cornelis Kant and Rev Bram Krol received an Ivory Coast's traditional dress (belonging to the descendants of the tribe of Dan). | Photo: Christians for Israel

■ Rev Cornelis Kant

Executive Director | Christians for Israel International

Sometimes extraordinary things happen. A fellow pastor, Rev Bram Krol, has been doing missionary work in the inland regions of the Ivory Coast (West Africa) for many years. Rev Krol works together with local Pastor Jean Christophe, who told him one day that he would like to know more about Israel. This is why Pastor Jean Christophe was connected to Christians for Israel and attended our biennial Forum in Jerusalem in 2019. In the autumn of 2021, the corona situation was stable in Ivory Coast, and we decided to organise a pastors' conference on Israel, in two cities. Together with 20 colleagues from various denominations, Jean Christophe set to organising two events.

Special Meetings

During the visit to Ivory Coast, I was joined by Rev Krol, and given his knowledge of the country culture and his connections, this was very useful. Before the conferences took place, we had the opportunity to visit the President of the Baptist Churches in French-speaking Africa, Dr Robert Dion. Dr Dion shared that Israel had played a great and valuable role in building up the Ivory Coast during the first years of independence. We also visited the Department of Religious Affairs, where we were allowed to explain to a top official why Christians for Israel organised these conferences and what our core message is. It was very special that this top official asked us to close our meeting in prayer and pray for his ill director. Later, Jean Christophe told us that this official is a Muslim, and his job is to ensure that Christians and Muslims live together in peace. This made it all the more special that we could tell him about Israel from the Bible and offer him the book *Why Israel?* in French.

Conference in Yamoussoukro

The first conference was held in the city of Yamoussoukro, 250 kilometres inland. Over 150 pastors attended the conference. During a lecture and Bible study, I drew comparisons between the Old and New Testaments to clarify that Israel has a continuing role in God's plan of salvation

for the world. With a PowerPoint presentation, participants got an overview of the political history of Israel in the past 120 years, and a presentation about the worldwide mission and activities of Christians for Israel. Rev Bram gave a Bible study from *Ezekiel 37* about the prophecy of the future reunion of the ten and two tribes of Israel. The participants told us they were very touched by the message. "I knew something about Israel, and I knew a few texts, but this clear overview was a revelation to me," one pastor told us. Another said: "It is a miracle that this message is being shared with us at this time".

Conference in Abidjan

The next day, we had a similar conference in the capital, Abidjan. Over 80 pastors attended the conference. One pastor enthusiastically shared: "The Holy Spirit has made it clear to us that we must do something with this message in our congregations. This is very important for French-speaking Africa".

The fact that the New Covenant, according to *Jeremiah 31*, is made with the house of Israel and Judah was an eye-opener for them. And that the New Testament contains such clear promises for Israel, for example, in the hymn of *Mary* and *Zacharias*, was also new to them. All the pastors went home with the French edition of the book *Why Israel?* written by Rev Willem Glashouwer. Once again, it became clear to us how important it is to organise these conferences for pastors.

Future Developments

Jean Christophe and our international team in the Netherlands are now in close contact about future developments. These pastors need to be supported with good Bible study material for their Sunday sermons and Bible study groups. Jean Christophe will set up a small local team and translate Bible study material into French, so we can develop a French-language website.

We are grateful for these new developments, please pray with us for the growth of this important work in Ivory Coast.



Worship during the conference.



Conference in Abidjan.



Pastor Jean Christophe presents the French edition of *Why Israel?*



God is Still in Control, Not Us

■ Bryce Turner

New Zealand Executive Director | Christians for Israel NZ

Welcome to *Israel and Christians Today*, and especially to our readers from New Zealand and the South Pacific. We have some wonderful articles for you this edition, including the continuation of our series by Joanna Moss, news from Sondra Baras in CFOIC Heartland – one of the projects we support, a great piece by Arthur and Sue Comery, and encouragement from Keith Buxton among many others. Our team is delighted to bring you this information from here in New Zealand, from the Pacific Islands, and around the world.

As we go to print, many around the world have stopped to recognise UNIHRD – the *United Nations Holocaust Remembrance Day* – held on the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp. It was a great privilege to attend a commemoration in Auckland, and there were others held around the country as many New Zealanders slowly start to recognise the importance of remembering the tragedy that was the holocaust. As a youngster I can clearly recall pondering what it must have been like for my grandfathers and other relatives to have seen the horrors of WWII, and yet to have returned to New Zealand and tried to live a ‘normal’ life. Even though young at the time, I remember being quite moved as I came into an understanding of just what that experience must have been like. Similarly, I am deeply touched every time I sit in the presence of holocaust survivors, albeit that the passing years are rapidly diminishing their numbers, where again I can try to imagine even just a little of what they have gone through. Having been privileged to visit Yad Vashem on a number of occasions, and to have sat with survivors, even the smallest understanding makes it so clear why we must remember; so we never let it happen again. As with my grandfathers, there is a sadness, a reluctance to share what was so obviously painful. At the same time, there is a realisation that sharing these stories might just help in some way to

spare others from the same experience. At the Auckland commemoration one of the speakers sadly reflected that we haven’t learned all that we should from the holocaust, as there have been other events of mass genocide during the decades that followed it. Surely this is all the more reason why we must remember? We hope that a post-pandemic world may allow a wider commemoration of the UNIHRD. The most moving scene I have witnessed recently, however, had to be that of Israel’s parliamentary speaker, Mickey Levy, as he delivered the mourner’s prayer in the German parliament, the Bundestag. Followed by a standing ovation from the members of the German parliament, the video clip of this event is nothing short of encouraging, and a powerful reminder of not only the pain of the holocaust, but of the ability for human beings to heal. I would encourage you to take a look at this video clip online. Here is the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CtDPzzVst8>

Another update in this edition comes from Pastor Nigel Woodley, regarding the call for a NZ embassy in Israel. Regardless of where you might sit on the political spectrum, this question of New Zealand’s apparent failure to properly invest in relations with Israel is valid and important. Our country funds a large embassy in Iran, for example, a country who – even in the last few days – hangs gay people, and yet nothing is said by our government. Our country’s track record of support – perhaps better expressed as opposition – of Israel, is nothing short of atrocious. A quick look at our past performance – online information such as <https://ourallynz.com/> for example, is easily accessible - shows not only our apparent lack of support for a country that arguably our soldiers spilled blood to liberate during WWI, but what seems to be our blatant opposition. There will always be those who twist and distort facts to suit their own purposes, those who try to deny the overwhelming body of evidence of Jewish history in their homeland Israel, for example, or those who take currently fashionable derogatory slurs like

‘colonialist’ and completely misapply them – denigrating the validity of genuine struggles against colonialism around the world. To disagree or speak out an opinion is a perk, a privilege of our democratic country – a privilege afforded to all Israeli citizens we might add, Jewish, Arab etc alike, but strenuously disallowed in the majority of the Islamic Arab nations that surround it. As a New Zealander, I find this position of opposing Israel hugely embarrassing, and contradictory to the values of freedom, truth and justice that we supposedly stand for.

Israel, however, is most definitely invested in New Zealand, and the hard-working team at the Israeli Embassy in Wellington are doing a wonderful job. We bring you an article from the embassy, celebrating a recent programme where representatives from New Zealand and Samoa were able to undertake training in agricultural technology and administration – a field in which Israel leads the world. In Samoa in particular, there are huge challenges in growing food crops, challenges remarkable similar to those encountered by the Israelis as they have successfully turned large areas of desert into productive agricultural land.

As antisemitism seems to be on the rise around the world, and those who try to deny that the holocaust even happened gain a following from those too stupid – or perhaps simply too blinded by hatred - to look at the evidence for themselves, the responsibility falls ever heavier on those of us called to support Israel to be stronger, clearer, even perhaps louder. On behalf of the Christians for Israel team in New Zealand and the South Pacific, we thank you for your continued interest and support. And in a subtle plug.... if you find yourself needing more information, answers to questions, or just more preparedness for when you come across those who do not yet understand the rightful place of Israel, do feel free to take advantage of the fantastic specials our office team is running on books, studies and other materials.

Have a wonderful 2022, thanks for your support.

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What Happened After the Jews Left?

■ **Joanna Moss**

NZ Friends of Israel (NZFOI) | Wellington

So far in this series, we have discussed 'push and pull' factors for Jews making *Aliyah*. But what of the nations they left? What impact did their departure have in the short and long terms? In this third article, we will examine history, what happened to nations after the Jews left, what happened to bilateral relations with Israel, and the implications for Christians living in those nations.

Obviously, this is a very large subject, and we can only look at some general principles and a few more unfamiliar case studies. People who follow the late Derek Prince and Lance Lambert will be familiar with their analysis of nations that came against the Jews, citing Spain and Portugal (1492 and 1496 decrees) and Britain as examples of major powers that lost their empires and standing as a result of mistreatment of the Jews and Israel. Their basis was the *Genesis 12.3* national curse being worked out.

Across North Africa and in the Middle East, there were countries where Jews occupied particular roles in society, whether by custom or by ancient decree. They had the status of 'Dhimmis' in Moslem countries and often lived in Jewish community areas. Over time the Jews learned to live with Moslem, Druze, Christian and other ethnic group neighbours and carved out a role for themselves. Some enjoyed a great deal of freedom in their choice of occupation and lifestyle whilst others were not so privileged. Many were merchants, some very successful using their links with traders abroad. Others played key roles in their societies, even in the government, like Daniel. Yes, there were tensions, riots and massacres. But the Jews tended to pick themselves up afterwards. However, the proposed founding of the State of Israel tipped the balance, and many fled in 'push' actions realising their days were numbered. They left behind homes and possessions, substantial land holdings and businesses leaving big gaps in their former societies, some have never recovered from. Today North Africa and the Middle East are largely denuded of their ancient Jewish communities, and as time passes, memories and connections with the old countries fade as new generations arise abroad and at home with no connections.

Morocco

Morocco has a long Jewish history that's worth studying. Jews fled Spain and Portugal in the late 15th century and made their homes in Morocco. They brought with them their European ways and connections and established thriving trading businesses in the major cities, including dominating the gold trade. Meanwhile, more ancient Jewish communities were scattered all over Morocco. However, as economic conditions deteriorated, they too migrated to the cities in search of opportunities.



Inside the Ibn Danan Synagogue, in Fes, Morocco, restored in 1999. | Photo: Shutterstock

This mercantile elite dominated the local Jews, and many held high positions in the country.

As the French influence spread across North Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries, it became more advantageous for Moroccan Jews to speak French and adopt French ways. They were rewarded with being able to take up French citizenship after fleeing to France in post-colonial uprisings. The founding of the State of Israel exacerbated the Moroccan domestic situation with riots, and *Operation Joachim* in the 1960s saw the final group of Jews leave. From a pre-1948 figure of 250,000-350,000 Jews (same as Britain today), they are now down to less than 2,000. But they still remain the largest community in the Muslim world.

The bulk of Moroccan Jews went to Israel, then France, USA, Canada and Argentina. However, the Moroccan government and King were keen for them to return and opened the doors. The state has restored many synagogues and Jewish heritage sites. They have recognised that something precious was lost in the departure of the Jews. In recent years many former Moroccan Jews made trips to Morocco, and Jewish tourism was a thriving business until Covid-19 struck.

Syria

Syria may have the world's oldest synagogue dating back to 240 AD. It was a haven for Jews fleeing from the First Crusade and again after the Spanish Inquisition. At the beginning of the 20th century, Jews numbered around 100,000. This was the beginning of the migration to New York. Interestingly, Damascus is a city divided into Jewish, Christian and Moslem quarters. The Jews had their place in society. Subsequently, many of their homes were left empty.

During the French Mandate period, thousands moved to Israel, now the largest diaspora community and this

process accelerated after Syrian independence in 1946 following anti-Jewish riots in 1947 and deaths in 1948.

Thereafter, the government banned Jews from leaving and enacted laws restricting their activities, including obtaining certain jobs and getting a driver's license! Still 25,000 left. Under pressure, Hafez Assad's government allowed the remaining Jews to leave in the 1990s, but with a proviso they didn't move to Israel. This was the last wave to New York. Other communities exist in Argentina, Mexico and selected South and Central American countries. Things have only gotten worse in Syria since the Jews left. The Jews were fenced in and restricted, so were many Syrians subsequently. The civil war started in March 2011 and is ongoing. Water supplies have dried up.

Uruguay

In the previous article, we saw how Zionist tendencies (pull) led to the Jews leaving Uruguay. But sadly, they found that no one was left to advocate for Israel once they had gone. The Christians there had failed to pick up the mantle. Worse still, Uruguay became anti-Israel. Support for Israel should never be left to the Jews alone. Two South American countries have shown strong support for Israel based on their Christian evangelical populations – Honduras and Guatemala.

Conclusion

God promised to use the Jews as a symbol of his existence and to be a light unto the nations. Of course, this promise is contingent upon the Jews being able to be a light. What if the nations block their ability to be the people God wanted them to be? Then not only do the Jews feel discriminated against, but nations miss the blessing, and they bring curses upon themselves. *Genesis 12.3-4*. It has been helpful to look at some countries and reflect upon how they have treated the Jews down the ages and how the nations fared. You may like to take a nation and do a study for yourself. Start with New Zealand. Did you know that Jews were restricted entry and banned from studying medicine and dentistry at Otago University in the 1930s and early 1940s? Note that we've had a shortage of doctors and dentists for years.

So, where does it leave Christians? First, we must know God's plan as set out in the Bible. What is the role of Jews, and what is the role for Christians? Obviously, we want to play a part in ensuring the Jews have the freedoms God wants for them, especially given their minority community status. This must be stemming from an attitude of love and wisdom wanting the best for them. Note this may well include defending them in future.

If and when they choose to leave our shores, we want them to go with a blessing and not be forced out or be unable to take their possessions. Meantime let Christians play their role in support for Israel. What can you do?

As they say: Long live Israel (*Am Israel chai*).





The Significance of the Mandate

■ Prof Matthijs de Blois

Senior Fellow | The Hague Initiative for International Cooperation (thinc.)

The Mandate for Palestine, created by the Council of the League of Nations (LoN) in 1922, carries not only historical significance but also strong legal weight. The rights of the Jewish people that are implied in the legal obligation to ensure the establishment of the Jewish national home laid one of the most important foundations for the existence of the State of Israel under international law.

By the late 1930s, the LoN had become dysfunctional, and it was finally dissolved in July 1946. It was in effect replaced by the United Nations (UN), which came into existence in 1945. This brought to an end the system of Mandates under the LoN and the role and responsibilities of the League and its Permanent Mandate Commission in relation to the existing Mandates. In 1947, the British finally announced their intention to terminate their responsibilities under the Mandate. The State of Israel was proclaimed on 14 May 1948, and the British withdrew on 15 May 1948.

League of Nations Succeeded by the UN

The United Nations was entitled to assume certain responsibilities of the League of Nations with respect to the Mandate system and existing Mandates, but it did not—and could not—take over the role of Britain as Mandatory. The UN and its Member States should, according to Article 80 of the UN Charter, respect the rights of the Jewish people and other peoples under the Mandates. It states:

Except as may be agreed upon in individual trusteeship agreements, (...) nothing in this Chapter shall be construed in or of itself to alter in any manner the rights whatsoever of any states or any peoples or the terms of existing international instruments to which Members of the United Nations may respectively be parties.

This provision, which reflects the international law principle of 'acquired legal rights', constitutes part of the transitional arrangements from the system of Mandates under the LoN to the system of Trusteeships under the UN Charter. No attempt was made to place Palestine under the Trusteeship system.^[i] The well-known Resolution 181 (II) – including the 'Partition Plan' – that was adopted by the General Assembly (GA) on 29 November 1947, is a non-binding decision by the GA with recommendations on the future of the Mandate territory; it is not a Trusteeship Agreement. Article 80 of the UN Charter is often referred to as the 'Palestine Article' or the 'Palestine Clause'.



Peace Palace in The Hague, Seat of the International Court of Justice, The Netherlands. | Photo: Shutterstock

This indicates that it was drafted with the Palestine Mandate in mind. From the drafting history, it is clear that a Jewish delegation present at the San Francisco Conference in 1945 where the UN Charter was drafted, intended to protect the right of settlement of the Jewish people guaranteed by the Mandate. It successfully included the word peoples in the text, which was missing in the original draft. All participants in the discussions of the draft knew that the term peoples referred to the Jewish people in Palestine. Even if one would argue that the Mandate itself was brought to an end by the decision of the British Government to terminate it in 1948, Article 80 supports the "persistence of rights, interests and claims thereunder..."

The ICJ has also underlined the relevance of the rights bestowed by a Mandate on the people concerned after the demise of the LoN:

"Their *raison d'être* and original object remain. Since their fulfilment did not depend on the existence of the League of Nations, they could not be brought to an end merely because this supervisory organ ceased to exist. Nor could the right of the population to have the Territory administered in accordance with these rules depend thereon. This view is confirmed by Article 80, paragraph 1, of the Charter, which maintains the rights of States and peoples and the terms of existing international instrument until the territories in question are placed under the Trusteeship System."

The International Court of Justice

In an Advisory Opinion in 1971, the Court again emphasised the continuing relevance of the rights of a people under a Mandate after the dissolution of the League of Nations. Unfortunately, the ICJ did not follow these precedents when the issue of the relevance of the Mandate for Palestine for the rights of settlement of the Jewish people was at stake in the Wall Advisory Opinion in 2004.

Conclusion

To sum up: the political and territorial rights of the Jewish people with respect to the land of Palestine pursuant to the Mandate for Palestine remained valid and effective after the termination by the British of their responsibilities as Mandatory and of the LoN itself. In fact, the decision of the British in 1947, and their actual withdrawal from Palestine in May 1948, did not terminate either their responsibilities as Mandatory.

The territorial rights of the Jewish people under the Mandate are still relevant for determining the legal status of the parts of the former Mandate territory over which Israel (re-)gained control in June 1967, and that have not (yet) been formally incorporated in the State of Israel: Judea and Samaria (West Bank) and Gaza.

thinc. seeks to contribute to a fair solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – and other similar situations – on the basis that Israel is a legal, democratic state under international law. We conduct research, provide education and advise governments. The team in the Netherlands coordinates a worldwide network of experts in international law, politics and religion.

Will the Vatican Pay Israel Taxes Due?

■ David S Levine

Ever since the creation of the State of Israel, the Catholic and other Christian churches have refused to pay taxes due to Israel and its municipalities on church-owned properties and income.

Benjamin Franklin, one of the more famous founding fathers of the US, is quoted as saying, "... in this world, nothing is certain except death and taxes." The first part may be true, but as for the Catholic Church in Israel, they are operating tax-free.

The modern State of Israel was internationally recognised by the UN in 1948. It took 45 years for the Holy See finally to recognise Israel in December 1993. Regardless, the Catholic Church (like everyone else) is subject to the laws of the country it operates in. And it should be matching its actions with their own teachings: According to the New Testament, Jesus said one should "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (*Mark 12:17 and Luke 20:25*) and "Pay everyone what you owe

him: taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honour to whom honour is due" (*Romans 13:7*).

However, ever since the creation of the State of Israel, the Catholic and other Christian churches have refused to pay taxes due to Israel and its municipalities on church-owned properties and income. In 2002, the Knesset cancelled certain tax exemptions to religious institutions (of any denomination) that offer health, hospitality, and welfare services (with the exception of houses of prayer like synagogues, churches, and convents), ritual baths, and educational institutions that are not commercial activities.

While it may seem reasonable that houses of prayer, ritual baths, and educational institutions be exempt from taxes, it is against internationally accepted rules of fair competition to exempt from taxes: hotels, stores, restaurants, hostels, guest houses, hospitals, welfare services, and leases of apartments belonging to churches. They operate like regular commercial businesses. They are classified as unrelated business activities and should,

therefore, be subject to taxes. Churches, mosques and synagogues are required to pay taxes in Israel on the profits made in Israel by their schools, hotels, hostels, hospitals. Furthermore, they are taxed on properties that are not places of prayer.

In December 2017, the Jerusalem Municipality asked for payment of unpaid commercial taxes amounting to NIS 650 million (about NZ \$308 million) and froze church bank accounts. In response, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and other churches demonised Israel, going so far as to imply that Jerusalem does not belong to the Jewish state.

For the Holy See and other churches, the argument that Jerusalem must be internationalised and become a *corpus separatum* (Latin for 'separate body') is so nonsensical because (1) Jerusalem has been the capital city of Israel since King David made it so in 1003 BCE (approx 1300 years before the establishment of Christianity by Constantine in 313 CE).

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NZ Embassy in Israel Update



Panorama of Jerusalem's Citadel near the Jaffa Gate with Tower of David, ancient fortress walls and Israeli flag. Zion Mount with buildings of Dormition Abbey and bell tower on background.. | Photo: Shutterstock

■ Ps Nigel Woodley PhD

For the Protection of Zion Trust | Hastings

The petition on the Parliamentary website *Establish an NZ Embassy in Israel* was published on 17 June 2021. The original expiry date was set at 31 December, but due to the slow uptake of the petition, it has been extended to 17 June this year; taking full advantage of the full one-year term, we are allowed to run with the petition on the

given land and support Israel's right to have sovereignty over the entire Land of Israel, including Judea and Samaria (West Bank) and all of Jerusalem.

This was during Murray McCully's term on the UN Security Council and prior to his controversial sponsoring of UNSC Resolution 2334 at the end of 2016. The petition was certainly on his radar, and his ministry (Foreign Affairs) was tracking my activity at the time.

the internet today. My fear is that it represents a drop in support for Israel since 2015. However, I think New Zealanders are generally pro-Israel, but there is an organised campaign being waged from the haters of Zion to vilify Israel with false accusations and propaganda.

Whatever the reason, I would encourage you to bring the petition to the attention of all who would be prepared to sign it. The current attitude of New Zealand foreign policy towards Israel seems to be biased against closer ties, and more concerned with pandering to Arab and Muslim interests. Petitions do count and so do numbers. However, whether many go with us or few, this petition will be used to remind the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that decent New Zealanders believe it is fair and right to establish an embassy in Israel. Antisemitism cannot be fully explained intellectually because it is not primarily an ideology; it is a spiritual force of evil that seeks to destroy God's covenant people Israel—their faith, their homeland, and their race. New Zealand cannot sit on the fence anymore on this as the fence is becoming electrified. We will have to choose which side of the fence we want to be on, and an embassy in Israel will help set us on the right side of history.

Please sign the petition here:
<https://fortheProtectionofZion.com/category/petitions/>

The current attitude of New Zealand foreign policy towards Israel seems to be biased against closer ties, and more concerned with pandering to Arab and Muslim interests.

Parliamentary site. As of 5 January, the petition had collected a modest number of 2250 signatures.

This is a little surprising to me because a petition we ran in 2015 collected nearly 12,000 signatures in just three months. It was presented to Parliament on 21 October 2015 by Stuart Nash (Napier). It stated:

That the House note that 11,685 people have signed a petition urging the New Zealand Government to cease from pressuring the State of Israel to give up its rightful and God-

The petition was done by hand—hard copy names and signatures filling a box of A4 pages. So, I didn't expect the slow uptake as I thought that an electronic petition would be much easier and faster at procuring support. That has not eventuated to date, despite a targeted internet campaign. Perhaps people are 'petitioned-out' because of an avalanche of other petitions published in the last twelve months. That is my excuse. It may signify that the people we were reaching via hard copy in 2015 were representative of a generation that is not so accessible via

Continued from page 3

And (2) the Catholic and other Christian churches also have property outside of Jerusalem, so why just this demand of Jerusalem?

In a CUFI article of 13 March 2018, then Jerusalem Mayor Nir Birkat said, "But does it sound logical to anyone that commercial areas like hotels, wedding halls and businesses should share this exemption, just because they are owned by the churches? Why should the Mamilla Hotel pay municipal tax while the Notre Dame Hotel across the street is exempt?"

Shimon Shetreet, former deputy mayor and Hebrew University law professor, was quoted by World Israel News (26 February 2018), "There is a difference between worship facilities and commercial facilities owned by the church. Many years ago, there was a similar issue with yeshivot (Jewish educational institutions focusing on Torah and Talmud) that have wedding halls. There was also the case of the Bar Association with a party hall. Places of prayer are not taxed. Places of parties are subject to taxation. There are also stores owned by churches and synagogues that pay tax. Why not? Nobody is charging houses of prayer, so these protests are totally misleading."

Why do churches insist that they are not obligated to pay taxes to the Jewish state, even though their scripture states that "...it is necessary to submit to authority, not only to avoid punishment but also as a matter of conscience" (*Romans 13:5*)?

The church's disregard of the law (international and Israeli), as well as its own teachings, means that Israeli citizens, whether they be Jews, Christians, or Muslims (of Jerusalem and elsewhere), are paying more than their share for sanitation, garbage collection, municipal services, and other taxes because of taxes that are not being paid by the church's owned commercial businesses (shops, hotels, and restaurants). Ironically, this puts a harder economic burden on the poor, who the church is committed to serve.

In addition, it should be mentioned that there are an untold number of invaluable Jewish artefacts in the Vatican archives that have been plundered over the centuries. The importance to return all of the plundered Judaica objects d'art, texts, and artefacts cannot be overstressed.

From the Jewish perspective, all these plundered items are part of the Jewish identity, history, and holy religious practices. Many original Hebraic texts contain insight



The Papal Basilica of Saint Peter in the Vatican. | Photo: Shutterstock

into Judaism, as to how and why it is practised today. These sacred religious artefacts and objects d'art depict Jewish communal life throughout the ages.

If the Vatican's tax bill was NIS 650 million (about NZ \$308 million) in 2017, how much is owed now, including interest and penalties?

Perhaps the State of Israel could cut the Catholic Church a deal and offer a credit against the tax bill for the return of the Jewish treasures to the State of Israel.

First published in *Jerusalem Post*. Republished with permission.

Indigenous Coalition for Israel Gains International Attention



Jerusalem at night. | Photo: Perry Trotter

■ Dr Sheree Trotter

Author | Indigenous Coalition for Israel

The months since the launch of Indigenous Coalition for Israel (ICFI) have been very busy, accompanied by some highs and lows.

We were deeply saddened by the passing of Kaumatua Pat Ruka. Matua Pat had a deep love for God, his *Ngapuhi* people and Israel. Matua Pat played a significant role in developing the relationship between *Iwi* and Israel. He initiated several significant *hui*, such as the event held at Hoani Waititi Marae in 2018 to offer a *whakapāha* or official apology to Israel for New Zealand's role in co-sponsoring Resolution 2234. We will greatly miss his vision, wisdom, guidance, and *aroha*. However, his legacy lives on, and we and others will continue the work about which he was so passionate.

On a brighter note, we were very pleased to facilitate a *hui* between *Te Arawa* business and *Iwi* leaders and the Israeli ambassador, HE Ran Yaakoby, in November. It was the first time an ambassador had been formally welcomed onto the renowned local meeting house '*Tama-te-Kapua*'. The ambassador was warmly received, and the *hui* marked the beginning of a relationship that will no doubt be developed in the coming months.

It is central to our mission to communicate why we believe recognition of Jewish indigeneity is so important. We are pleased to have had our work published in international fora in the past few weeks; in the well-respected American Jewish online *Tablet Magazine*, *The Jerusalem Post* and in Australian publications, *Australia Israel Review* and *JWire*.

The *Tablet Magazine* article, *Light for the Indigenous Nations*, explains why the understanding of Jewish indigeneity matters.

So, in regard to Israel, why does this matter? Because a colonialist narrative has taken hold in the popular imagination, by which Jews are seen as foreign colonisers who have displaced the indigenous Palestinian population. The colonialist narrative had its genesis in academia and has filtered down to politics and media. It has been promoted by historians of settler colonialism, Palestinian academics, politicians, and anti-Israel activists. Israel is portrayed as the archetypal intruder.

A lack of understanding of the indigenous status of Jews in Israel has meant that the United Nations has had a free hand in its attempt to sever all Jewish association with Jerusalem. The *Jerusalem Post* article, *UN's war on Jewish Jerusalem: A denial of indigenous rights*, explains that, *(The UN's attack on Jewish Jerusalem) constitutes a denial of history, an infraction against self-determination under*

international law, and a violation of indigenous rights in ancestral lands.

The UN has been unrelenting in its attacks on Israel and its denial of Israel's rights over Jerusalem. In this, New Zealand has been complicit. While we are cognisant of the fact that in arguing for the recognition of the indigenous status of Jews to Israel, we are using the language of currency, we are keenly aware that the principles of peoplehood, language and the connection to land are deeply embedded in Scripture and form a solid basis from which to build. We are also keenly aware that Jerusalem will be a central focus of world events in the days ahead, and our desire is that the people of our nation will stand on the right side of history and history's God.

The topic of Jewish indigeneity has drawn significant international interest, and we were invited by the Canadian Antisemitism Education Foundation and the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research to speak on the topic *Understanding Jewish Indigeneity*. The webinar was co-sponsored by more than 25 organisations.

There is much to be done to address these matters locally, and we invite you to follow and consider supporting our work at www.indigenouscoalition.org

Indigenous Australians Oppose Boycott

When a group of twenty-five or so performers and artists withdrew from the Sydney Festival because of the Israel embassy's sponsorship of one of the performances, Indigenous Australian and former politician Warren Mundine AO was quick to respond.

Mundine addressed the accusations of apartheid, settler colonialism and genocide with a few pithy tweets, pointing out that Israel is in fact a democratic nation, where free and fair elections are held, where Israeli Arabs, Christians, Muslims and Jews sit as equals under the rule of law.

Indigenous Australian, Munganbana Norman Miller and Barbara Miller of the 'Indigenous Friends of Israel' also issued a press release refuting the settler colonial lie, asserting that Jews are the indigenous people of the land and recounting the 4,000 year history of Jewish connection to the land of Israel.

Israel is not a racist, apartheid state. Arab citizens living in Israel have the right to vote and there are Arab MKs i.e., members of the parliament or Knesset. Why is it that the only democracy in the Middle East is so maligned?

The answer is antisemitism.

It seems that the Israeli embassy's sponsorship of the Sydney Dance Company, whose choreographer is Israeli, was enough to threaten the 'cultural safety' of Palestinian participants in the festival, according to *The Belvoir Street Theatre*.

An open letter signed by '*artists against apartheid*' stated, "We will not perform in or attend a Festival where the Israeli regime rainbow-coloured logo is used to artwash the violence, ethnic cleansing, and crimes inflicted upon the Palestinian people."

The idea that art and culture might function as a bridge to co-existence and cooperation evidently didn't occur to these artists. Instead they chose to interpret Israeli participation as 'art-washing' - using art for political purposes. Apparently the irony and hypocrisy of their statement was lost on them.

While it is unlikely that the boycotters' actions will achieve much in real terms, they did attract the praise of the terrorist regime, Hamas, who stated, "We declare our

solidarity with the participants who have withdrawn from the festival, and we call on all participants to raise their voices in face of oppression and injustice."

Perhaps it hasn't occurred to these artists that they would not have the freedom to pursue their art under the repressive conditions of a Hamas-led regime while in Israel, Arab Israelis enjoy freedom of expression.

The BDS movement has as one of its goals the demonisation of Israel. Unfortunately, BDS is completely divorced from reality and achieves very little for Palestinians. In fact its actions have been shown to harm the plight of Palestinians.

As the Millers have stated, "Those who have boycotted the Sydney Festival have been misled and have aligned themselves with a murderous terrorist organisation. And this is at a time when, through the Abraham Accords, there is increasing cultural and artistic exchange between Israel and Arab nations to promote peace and better understanding. Boycotts will not promote peace; only division."



Fiji Sees God's Fingerprints

■ Raphael Jordan

National Leader | Christians for Israel Fiji

Bula and Shalom from Fiji. Greetings once again from the ends of the earth, and Happy New Year to you all.

With the start of a new year we are setting new personal and organisational goals. We hope to accomplish these goals by the end of the year despite the ongoing global pandemic.

We trust that, in and with God's grace and power, we will overcome through the blood of *Yeshua*, our risen Lord and returning King (*John 16:33, Romans 8:37, Revelation 12:11*).

For Christians for Israel Fiji, we continue to meet on a fortnightly basis through our virtual platform. It is so encouraging to hear testimonies during our meetings of what God is doing on the home front, at work and in the nation as well.

One of the highlights for us was our visit to our Jewish friend (Tamar Atcheson) and her family (Pete, Eli and Ari) in Nadi. We used the opportunity to bless them with gifts. It was indeed a rare privilege and honour to do this. The Atchesons' reciprocated by preparing for us a big and tasty meal for lunch. We ended our visit with the breaking of bread – what a blessing!



From left to right: Raphael Jordan with the Atcheson family: Ana, Pete, Tamar, Elijah, Ari, Eli and Joseph.

Our connection with this beautiful family was made possible through Tamar's mother, Debbie, who lives in Israel. Debbie and Tamar have occasionally joined our fortnightly virtual meetings.

The timing of our visit to the Atchesons' was so divine considering the date (12/12/21) as it coincides with the date we (as a family) raised an Israel flag on Fijian soil nine years ago (12/12/12). It is undeniable that God's fingerprint is in all these numbers (day/date/year).



Christians for Israel Fiji President, Tomasi Biumaiwai and Elijah visiting the Atchesons.

So amazing how God shows up in ALL things and how He places His seal on His covenants.

All glory and honour to God enabling us to do His bidding in Fiji.

It is truly wonderful to collaborate with Jews in our journey with God, as we look forward to the return of the King of kings in *Yeshua HaMashiach* (Jesus the Messiah), our Saviour.

Israeli Agriculture Training

■ Embassy of Israel in New Zealand

Ten senior level officers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) and Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS) have completed two training programmes aimed at improving delivery of agriculture extension services and introducing new Irrigation and Fertigation Technology to boost farmers' production and productivity in Samoa.

The trainings were organised and coordinated by MASHAV Agriculture Training Center (MATC) and Israeli Pacific Food Security Alliance (IPFSA) through Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFAT).

ACEO Crops Division, Tanu Toomata said the programme was comprised of two components. The first stage (delivered between 25 January to 28 August 2021) focused on building capacity of agriculture extension officers and relevant staff from SROS.

Emphasis was directed to strengthening links between the extension officers and the farmers by developing diagnostic abilities to help MAF officers identify challenges and issues affecting farmers and apply the necessary technical assistance.

"The first component of the training allowed us to re-look at the roles and responsibilities of our agriculture extension officers, explore different approaches and solutions to the challenges they are facing so we can improve their service delivery to our farmers," said Mr Toomata. "This part of the programme was very beneficial and it's been very helpful to refresh our knowledge on the tools and methods available to improve our services."

The second component was based on the establishment of island vegetable demonstration plots to 'mirror' a similar Israeli demonstration and training plot which serves as a platform for learning and cooperation. It consisted of ten weekly meetings between 18 October - 20 December 2021, based on Irrigation and Fertigation for Vegetable Production.

This phase of the programme elaborated on the nature of the different crops and dealt in depth with the calculations, measurements and analysis of water and fertilisation

needed by the different crops through different growth stages. According to Principal Development Officer Liu Pueata Tanielu and SROS officer, Tualupetu Togafau, their training will provide valuable knowledge for all farmers.

"Looking at the importance of irrigation systems and fertiliser use for vegetable production has really helped me with the technical aspect of selecting the appropriate irrigation technology," said Mr Tanielu "There are a lot of irrigation systems available but the recommendation by this programme is to utilise the drip method which not only improves crop production but is also the best method for the efficient use of water resources that I have seen so far for our climatic conditions here in Samoa."

Ms Togafau added: "Irrigation is an important practice that can significantly increase the survival rate of vegetables, especially when soil moisture is marginal and the evapotranspiration rate is higher, as we experience here in Samoa during its dry season. This use of irrigation systems becomes necessary when water retention rate of the soil declines and vegetables are observed to start wilting."

With the increasing use of tunnel house technology in Samoa, Advisory Officer, Ioelu Iosefa, says vegetable growers will benefit greatly from adopting the new technology from Israel's Agriculture Agency.

"A lot of people these days are now using tunnel houses and utilising tube irrigation system. However this new technology from Israel is very different. I learnt how to calculate how much water to use in each stage of vegetative growth, a far more efficient and sustainable way of using water compared to our current practice of leaving the irrigation system on all night."

Crops Division Principal Advisory officer, Tommy Tuuamalii also participated in the training programme and is keen to share his knowledge and expertise with local farmers to help improve their production and productivity.



Participants at the completion of the two training programmes.

"The irrigation technique is not a newly introduced system and we have a lot of farmers with existing irrigation systems, but with this training, we have enhanced our understanding of the various benefits of using this system in boosting production" said Mr Tuuamalii. "We need to build more confidence and practical skills as extension workers, so that we can assist our farmers more effectively."

Participants of the Training Programme by MASHAV Agriculture Training Center (MATC) and Israeli Pacific Food Security Alliance (IPFSA) include professionals of agriculture ministries and research institutes from Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The establishment of the IPFSA was announced by the President of Israel, HE Reuven Rivlin in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals during his last visit in the region as part of the global effort to end hunger and guarantee food security in developing regions.

IPFSA seeks to establish a long-term agricultural training and capacity building programme, aimed at training vegetable producers and agricultural extensionists in efficient agricultural production techniques, as well as improved extension methods and skills for maximum diffusion of the know-how and to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

Building up the Biblical Heartland

■ Sondra Oster Baras

Director | CFOIC Heartland

In June 1967, Israel was attacked by Jordan, even as it was defending itself from Egypt and Syria. At the time, the Old City of Jerusalem and the entire central mountain range of the country, an area referred to by Jordan as the West Bank, was in Jordanian hands. But Jordan, Egypt and Syria were not satisfied. They wanted to destroy the 19-year-old Jewish State and drive the Jews into the sea.

Thank God they were not successful. Instead, Israel responded to the vicious attacks and liberated the entire West Bank, (Biblical Judea, and Samaria) from Jordan. Since then, this area has been in Israeli hands, although their hold on the area has long been disputed in international forums. But for the people of Israel, the reunification of Jerusalem and the Biblical Heartland was a homecoming. And just a few short weeks after the 1967 victory, a young group of pioneers literally came home.

Together these wonderful people make up the mosaic that is life in this vibrant area of Judea. Together, they have formed the foundation for Jewish life throughout Judea and Samaria.

In 1948, Kfar Etzion, a small community founded by young religious pioneers, some of whom were Holocaust survivors, was overrun, and its brave defenders slaughtered, by Arabs. Some weeks earlier, the mothers and children of the community had been evacuated to Jerusalem. They became the only survivors of Kfar Etzion. Nineteen years later, the surviving children, who were now young adults, returned to Kfar Etzion, determined to re-establish the community their fathers and mothers had died fighting for. And they succeeded



Gush Etzion Senior Citizens Club: Members dress up for Purim 2021.

beyond their wildest dreams. Kfar Etzion was the first of 19 communities to be established in the Gush Etzion area of Judea, just south of Jerusalem, an area that has become a centre of culture, Bible Study, and innovation.

But those original children and the pioneers who joined their efforts, are now elderly. While they bask in the glory of their accomplishments and are proud of the multi-generational families they have built on these hills, they face the challenges of their advanced years, declining health, dementia, loneliness.

The original pioneers have been joined by elderly new immigrants and the parents of younger residents, all in all, creating a large population of elderly residents with a multitude of needs.



Gush Etzion Senior Citizens Club 2019: Members enjoying a field trip.

It is these needs that have been supported by the wonderful friends of Christians for Israel New Zealand. With your help, CFOIC (Christian Friends of Israeli Communities) Heartland has provided assistance for dental and medical needs not otherwise covered by national health plans. You have assisted the elderly with heating in the winter and have helped to refurbish homes that require handicapped accommodation. You have supported the senior citizens club and the centre for senior citizens with dementia and diminished capacity. You have done so much to bless the elderly of Gush Etzion, the people who were the very first pioneers in Judea and Samaria.

Today, close to 40,000 people live in the Gush Etzion region, ranging in age from newborn babies to the elderly. Together these wonderful people make up the mosaic that is life in this vibrant area of Judea. Together, they have formed the foundation for Jewish life throughout Judea and Samaria.

Returning Remnant For Zion's Sake reaches Russian-Speaking Immigrants

■ Tom Price

Calvary Chapel

God's chosen people began returning to their biblical homeland after six million Jews were murdered in the Holocaust of WWII. In 1948, Israel became the first nation ever to be reborn. Over one million Jews from the former Soviet Union have returned to Israel since 1988, 16 per cent of the country's population. It is to this returning remnant that *For Zion's Sake* feels called to minister.

"The Lord desires for us to share the good news of Jesus Christ with these returning Russian-speaking Jews," commented Pastor Bradley Antolovich, *CC Jerusalem* and

... "This is what the Sovereign Lord says: My People, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel."

director of *For Zion's Sake Ministries*. "Of all Jewish people groups, they are the most open to the Gospel. They typically arrive in Israel with just a suitcase of belongings. I feel we Christians are called to show them the love of Jesus."

After beginning *CC Jerusalem* in 1995, Bradley witnessed the immigrants struggling with this new country, language, and culture. They had been discriminated against in the Soviet Union, and now they feel disenfranchised as Russian immigrants. Starting over in Israel is physically, emotionally, and economically overwhelming. Twelve percent of new immigrants leave Israel and return to their place of origin.

Even if a new arrival acquires living quarters, paying for any sort of furnishings is a major obstacle. Bradley was able to provide some immigrants with work, picking up donated items to share with other immigrants. Former furniture makers refurbished the discarded items. In this way, *For Zion's Sake* was born, first, to meet the immigrants' physical needs, and then to minister to their spiritual needs.

"Very few of them know how to deal with the complexities of living in a Western culture," added Bradley. "At *CC Jerusalem* we have believers that speak both Hebrew and Russian fluently, so we can help guide

the new arrivals through the maze of legal and medical obstacles. Our warehouse distributes furniture, medicine, food coupons, and clothing. One of the programmes offers the immigrants financial assistance while another helps them find employment that meets their level of expertise."

Therefore prophesy and say to them: "This is what the Sovereign Lord says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel." Ezekiel 37:12.

For Zion's Sake is a Jerusalem-based nonprofit, humanitarian aid organisation, which assists newly arriving immigrants.



Pastor Bradley Antolovich, For Zion's Sake (FZS) director, is hugged by Yeugeny Garifulan, a Jew from the former Soviet Union province of Uzbekistan. He received aid from the humanitarian organisation and now attends CC Jerusalem. | Photo: Tom Price



The Beginning and the End



Traditional treat made for Purim, hamantaschen. | Image: Darya Muravin

■ Arthur & Sue Comery

NZ Friends of Israel Association Inc.

Better is the end of a thing than its beginning.

Ecclesiastes 7:8

The festival of *Purim* is nearly upon us... a good time to reread the story of Mordechai and Esther. The *Book of Esther* is very unusual; in fact, it is the only book in the entire Bible that doesn't mention the name of God, not even once. And yet it is a book full of God's amazing, miraculous care and provision. Rabbi Friedler from the Auckland Hebrew Congregation commented that the book "reads more like a Netflix series than a holy book. There's the drama of one of the main characters being killed off in the first scene. There are manipulations, attempted assassinations, coronations... and more! This drama peaks with an attempted annihilation of an entire people."

He highlighted a challenging comment from the *Talmud*: **It is said that no one gets a blessing from reading the story of Esther from the end to the beginning.**

What a strange thing to say; who in their right mind would read a book from the end to the beginning? But maybe it's not so strange after all; perhaps it's a challenge to approach the text with fresh eyes. Here's what we thought...

Many of us are very familiar with the story, and we know for certain that in the end, justice is served, that the good are vindicated, and that evil is defeated. So, when we read the story, we read it through the lens of knowing that it ends 'happily ever after'. But that is not how Esther, Mordechai or the Jewish people in the story experienced events, and it's not how we experience life either. If we read Esther 'from the end', happy in our knowledge that God is in control and that everything ends well for his people, then we don't acknowledge the fearful struggles and dangers the characters who lived the story actually experienced ... and in our own lives, the hidden hand of God can sometimes seem like abandonment. There are no Netflix moments for us, just dreary struggles.

The *Talmud* asks us to read the book 'from the beginning'

because that is how we have to live our lives... from the beginning... without knowing how any particular distress, anxiety, or heartbreak is going to be resolved.

Esther teaches us that even when a situation is tragic or catastrophic, God is very present.

He is present, although hidden.

*He is present when life is smooth and easy,
and he is present when life seems impossible.*

He is always bringing us to himself.

Rabbi Friedler asks, **it's easy to see Hashem in the perfect moments, but can you find Hashem in YOUR scroll?**

Purim was the unique holiday when it was first revealed that 'natural events' are truly miraculous. The celebration of *Purim* testifies to the sincere belief that God is working for our good in, through and despite the difficult circumstances of our lives, even when those circumstances are evil and wicked. The more we can perceive God's good hand 'hidden' behind the challenges we face, the more we can discern his kindness in the midst of that concealment, and the more our lives will be transformed. Incidentally, it is because the miracles of *Purim* were hidden that the custom of preparing dishes that represent this hiddenness developed ... think *kreplach*, stuffed cabbage, *knishes*, and *hamantaschen*.

It's important to remember that Jesus never asks us to walk a path that he hasn't already trodden. Consider his beginning; he was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Then look at the end! He sits at his Father's right hand, waiting until His enemies are made his footstool. In pondering these things, Spurgeon reminded the Christians of his day:

*You must bear the cross, or you will never wear the crown;
you must wade through the water, or you will never walk the golden pavement.*

Cheer up, then, poor Christian. Better is the end of a thing than its beginning.

View the creeping caterpillar —how contemptible its appearance! It is the beginning of a thing. Mark that insect with gorgeous wings, playing in the sunbeams, sipping at the

flowers, full of happiness and life—that is the caterpillar's end. You are that caterpillar, wrapped up in the chrysalis of death, but when Christ appears, you will be like Him, for you will see Him as He is.

The rough-looking diamond is put upon the wheel of the gem-smith. He cuts it on all sides. It loses much, much that seemed costly and precious to itself. The King is crowned; the diadem is put upon his head. A glittering ray flashes from that coronet; it beams from the same diamond that was so recently fashioned at the wheel. So much cutting, so much loss ... and now so much radiance in the diamond and so much glory for the King.

You may compare yourself to such a diamond, for you are one of God's people, and this is the time of the cutting process. Let faith and patience have their perfect work, for, in the day when the crown is set upon the head of the King, a ray of glory shall stream from you.

They shall be mine, says the Lord of Hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession. Malachi 3:17



Boy holding a ra'ashan - Purim noisemaker. | Photo: Shutterstock

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Holocaust survivor calls on Kiwis to 'learn from history'

■ Ripu Bhatia

Stuff NZ | Holocaust Centre of NZ Facebook

A survivor of the Holocaust is concerned by rising antisemitism 77 years on from the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp.

Auckland resident Bob Narev, 86, was sent to a concentration camp when he was 7 years old. He survived with his mother, but his father and two grandmothers died.

Narev wants Kiwis to be informed and aware of history on Holocaust Remembrance Day, and is concerned that if events are forgotten the consequences will be dire.

Narev was born in Germany in 1935 shortly after the Nazis came to power.

"Being a very young child when the Holocaust started, I wasn't fully conscious of what was happening until after the war," he said.

Narev was taken to Theresienstadt concentration camp in Czechoslovakia in August 1942.

"My mother and I were there until 1945, just before the end of the war. In the meantime my father had died from lack of proper medical attention," he said. "My two elderly grandmothers, at their age, they certainly couldn't cope with the conditions of the camp."

Just last month, on 15 January, a gunman in the US took four people hostage in a synagogue in Colleyville, Texas. One person was released after six hours, and the other three escaped 11 hours into the standoff.

Narev said the incident was clearly an attack on Jews, and was by no means an isolated incident.

"There are elements of antisemitism in many countries, including New Zealand. It's a real concern that not enough is being done to try and nip it in the bud," he said.



Narev was sent to a concentration camp in 1942. He and his mother survived, but his father and two grandmothers died. | Photo: Chris McKeen, Stuff



Narev wants Kiwis to make sure they know the history of the Holocaust, what happened and how it happened. He said if events were forgotten, the consequences would not be good.

"The large majority of those Germans who didn't actively participate, stood by and let it happen," he said. "The message that I would give is, don't stand by when something occurs that is obviously an attack on innocent people. Learn from history to see what happens when good people do nothing."

Narev said there was no reason not to believe Jewish people in Aotearoa might one day be attacked by 'evil-thinking people'. "There are attacks on minorities in many parts of the world, and the mosque attacks in Christchurch are a prime example," he said.

"But the real danger is if enough people are persuaded that, whether it be Jews or Muslims, are not the right people to have in New Zealand, the consequences will be hard to swallow."

Narev was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to community and education in the 2020 New Year's Honours.

He lives with his wife, Freda, who is also a Holocaust survivor. The pair are both involved in Holocaust education and have been married for 63 years.

"The only reason Freda survived is because she was hidden by a nice Catholic lady on a farm," Narev said.

"That was a good person who did something."

We Will Never Forget

■ Bill Gavoka

Leader | Social Democratic Liberal Party (SODELPA) | Fiji

More than 75 years since the Holocaust, we are again reminded about the atrocious conditions the Jewish people went through. Today, they are still facing similar circumstances in terms of state-sponsored terrorism, bloc nation politics of hate and anti-Semitism, says SODELPA Leader, Hon Viliame Gavoka.

SODELPA recognises Israel as the Jewish homeland and that Jerusalem is its founding capital from the times of King David.

Just about every home in Fiji has a Bible, the vast majority of Fijians being Christians. The Christian faith that originated from Judaism, identifying the people of Fiji closely to the people of Israel.

It defies belief that Fiji has been found sponsoring and supporting UN resolutions to condemn Israel. Since 2015, the UN General Assembly has passed 121 condemnatory resolutions against Israel and a total of 45 against the rest of the world. Israel is the only democracy in that volatile region and quite small compared to its neighbours, most of whom have shocking records in areas relating to human rights.

SODELPA believes that the Jewish people must feel protected, and their interests are fully supported by Fijians. The Almighty promised Abraham the father of the Hebrews: "I will bless those who bless Abraham and his descendants and curse those who curse them." SODELPA will always remember that promise, and will



Christians for Israel Fiji and SODELPA gather to commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 27 January 2022



not remain silent when Jewish people are exposed to hatred and harassment - anywhere in the world.

Recently, Mr Hillel Neuer from unwatch.org exposed the UN Human Rights Council latest saga in its continued biased work against Israel by creating a committee to investigate supposed breaches of human rights by Israel that may result in a challenge to its sovereignty and security.

This latest move was led by none other than the FijiFirst appointee Ambassador to Brussel and current UNHRC President Ambassador Nazhat Shameem. This action challenges the basis of our Christian faith and our position as close friends of Israel, including the historical

working relationship with our soldiers in Lebanon, Sinai and Syria and in our agricultural sectors.

SODELPA calls on the FijiFirst Government to cease its condemnations against Israel and to respect Israel's historical sovereignty and the safety of the Jewish people.

It is the duty of all Fijians to remember the Holocaust where some six million Jews had perished. This was in the 20th century when mankind had supposedly made great advances in education and civilisation. Sentiments against the Jews today are reminiscent of pre-holocaust days and it is our duty as Fijians to be on the alert; to be prepared to protect Israeli citizens who share the same biblical heritage as us.



World Remembers the Holocaust as Antisemitism Rises in Pandemic

■ Vanessa Gera & Samuel Petrequin
Stuff NZ

Survivors recalled their agony to a world they fear is forgetting, Israel's parliamentary speaker wept in the German parliament and politicians warned of a resurgence of antisemitism on International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

The day fell on Thursday, 27 January, the anniversary of the liberation by Soviet troops of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the most notorious of the death camps where Nazi Germany carried out its *Final Solution* seeking to murder the Jewish people of Europe.

At the memorial site in Poland, which was subjected to a brutal German occupation during World War II, a small number of survivors gathered in an auditorium. Attendance at the yearly event was sharply curtailed amid Europe's coronavirus surge. Others joined online.

Nazi German forces killed 1.1 million people at Auschwitz, most of them Jews, but also Poles, Roma and others.

Halina Birenbaum, a 92-year-old Polish-born poet who lives in Israel, recalled her suffering remotely. She was 10 when the Germans invaded and occupied Poland in September 1939, and was 13 when she was taken to Auschwitz-Birkenau after being led out of the gas chamber of the Majdanek camp thanks to a malfunction.

"I saw masses of the powerful but arrogant army of Nazi Germany as they marched cruelly, victoriously, into the devastated and burning streets of Warsaw," she recalled.

"The countless experiences of infinite suffering on the brink of death are already a distant, unimaginable story for new generations," she said.

Commemorations everywhere took place amid a rise of antisemitism that gained traction during lockdowns as the coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated hatred online.

German parliament speaker Bärbel Bas said the pandemic has acted "like an accelerant" to already burgeoning antisemitism.

"Antisemitism is here – it isn't just on the extreme fringe, not just among the eternally incorrigible and a few antisemitic trolls on the net," she said. "It is a problem of our society – all of society."

Just last month, a 12-year-old Jewish boy in Italy was attacked and subjected to antisemitic slurs while two men were punched in London.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the London attack "is a terrible reminder, on Holocaust Memorial Day, that such prejudice is not consigned to history, but remains a very real problem in society."



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Mickey Levy, Speaker of the Knesset, Bärbel Bas, President of the Bundestag, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Bodo Ramelow, Prime Minister of Thuringia and President of the Bundesrat, from left, stand in front of the Reichstag building after the memorial hour for the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of National Socialism in Berlin, Germany. | Photo: AP

Holocaust survivor Inge Auerbacher, 87, told the German parliament she still remembers "the terrible time of horror and hatred."

"Unfortunately, this cancer has reawakened and hatred of Jews is commonplace again in many countries in the world, including Germany," she said.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told a virtual UN Holocaust remembrance ceremony on Thursday, 29 January, that he has made tackling the roots of intolerance an urgent priority.

"Antisemitism, virulent anti-Muslim bigotry, persecution of Christians, racism, and anti-refugee hatred are becoming normalised in a coarsening public discourse – often amplified in online echo chambers of hate," he said.

The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution in 2005 establishing *International Holocaust Remembrance Day* as an annual commemoration.

About 6 million European Jews and millions of other people were killed by the Nazis and their collaborators. Some 1.5 million were children.

"Our country bears a special responsibility – the genocide against the European Jews is a German crime," Bas said in the German parliament, the Bundestag.

Israel's parliamentary speaker, Mickey Levy, broke down in tears in the Bundestag while reciting the Jewish mourner's prayer from a prayer book that belonged to a German Jewish boy who celebrated his *bar mitzvah* on the eve of *Kristallnacht*, an outburst of anti-Jewish violence in 1938.

Levy said that Israel and Germany experienced "an exceptional journey on the way to reconciliation and establishing relations and brave friendship between us."

In Rome, Pope Francis met Holocaust survivor Edith Bruck, a Hungarian-born writer and poet who survived Nazi death camps and settled in Italy. Both emphasised the "inestimable value of transmitting the memory of the past to the young, even in its most painful aspects, to not repeat the same tragedies," the Vatican said.

In Austria, Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid paid an emotional visit to the Mauthausen concentration camp, where his grandfather, Bela Lampel, was murdered in 1945.

"Grandpa Bela, a quiet man whose family nickname was 'Bela the Wise,' sent me here today to say on his behalf, that the Jews have not surrendered," Lapid said.

"The Nazis thought they were the future, and that Jews would be something you only find in a museum. Instead, the Jewish state is the future, and Mauthausen is a museum. Rest in peace, grandfather, you won," he said.

He was joined by Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer. The two men hugged each other during the memorial service.

"I apologise, on behalf of the republic of Austria, for the crimes committed here. I apologise that your grandfather was murdered here," Nehammer said.

Gathered at the European Parliament, EU lawmakers listened to 100-year-old Holocaust survivor Margot Friedlander's ordeal. She was arrested in 1944 and brought to Theresienstadt, now part of the Czech Republic. A year before, her mother and brother were deported to Auschwitz and killed.

"We must be vigilant and not look the other way as we did then," she said. "Hatred, racism and antisemitism must not be the last word in history."

Charles Michel, the head of the EU Council bringing together leaders of the 27 EU member countries, said that with each passing year, the Holocaust "inches towards becoming a historical event."

"More and more distant, more and more abstract," Michel said. "Especially in the eyes of the younger generations of Europeans. This is why, paradoxically, the more the years go by, the more important the commemoration becomes."

To tackle Holocaust denial, UNESCO and the World Jewish Congress launched a partnership with the online platform *TikTok* popular with youngsters. They say it will allow users to be oriented toward verified information when searching for terms related to the *Shoah*.

According to the UN, 17 per cent of content related to the Holocaust on *TikTok* either denied or distorted the Holocaust.

In Italy, members of the Jewish community and lawmakers gathered in Rome's Ghetto to lay a wreath where more than 1000 people were rounded up and deported to Auschwitz on 16 October 1943.

In Albania, Foreign Minister Olta Xhacka honoured Holocaust victims while expressing pride in his country's role in sheltering Jews.



Mickey Levy, Speaker of the Knesset, at the commemoration of the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of National Socialism in the German Bundestag.



Eighth Encouragement

The Water and Light of Tabernacles remind us of Jesus, the Word and the Life

■ Keith Buxton

Former National Director | Bridges for Peace Australia

As with so much of the Old Testament, it is helpful to see how the Feast of Tabernacles has a prophetic dimension, and we may be encouraged in our Christian journey as we reflect on two particular ceremonies during the feast that we believe point clearly to Jesus, ceremonies relating to water and light.

As we have been seeing, Tabernacles is a feast that is characterised by joy. There is rejoicing in the God who rescues and saves His people and protects and provides for them. For the Jews, it was a celebration of God's dwelling among His people during the long 40 years that the children of Israel were wandering in the desert.

In fact, the Jewish people are specifically commanded to be joyful at this time! "Be joyful at your Feast - you, your sons and daughters, your menservants and maidservants, and the Levites, the aliens, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns" (*Deuteronomy 16:14*). By the way, we can learn a lot from the specific inclusion of aliens, fatherless and widows.

Now God has purpose in the times and seasons that He has appointed. There is much to suggest that Jesus - the bringer of great joy to us all! - was born during the Feast of Tabernacles. It is likely that during December (when we celebrate Jesus' birth), shepherds (to whom came 'good news of great joy') would, in fact, have their sheep in a protective sheepfold rather than out in the fields in the mid-winter cold.

Also, John, in describing the birth of Jesus, used Tabernacle language - "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling [tabernacled] among us" (*John 1:14*). Jesus, being a Jew, would have faithfully observed the Feast of Tabernacles all His life and used it as an opportunity to teach some things that speak deeply into our hearts.

Let us now turn to *John 7:37-39* - "On the last and greatest day of the Feast [Tabernacles], Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within Him." By this, He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were later to receive. Up to that time, the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified."

"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within." John 7:37-39

Now scripturally, water has a lot of significance and symbolic meaning, especially at this feast time. Here in Australia we are well aware of the importance of rain - especially those who dwell in the bush. At that time of the year in Israel the long rainless summer months - especially in the arid southern desert region - cause the ground to become parched and much of the wild vegetation to dry up.

It can be hard for us to understand all this excitement about water. If we want water, all we usually need to do is turn on a tap and *voilà* - water! It was very different in biblical times! Water was often scarce, and the people were very aware of their dependence on God for the rains that were vital for the preservation of life.

Everyone would wait eagerly for the first rains that would bring everything back to life. No rain, no food, no life - it was as simple as that. So it is not hard to understand how 'living water' - an ever-flowing source of that which is precious and life-giving - became a major biblical metaphor for the Holy Spirit.

No wonder that the prophets came to see rain as a symbol of salvation and the work of God's Holy Spirit, as for example in *Ezekiel 36:25-27* - "I will sprinkle clean



Desert dunes in Israel. | Photo: Shutterstock

water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit in you and move you to follow My decrees and be careful to keep My laws."

I was intrigued to discover that before the feast the rabbis taught on every passage in Scripture dealing with water. Then on each of the first seven days of the feast, a priest took a gold vessel and went to the Pool of Siloam to get water. As the Levites led the people in joyful praise and the *shofars* were blown, the water was poured out at the base of the altar. Said an ancient rabbi: "Anyone who has not seen this water ceremony has never seen rejoicing in his life."

At one level, this ceremony referred to the rain for the crops. But there was also a prophetic significance to the pouring. It represented the Jews' Messianic hope because of the outpouring of God's Spirit upon all Israel expected during the coming reign of the Messiah. So Jesus' words in *John 7* are understood by Christians to be a clear claim to being the Messiah. Some sensed this - others did not - and we read, "the people were divided because of Jesus" (*John 8:43*). Jesus still has that effect.

We now come to the second *Sukkot* symbol that Christians believe was used by Jesus to point to Himself as the fulfilment of Scripture - light. At the end of the first day of the feast, the Temple was gloriously lit up by four massive lampstands. Ladders were needed to climb to the top of them in order to ignite the oil in the four golden bowls on each of the lampstands.

Now imagine the scene for a moment! The Temple was on a hill above the rest of the city, so the glow would be visible for miles around. Add to that the vast crowds of Jewish people holding lit torches, and the praise and the music, and you can catch something of the incredible joy and excitement that gripped people's hearts and stirred their emotions.

The light was to remind the people of how God's *Shekinah* glory had once filled His Temple. But in the person of Jesus, the glory of God was once again present in that Temple - unrecognised by the Jews. So once again Jesus used a central ceremony from the Feast of Tabernacles to declare that very fact.

He was teaching in the Temple on the day after the feast. The impact of the Tabernacles celebration and of the

light from the huge lampstands would still be fresh in people's minds. We read first of how Jesus forgave a woman caught in adultery - that spoke pretty clearly about who He was, to those who had ears to hear and a heart to respond!

Then Jesus declared to all who were gathered there: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (*John 8:12*). Many at that time refused to have their own darkness and sin exposed by that light. But there were those who were drawn to that light, drawn by the Holy Spirit. It is no different today.

There is a message here to us all who believe in Jesus as Lord and Messiah. It is a two-fold message of the water and the light of Tabernacles. A message that has very much to do with the fact that we are a people called to take the love of Jesus to a world that is dry and dark, just as Jesus did to the woman caught in adultery. Do you see that?

We are not basically called to live our Christian lives within the four walls of a church building - we are called by the Spirit of God to tell others round about us of the One who is the Living Water of Life, the Living Word. Like Jesus, we are called not to condemn but to forgive. Will you let the Holy Spirit have all of you afresh, every part of your life, so that the pure water of Jesus' life may flow from you to others?

Physically and spiritually Australia is a dry and thirsty land - the picture I have in my mind is that of a wilderness, of a nation in moral darkness (I hardly need to speak about that). People need so much the living, refreshing water of the Word of Life, and the joy that comes from following the One who alone is the Light of the world.

And for us that will be a matter of action and deeds as much as of words, as we have seen. That is where the metaphor of light is so relevant. Jesus said in *Matthew 5:14-16* - "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

How much then we need the Holy Spirit in our lives! The booths of Tabernacles, the *sukkot*, can be put up or taken down in very little time. And they are open to the wind. We too must always be open to the wind of the Spirit, ready to go where God calls us, willing to trade the comforts of this life for the joy of serving our God and loving others into the kingdom. For as Tabernacles reminds us, we are "aliens and strangers in the world", and "our citizenship is in heaven".



Snow Blankets Israel

J-Wire

Large parts of Israel, from the Golan Heights in the north, through the Galilee, Judea and Samaria, Jerusalem, and all the way south to areas near Be'er Sheva, were blanketed in snow on the eve of the *International Holocaust Remembrance Day*.

The storm *Elpis*, which came in from Europe, dropped snow at mountainous areas and heavy rains in lower areas, creating scenes that are seen only once or twice a year in the Holy Land.

School was canceled in many municipalities and major routes were blocked by police, as several inches of snow brought life outside to an almost complete standstill.

However, the train to Jerusalem and the light rail in Jerusalem continued to operate as usual.

Motorists who were stranded by the storm on their way to Jerusalem were hosted by local communities situated on the way to the capital.

Israelis broke the all-time record of electricity consumption that night, and according to the electric company, at 6:22pm, the consumption was 14,805 megawatts. The previous record was broken the week before and stood at 14,735 megawatts.

Celebrated as a holiday in Israel, Israelis took to the street to enjoy the snow, building snowmen and using plastic bags as sleds.



Large parts of Israel blanketed in snow. | Photo: Flash90

The Water Authority said that the level of the *Kinneret* (Sea of Galilee) rose by 5.5cm in the past day due to the heavy rains and the stormy weather, and is now 1.69 metres away from the upper level. The heavy rains and snow are expected to generate flooding in streams in the south.

Michael Kuttner writes: "We have just survived a major snowstorm although the garden is a mess and tree branches are down. Still very icy and the roads are dangerous. On top of that the power has been on and off and there seems to be a problem with the emails because we are not receiving messages at the moment."

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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

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Due to high demand, we have decided to extend our book sale. But don't miss out! These \$10 deals are only available until 31 March 2022.

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2021 - A Turbulent Year for Israel

■ Yochanan Visser

Christians for Israel Correspondent | Israel

The year 2021 was another eventful period in the existence of the young State of Israel, with many positive - but also negative - developments.

The Corona Crisis

First, there was the ongoing Corona Crisis, which was initially brought under control following an intensive vaccination campaign and sharp restrictive measures. These measures included a complete stop on commercial flights to Israel and the closure of schools, commercial centres and other places where public gatherings were held.

On 1 January, Israel already had one million citizens vaccinated, and on 17 March, Israel became the world leader in the number of its citizens vaccinated. On 25 June 2021, the situation changed, and the number of new cases of Corona began to rise again as a result of the so-called Delta variant. As a result of these developments, the obligation to wear masks in all enclosed spaces was reintroduced.

The new government of Prime Minister Naftali Bennett changed the closure policy that Benjamin Netanyahu's previous government strictly adhered to and decided to let the economy run its course. Bennett also decided to allow limited gatherings on the condition that the restrictive measures were enforced.

On 1 August 2021, Israel became the first country in the world to introduce a third vaccination for citizens at risk. This was later extended to the entire population. Despite this, more than a million Israelis decided not to be vaccinated. At the end of the year, the fifth wave of Corona attacks began when the Omicron variant reached Israel.



Medics and hospital team members working in the Coronavirus ward of Shaare Zedek Hospital in Jerusalem. | Photo: Flash90

terrorist attacks there increased dramatically, forcing the IDF and the Border Police to call in reinforcements to control the situation.

Israel also decided to strengthen the Palestinian Authority (PA) position to prevent a takeover by Hamas and PIJ in Judea and Samaria. PA leader Mahmoud Abbas is very unpopular among Palestinian Arabs; according to polls, 90% of the Palestinian population wants Abbas to resign. Israel is now conducting a so-called 'realpolitik'; Defence Minister Benny Gantz has had several meetings with Abbas, resulting in new Israeli 'goodwill' gestures.

The intention was clear; despite the fact that the government in Jerusalem knows that the Abbas regime is thoroughly corrupt, the Israeli government wants to

which even concluded a defence pact with Israel in November. The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain also implemented the so-called Abraham Accords and opened embassies in Israel, while the Jewish State did the same in these Arab countries. Trade between Israel and these Arab countries increased enormously, and extremely friendly relations.

As a result of these new flourishing relations, ties improved with Egypt and Jordan, two countries with which Israel already had a peace agreement but where there was always a cold peace.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi was particularly interested in improving relations with Israel and invited Prime Minister Bennett for an official visit to Sharm el-Sheikh. The visit was extremely successful and resulted, for example, in renewed Israeli gas deliveries to Egypt and cooperation in the rehabilitation of Gaza after the May war.

The Growing Threat from Iran

Despite the normalisation in relations with Arab countries, however, the strategic threat to Israel in the region continues to grow, primarily due to Iran.

The Islamic Republic stepped up its bellicose activities against Israel in 2021 and is continuing to develop a nuclear weapon. Because the government in Jerusalem has no faith in the American attempts to revive the nuclear agreement with Iran (JCPOA), Israel is now more or less openly preparing for (military) action against Iran. To this end, a budget of 1.5 billion Shekel has been made available to the Israeli army, which is now holding frequent exercises in preparation for military action against Iran's nuclear facilities.

Meanwhile, through Mossad, Israel will increase its activities in Iran and try to carry out new acts of sabotage against Iran's nuclear facilities. At the same time, Israel continues to disrupt Iran's military build-up in Syria and Lebanon. Earlier this week, Israeli missiles struck containers containing equipment for transforming primitive rockets into precision weapons in the port city of Latakia in western Syria. Two Iranian militiamen were killed in the attack. This was one of the dozens of actions taken by the Israeli Air Force against the Iranian axis in Syria in 2021.

New Developments Every Day

Of course, these are only highlights; much more happened in Israel during 2021, with new developments, positive or negative, occurring almost every day. The Israeli economy became the fastest growing in the world last year, with a growth rate of more than seven per cent. At the same time, in this 'Corona Year', an increase in the number of poverty-stricken Israelis was recorded. More than 20 per cent of the population now lives below the poverty line, partly as a result of the Corona crisis.

So the question is whether the opposition led by Netanyahu will succeed in toppling Bennett and Lapid before Lapid can take over as Prime Minister.

This variant also proved resistant to previous vaccinations as more than a third of the Omicron cases had received three vaccinations.

In November, a list of 'red countries' to which Israelis could not fly was published, including European countries and later the United States and Canada.

Meanwhile, Israeli companies developed new vaccines and even drugs to treat Corona patients. These drugs seem to be very promising in the efforts to finally get the crisis under control worldwide.

At the end of 2021, there was a sharp increase in the number of new cases of Corona in Israel, but the number of seriously ill people being treated in hospitals remains fairly stable.

War in May 2021

In 2021, Israel was again confronted with war when Palestinian terrorist movements in Gaza started a massive bombardment of cities and villages in the south of Israel with rockets at the end of May.

However, the war started with a salvo of rockets on Jerusalem that the Israeli army (IDF) could not ignore.

Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) started the war because Israel allegedly endangered the Islamic shrines on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and wanted to change the status quo there. A long-running court case against Arab squatters of buildings in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood was also used to justify the war. These squatters refused to comply with an order from a Jerusalem court. The court had previously ordered the Arab families occupying the properties to pay rent to the Jewish owners of the houses, something they refused to do.

Attempt at a New Intifada

At the end of 2021, Hamas and PIJ tried to launch a new *intifada* in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria. The number of

avoid a 'Gaza scenario'. Prime Minister Bennett's government prefers to keep the PA in the saddle rather than let Hamas take control of PA-ruled areas in Judea and Samaria.

End of the Netanyahu Era

In 2021 the long period of rule by Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel came to an end. Despite the fact that Netanyahu's Likud Party won the March elections by a large margin, Netanyahu failed to put together a coalition. This was mainly due to personal opposition to Netanyahu amongst politicians from both left and right-wing parties.

Yair Lapid of the Yesh Atid party was given the chance to form a government, and the former TV presenter succeeded against all odds. He agreed to appoint Naftali Bennett, whose party Yamina won only seven seats in the elections, as Prime Minister of Israel and to include the Arab party Ra'am in his coalition.

Bennett will remain Prime Minister for two years, and then, if the coalition holds, Lapid will replace the Yamina leader and become Prime Minister of Israel for the next two years. However, the 'government of change' has a tiny majority of only one seat. So the question is whether the opposition led by Netanyahu will succeed in toppling Bennett and Lapid before Lapid can take over as Prime Minister.

International Politics

In the field of international politics, 2021 was a year of strong contrasts. On the one hand, there were spectacular successes in relations with Arab and Muslim countries.

Kosovo, for example, established official relations with Israel and promised at the beginning of 2021 to establish its embassy in Jerusalem. Then there were the new relations with many Arab Gulf States and Morocco,

Recommended Reading

Until... Fourteen
Prophetic Horizonsby Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer
Christians for Israel (2020)

Many Christians think that the Bible does not contain any clear timelines but that creation and recreation somehow go on endlessly, history repeating itself time and again. We can never say for sure where we are in history, and the Bible does not help us to understand secular history.

Rev Willem Glashouwer examines the remarkable prevalence of the Greek word *heoos* (meaning 'until') in both the Old and New Testaments. The recurrence of this tiny word shows that history is no circle that continues to rotate endlessly and repeat itself constantly. No, history has a beginning and an end. History is a line, from creation to recreation, from paradise to the Kingdom of God. God is a God of time. He has times and seasons, and He intervenes in the affairs of men.

Without falling into the trap of dogmatic end-time scenarios, Glashouwer eloquently shows that we can confidently say that momentous prophetic events are occurring and will occur, ushering in the Kingdom of God. For example, chapter 3 explores the reference in *Romans 11:25* that "Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in". This opens the door to a consideration of God's amazing purposes with both Jews and Gentiles, their interrelationship, and the significance of this for the whole creation. He connects the Bible with historical events and current affairs. We gain a deeper understanding of the depths and height and width of our Creator's amazing plan for this world, which He loves and has redeemed.

This book helps us make sense of the world we live in. It encourages us to be salt and light in the world and point the way to the coming of Jesus Christ.

If you would like to purchase this book, it is available through our website: www.c4israel.org.nz/product-page/until-fourteen-prophetic-horizons



Cut Off from Messiah

■ Johannes Gerloff

Theologian, Journalist, Lecturer & Author

This is the third in 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.

Having explained how sinners who lack the glorious presence of the living God (*Romans 3*) may become children of God and heirs with Messiah (*Romans 8*), the Apostle Paul continues:

I am speaking [the] truth in Messiah! I am not lying! My conscience confirms as an additional witness in the Holy Spirit: My sorrow is overwhelming, unceasing the pain in my heart. I have been praying to be myself cursed, cut off from Messiah for my brothers who are my [blood] relatives according to the flesh. (Romans 9:1-3)

Paul's emotions are full of 'great (inner) sorrow'. This is not an agony that the Apostle feels now and then; it is continual. Paul is ready to make every sacrifice for Israel's sake. He is prepared to surrender not only his earthly life but even his eternal communion with the Lord and Saviour if this will contribute to the well-being of the Jewish people.

The wish "to be cursed and cut off from Messiah", for whatever reason, seems to be in fundamental contradiction to the Biblical teaching of the assurance of salvation, which Paul had just developed in the preceding chapters.

But Paul was not the first Jewish leader to say: "I have been praying to be myself cursed, cut off from Messiah for my brothers..."

Another prominent example is Moses, who had received the two stone tablets that were inscribed by the finger of God. Immediately afterwards, the Lord sent his servant back to the people; "for your people whom you have brought up from Egypt have corrupted themselves. Quickly they have left the way of life which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molded calf, have worshipped it and sacrificed to it" (*Exodus 32:7-8*).

Moses realised that God's destructive judgment upon his chosen people was fully justified. However, instead of agreeing with God's plan, Moses pleads: "Now, take their sin away, please! But if this is impossible, then, please, blot me out of the book that you have written" (*Exodus 32:32*).

In view of God's holiness on the one hand and the immensity of the nation's guilt on the other, Moses saw but two possibilities: Either the people themselves had to take the curse, which they had brought upon themselves through their idolatry, and be judged to (eternal) death – or he himself would take their place and the (eternal) death sentence upon himself.

This exact same attitude displayed in Moses we also find in Jesus of Nazareth. Israel's Messiah stands up for God's stubborn, unrepentant and yet eternally-chosen people: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often did I long to gather your children, as a hen gathers her chicks



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under her wings" (*Matthew 23:37*). The Lord did not lose sight of the terrible judgment to come. Yet, as with Moses, the promise of unbroken communion with the God of Israel has the last word. The time will come when they will see Him and say: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" (*Matthew 23:39*).

This love for Israel is visible even on the cross. There, Yeshua hung as the one who is cursed. He was the only one "who knew no sin" (*2 Corinthians 5:21*). Therefore, He was able to bridge the gap for his people and bear their guilt. In spite of all the hatred, scoffing, and rejection that He experienced from the leaders of those for whom He suffered, the accursed did not curse. Rather, under unimaginable inner and external pain, Messiah prayed: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!" (*Luke 23:34*).

This love that springs from the Spirit of Yeshua is the basic prerequisite for any dealing with or discussion about Israel.

Many Biblical personalities have borne this love in their hearts and confessed it. Instead of distancing himself from the guilt of his people, Isaiah – like Moses, Jesus and Paul – identified himself with Israel, and – like Samuel, Jeremiah and Daniel – he identified personally, in God's presence, with the burden of guilt his people had brought upon themselves: "We – not: they! – should have been as Sodom, and we – not: they! – should have been like unto Gomorrah!" (*Isaiah 1:9*).

This love that springs from the Spirit of Yeshua is the basic prerequisite for any dealing with or discussion about Israel. It is the sole legitimate foundation for any theological debate about Israel, for only this love corresponds to the heart of God. Without this love, all prophetic knowledge, all faith, all dedication and effort for the 'right cause' is nothing in the eyes of the one and only God (*1 Corinthians 13*).

What Does This Mean Today?

If present-day Israel grumbles against the loving-kindness of her God – then our reaction can only be that we intercede together with Moses for them before our Heavenly Father: "Let the power of the Lord be great... Please pardon the

transgression of this people according to the greatness of your loving-kindness" (*Numbers 14:17, 19*).

If the Jewish people persist in dancing around all the imaginable 'golden calves' of our time, running after all the 'ba'als', if they should strive to be 'like all the nations' and (for whatever reason) reject the Lord's Messiah – then we can only say, "Father, forgive them; for they do know not what they do! – and if not, blot me, I beseech you, out of thy book that you have written" (*Luke 23:34; Exodus 32:32*).

If the "Israel according to the flesh" should persecute the Church, be hostile towards the 'Stevens' and 'Pauls' of today, only then will we – "being full of the Holy Ghost," the Spirit who permeated the thinking and desires of Moses, Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Jesus, Steven and

Paul, – be able to see "the heavens opened" (*Acts 7:54-60*).

And if the whole world characterises modern Israel not only as a 'war criminal', an 'occupying power' and 'anti-Christ', then let me share another observation from the Biblical texts mentioned above: In view of Israel's actual state in Jeremiah's time, the prophet would have had every reason to call his people a 'whore' or a 'prostitute'. But he calls her "the virgin daughter" (*Jeremiah 14:17*), according to God's original design and according to "the gifts and calling of God", which are "without repentance" (*Romans 11:29*).

The Apostle Paul did not begin his explanation of Israel's designation and future by clarifying who they actually are – that they rejected the Messiah of Israel and opposed the anointed One of the Lord and his followers. The terminology he used to describe the Jewish people is positive without reservation – and the expression which the Church so often used to label Jews throughout two thousand years of history, "cursed and cut off from Christ," he applies exclusively to himself.

Meet the Prophet David: A Key to Understanding Current Events and the Last Days

■ Kameel Majdali

Director | Teach All Nations Inc.

In our series about current events and the last days, we have learned that the Biblical covenants and the prophets are crucial to understanding the future. Two key prophets are Abraham and David, attested to in *Genesis 20:7* and *Acts 2:30*.

While Abraham the patriarch did not make any recorded prophetic utterances, his walk with God and God's covenant with him thrust him into the prophetic realm (Note: The near-sacrifice of Isaac in *Genesis 22* was a prophetic act which speaks of the sacrifice of the only begotten Son and his resurrection [*Hebrews 11:17-19*]).

Our second unlikely prophet, David, the King, also had a transformational covenant with God. In addition, the psalms he wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit were highly prophetic and Messianic.

Davidic Covenant

2 Samuel 7:11-17; 1 Chronicles 17:10-15; Psalm 89:3-4; Jeremiah 33:22, 25-26.

This remarkable covenant came about in a heart-warming way. Against great odds, God plucked David from total obscurity of the sheepfold and made him King of Israel. David loved and worshipped the God who promoted, protected and blessed him. Despite so many attempts against his life, his surviving and thriving was a miraculous testament to God's goodness.

Paradoxically, while the King lived in palatial splendour in a house of cedar, the God of Israel dwelt in a tent. David was troubled by this apparent absurdity - why should the servant live better than the Master? God's ark needed a house, and David was determined to build a magnificent dwelling for the Lord.

David shared his vision with Nathan, the prophet, who initially responded, "Go ahead and do what's on your heart." Yet soon thereafter, God told Nathan "No," David was not to build the house of the Lord, later known as the temple. He was a man with much blood on his hands from waging great wars (*1 Chronicles 22:8*). Nevertheless, God graciously offered David something far better in return; He would build David a house - not a physical building - but an indestructible dynasty.

From this exchange between God and David came what has become known as the 'Davidic Covenant.' It represents and builds on the 'seed' aspect of the Abrahamic covenant. While it includes statements about 'chastening' and 'building the temple,' the key points of David's covenant are as follows:

1. **God will give David a (special) son** (*2 Samuel 7:12; 1 Chronicles 17:11*);
2. **The Son of David will sit on his father's throne** (*2 Samuel 7:12; 1 Chronicles 17:11-12*);
3. **The Son of David will rule and reign forever** (*2 Samuel 7:13; 1 Chronicles 17:12*);
4. **The Son of David will simultaneously be the Son of God** (*2 Samuel 7:14; 1 Chronicles 17:13*).

This singular individual, both Son of David and Son of God, became known as *Messiah* (Christ in Greek), the Anointed One. While the Old Testament recognised three categories of anointed - prophets, priests, and kings - the Son of David goes much further. He is the King of kings, Lord of lords, the Anointed of the anointed; a prophet like Moses, a priest like Melchizedek, and a king like David.

When the angel Gabriel announced to Mary of Nazareth that she would be the mother of *Messiah*, he mentioned the 'two fathers':

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his Kingdom, there shall be no end - *Luke 1:32-33*

In *verse 32*, the coming baby is called 'Son of the Highest,' namely God, and David is also referred to as 'his father.' *Verse 33* announced the fulfilment of the Davidic covenant - He will reign forever.

In essence, the Son of David will rule the people of God in the promised land (*2 Samuel 7:10*) and the whole world

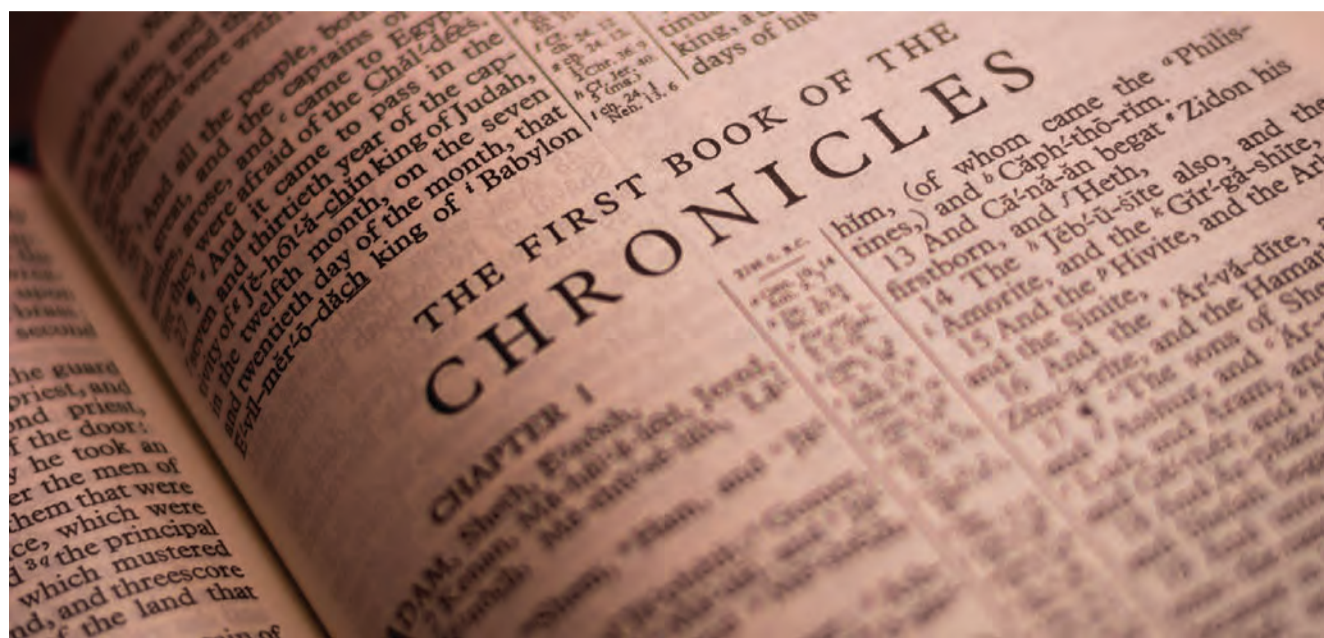
(*Psalm 22:27-28; Zechariah 14:9*). *Messiah* will have a righteous reign, with universal peace, prosperity, and blessing. Pilgrims will come worldwide to God's mountain in Jerusalem (*Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-4, Zechariah 14:16-19*). The Kingdom established by the Son of David will never end.

This covenant is so important that it is confirmed by other passages like *Psalm 89; Isaiah 9:6,7; 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5,6; 30:8,9; 33:14-17,19-26; Ezekiel 37:24,25; Hosea 3:4,5; Amos 9:11; Luke 1:30-35,68-70; Acts 15:14-18*.

Again, we emphasise: The Son of David is the Son of God. Jesus stresses this point in His dialogue with the Pharisees in *Matthew 22:41-45*. He is David's Son and Lord, root and offspring (*Revelation 22:16*).

In summary, what does the Davidic covenant have to do with the future and with last days prophecy? Ratified three thousand years ago, it promised an everlasting kingdom at the end of the age. Jesus Christ, who came a thousand years after David, preached about this same Kingdom (*Matthew 3:2; 5:3; 5:20; Mark 1:15 and many more references*). The coming Kingdom, which will replace the kingdoms of this world (*Revelation 11:15*), has a king, and that King is the Son of David, Son of God, *Messiah*.

So get ready: the King and His Kingdom are on the way. How do we know? Through the covenants and many prophecies like *Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21*, and elsewhere. It's time for the church to walk in the light of prophecy (*2 Peter 1:19*) and get ready for the coming King (*Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7*).



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What is the Western Wall?

The Western Wall is a wall in the Old City of Jerusalem in Israel. It is a remnant of the complex on which the Second Jewish Temple once stood. Today it is considered one of the holiest sites in Judaism. However, the Temple Mount remains the most holy place in the world for the Jewish people. It is, therefore, sad that Jews are not allowed to pray there.

The Western Wall is also known as the Wailing Wall. Many people think that the Wailing Wall owes its name to the fact that you can go there with all your complaints. This is a misunderstanding.

After the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 AD, many Jews gathered at the only remaining wall of the Temple complex: the western wall of the plateau on which the Temple was built. Because of the mourning over the destruction of the Temple, the wall was soon jokingly called the 'Wailing Wall' by non-Jews.

Jews themselves speak of the Western Wall, in Hebrew *HaKotel HaMa'aravi*, often shortened to *Kotel*.

The Western Wall is adjacent to the Temple Mount. This mountain is called the Temple Mount because King Herod's second Jewish Temple complex once stood upon it. He built the wall and embellished it. You'll read about this in the New Testament, for instance, in *John 2:20*.

In *Psalm 132*, God says of this place that it is His resting place forever. "For the Lord has chosen Zion, he has desired it for his dwelling: 'This is my resting place forever and ever; here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it.'" *Psalm 132:13-14*

Why Place a Note in the Western Wall?

After saying a prayer, many Jewish and non-Jewish visitors put a little prayer note in the Western Wall. This ritual probably originated in the eighteenth

century, when Rabbi Chaim ibn Attar instructed a needy man to place an amulet between the stones of the wall.

The idea of the prayer notes is consistent with Jewish tradition, in which it is believed that the Divine presence has never left the Temple and human prayers still ascend to heaven through the Western Wall.

Today, hundreds of thousands of notes are placed between the stones of the wall each year. Twice a year (around Passover and the Jewish New Year), special cleaning teams collect the prayers. Because the destruction of sacred texts is forbidden in Judaism, the notes are therefore buried on the Mount of Olives.



The UN, Israel and the Rule of Law

■ Professor Gregory Rose

Israel is often accused of infringing international law, But what is international law? Who 'makes' international law? Is it really a legal system, or just politics?

'The Rule of Law'

A legal system only really exists when there is a 'rule of law'. The expression 'rule of law' was coined by an English law professor named Albert Dicey (1835-1922), referring to the tradition of the control over sovereign power by law that emerged in 1215 in England when King John of England was forced to sign the *Magna Carta* presented by the lords of the land.

The core concept is that no one should be above the law – not even the government. The law should apply to everyone equally. The judiciary should be independent and impartial, and government institutions are to act in accordance with the law.

In theory, the UN is an artefact of international law and subject to the rule of law. Pursuant to its own Charter, the UN is bound to operate in accordance with it, including the principle that all states are sovereign and equal (article 2(1) UN Charter). International law is, in theory, a legal system.

However, in practice, the international legal system is weak because it lacks the coercion of a global or collective sovereign to enforce it. There is no multinational peacekeeping force or international police force capable of imposing the rule of law. This means that the rule of law is essentially consensual – i.e. it is based on an agreement between sovereign states. This means decisions or statements are often made by States in the name of law when in reality, they are political decisions.

The Voting Practice of the UN

Many governments and others refer to UN resolutions as if they are legally-binding documents. That is a mistake. The UN General Assembly and Security Council are political bodies; they do not 'make' international law. Technically, the only resolutions that are 'binding' are Security Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter. None of the resolutions adopted by the Security Council over the years in relation to Israel have been adopted under Chapter VII.

The Security Council is the UN's highest body. There are five Permanent Members (USA, China, Russia, UK and France) and ten Non-permanent biennial members. The member states of the Security Council have developed a practice that is actually in breach of the Charter. The Charter (article 27) requires that all the five Permanent Members of the Council give an affirmative concurring vote for a decision to be made. In practice, the Permanent Members have adopted the practice that they can abstain from voting. This is what happened in December 2016 when the Council adopted Resolution 2334, declaring settlements to be a 'flagrant violation of international

UN Regional Blocs



law'; the US abstained from voting on that resolution. Resolution 2334 is a politically-driven statement, not a legally-binding decision.

Voting in the United Nations General Assembly is politically-driven, reflecting the various geographical and political groups. There are five regional blocks of countries (see diagram above).

To show how political the voting is, consider that when the UN General Assembly voted to admit Israel as a UN member in 1949, there were 58 UN members. 37 voted for, 12 voted against, and nine abstained. But 33 years later, the UN counted 141 countries and 86 General Assembly members adopted resolution 37/123, condemning Israel as a 'non-peace-loving state'. Since the UN is only open to peace-loving states, the language used in this resolution was clearly aimed at evicting Israel from the UN.

The African bloc is the largest one with 54 countries. The Asian bloc contains 53 countries, which means that more than half of all UN members come from Asia and Africa (107/194). The third-largest group is Latin America, with 33 members. The Western countries (Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand) comprises only 28 members. The smallest is the Eastern European Group, with 23 members.

Across regional groups, there are networks of UN member states, like the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which has 55 members and the Arab League (with 23 members). The OIC member countries number an absolute majority within the African bloc and almost half the Asian bloc. Through its members, the OIC can carry the direction of voting in the UN, just like in an ordinary election. Those who have a special agenda will then vote in accordance with it.

This system is made possible by a legal fiction, called sovereign equality, based on the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). Each state is accordingly treated as if a person and has one vote. For example, Nauru (5000 inhabitants) has the same vote as India (1.2 billion inhabitants). Ironically, this distorted basis for voting based on the fiction of equality enables Israel to be treated unequally.

When Politics Enters International Law

The creeping of politics into legal jurisdiction under UN institutions is an inevitable feature of the structure of the UN. Many decisions and cases regarding Israel show the blending of geopolitics with law. Sometimes, even judicial bodies act like political bodies. Both the UN International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on the Israeli Wall (2004) and the International Criminal Court's 2021 decision that the Court has jurisdiction over crimes allegedly committed by Israelis on 'the territory of Palestine' were largely based on the presumed legal authority of the UN Security Council and General Assembly.

When political power overrules law, there is no rule of law. In the UN, we can observe this play out as 'lawfare' – leveraging the political power of numbers in the widespread campaign not only to politically demonise Israel but also to also delegitimise Israel in international law.

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This article is a summary of a lecture delivered on 23 September 2021 in Session 1 of the Israel on Trial series organised by thinc. in partnership with The European Leadership Network (ELNET). The 5-part series can be viewed here: <https://www.thinc.info/education/elnet-course/>

Mikveh

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

What does a Jewish community need to make Jewish life possible? One of the most important things, even more, important than a synagogue, is a *mikveh*. A *mikveh* is a ritual bath. Through it, life is consecrated and sanctified. This does not only refer to the body. Pans, dishes and other eating utensils are also ritually cleansed before they are put into use, so that they are kosher.

The *mikveh* must meet a number of requirements. An average person must be able to immerse himself completely in it. The Talmud states an amount of water that is equivalent to about 575 litres. There

must be a certain amount of natural water from a well, from the ground or rainwater, which can be supplemented with (hot) tap water. The water must flow in. The *mikveh* may not be a movable 'vessel', it is therefore constructed on-site. It has no drain but is emptied manually.

The *mikveh* is not meant for hygiene but for ritual purity. Therefore, before entering the *mikveh*, you must wash thoroughly, clean your nails well, etc., so that the water of the *mikveh* can reach every spot of your skin.

The Bible (e.g. *Leviticus 15*) describes cases for which ritual cleansing is necessary. The need for ritual cleansing is related to the presence of the tabernacle in Israel's midst. But the *mikveh* provides a spiritual elevation that is also experienced at various events in

Jewish life today. Before marriage, a bride and groom go to the *mikveh*. Married women go to the *mikveh* after their monthly period, and also after the birth of a child, and a father before the circumcision of his son. Before the beginning of *Yom Kippur* (*Day of Atonement*), one goes to the *mikveh*. Many Orthodox men also go to the *mikveh* before the *Sabbath*, and many Hasidic men even go every day.

The Hebrew text of *Jeremiah 17:13* contains the word *mikveh*, which is translated as 'hope': "Lord, Hope of Israel." But a Jewish interpretation relates it to *Yom Kippur*: "As a cleansing bath for Israel is the Eternal One." "That contact with God is the final atonement. That contact brings everything into purity" (Rabbi Evers, Jerusalem).

75 Years Since Resolution 181

■ **Bryce Turner**

Christians for Israel New Zealand

2022 marks 75 years since Britain handed over responsibility for the Palestine Mandate, to the United Nations. An action which resulted in UN Resolution 181: The United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine (November 1947).

In 1922, Palestine was among former Ottoman territories placed under British and French administration by the League of Nations. All of these territories eventually became fully independent States, including Palestine, where in addition to the rendering of administrative assistance and advice, the British Mandate incorporated the Balfour Declaration of 1917. The Balfour Declaration supported the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people. Although Britain was required to allow Jews to immigrate and settle the land, from about 1930 British heavily curbed Jewish immigration, leaving European Jewry exposed to Nazi extermination in the Holocaust. Arab demands for independence and resistance to Jewish immigration led to a rebellion in 1937, which was followed by continued fighting from both Jews and Arabs. Britain considered and proposed various formulas to bring independence to a land ravaged by violence. In 1947, the British government turned the 'Palestine problem' over to the UN.

Excerpt from the speech of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr Ernest Bevin, to the House of Commons 18 February 1947:

"Sir, I am very sorry to have to inform the House that the Conference with the Arabs and the consultations with the Zionist Organisation about the future of Palestine which have been proceeding in London have come to an end because it has become clear that there is no prospect of reaching by those means any settlement which would be even broadly acceptable to the two communities in Palestine...."

... "We have, therefore, reached the conclusion that the only course now open to us is to submit the problem to the judgment of the United Nations...."

Following the British announcement that

it would end its authority over Palestine, a UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) was established. Various proposals were considered, including one-state and two-state options. The UNSCOP Majority Report recommended dividing the British Mandate-controlled area of Palestine into two states, one Arab and one Jewish, with Jerusalem to be an 'international' city. According to the plan, the two states, roughly equal in size and natural resources, would cooperate on major economic issues, sharing their currency, roads, and government services.

Considerable pressure was placed on the UN, with Zionists lobbying the White House to have the plan endorsed. At the same time, opponents of the plan issued severe warnings, with Arab states warning Western powers that endorsement of the partition plan might be met by an oil embargo, or even see the Arab states realign with the Soviet Bloc. Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Said, vowed: "We will smash the country with our guns and obliterate every place the Jews seek shelter in", and told British diplomats that "if the United Nations solution was not 'satisfactory', 'severe measures should be taken against all Jews in Arab countries'". Jamal Husseini, then spokesman for Palestinian Arabs to the UN, promised "The blood will flow like rivers in the Middle East". Haj Amin al-Husseini, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem explained that the Arabs did not intend merely to prevent partition but "would continue fighting until the Zionists were annihilated." Azzam Pasha, the General Secretary of the Arab League, stated "We will sweep them [the Jews] into the sea." Syrian president Shukri al-Quwatli told his people: "We shall eradicate Zionism."

On 29 November 1949 the General Assembly voted to accept the UNSCOP Majority's partition plan: Resolution 181. The Zionist leadership accepted the plan, albeit reluctantly, as it offered at least two of their requirements — sovereignty and control over immigration. The Palestinian Arabs and the surrounding Arab nations, rejected it outright and indicated that they would reject any other plan of partition,

refusing to accept the establishment of a Jewish state in the region.

The Arab states' delegations declared immediately after the vote for partition that they would not be bound by the decision, and walked out. The Arab delegations to the UN issued a joint statement the following day stating: "the vote in regard to the Partition of Palestine has been given under great pressure and duress, and that this makes it doubly invalid." On 16 February 1948, the UN Palestine Commission reported to the Security Council that: "Powerful Arab interests, both inside and outside Palestine, are defying the resolution of the General Assembly and are engaged in a deliberate effort to alter by force the settlement envisaged therein."

The UN Partition Plan was never implemented. Six months after the UNSCOP report and the passing of Resolution 181 in the UN General Assembly, one of the two envisaged States proclaimed its independence as **Israel** on 14 May 1948. Immediately following this declaration, and as the British administration was still packing up and departing, the neighbouring Arab States attacked the brand new nation of Israel. By the close of war in 1949, the Arab forces had expanded to hold 77% of the territory of Mandatory Palestine, including the larger part of Jerusalem. Israel did not gain control of its lost territory until the Six-day war of 1967.

Often the subject of fiery debate, Resolution 181 remains another line in the long history of Israel and the Middle East. As for its relevance today, most prevalent opinion amongst academics and international lawyers accepts the non-binding nature of such UN General Assembly resolutions, especially when – as was clearly the case with Resolution 181 – one of the two parties directly concerned flatly rejected the resolution.

In the 75 years since Resolution 181, and in light of the ever-increasing torrent of resolutions against Israel, one must question whether the Resolution – and indeed perhaps the United Nations – has any relevance in the Middle East at all.

Short News

2021 National Jewish Book Awards Honour Henrietta Szold



Dvora Hacoen's biography, *To Repair a Broken World: The Life of Henrietta Szold, Founder of Hadassah*, has won two awards, including Jewish Book of the Year. Szold dedicated her life to creating opportunities for both Jewish women and the disadvantaged.

| Photo: Flashgo

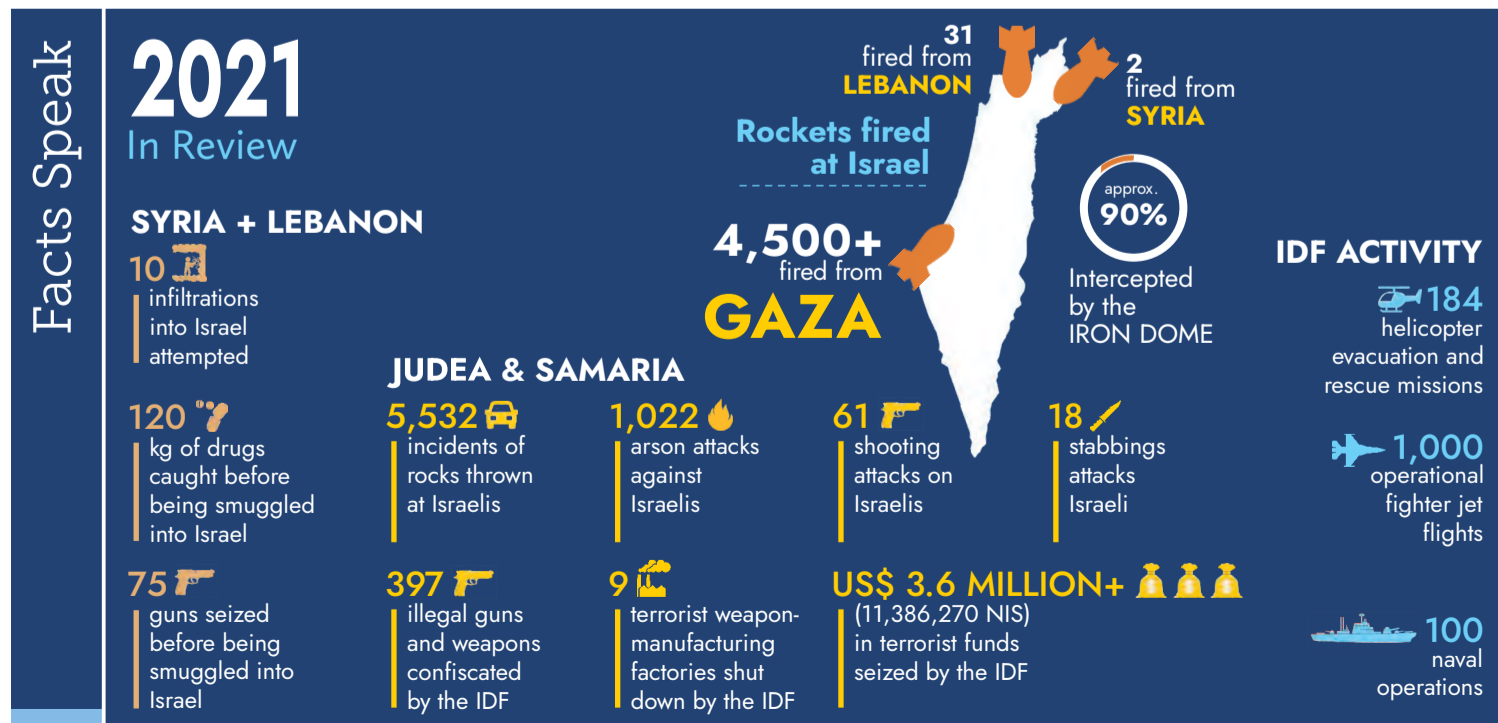
Improve Physical Performance

Most of us can conjure up a vivid mental image of our favourite food. Just thinking about it can make our mouths water. Israeli physical therapist Amit Abraham heads a lab at Ariel University that's translating this phenomenon into innovative training protocols to enhance dancers' and gymnasts' performance and improve rehab results for people with Parkinson's disease. "Parkinson is a multifaceted condition, mostly known for slowness of movement, rigidity, balance dysfunctions and resting tremor. About 60% of individuals also have sensory and cognitive deficits. We thought mental imagery could address these deficits," he explains. This unique embodiment approach taught people to connect imagery with physical sensations. This intervention eased both motor and non-motor symptoms of the disease. www.israel21c.org

Medical Inventions Change Surgery



Several companies in Israel have developed technologies that combine robotics and artificial intelligence, creating a new reality in the field of surgery, allowing unprecedented accuracy during operations, along with a shorter recovery for patients. The Israeli company *Human Xtensions* has developed a small robot that allows the surgeon to perform very complex abdominal operations in hard-to-access areas. *Beyeonics* has developed digital headsets for eye surgeons, orthopaedic surgeons and brain surgeries. Medtronic has developed the Transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), a minimally invasive procedure to replace the aortic valve, drastically reducing patient recovery. | Photo: Human Xtensions



Making Waves

■ Kay Wilson

Israeli Tour Guide | Author | Cartoonist

The advantage of the radio - as opposed to television - is that it leaves far more to the imagination. The non-visual media allows us to tantalisingly 'fill-in the blanks,' leaving us all to draw our own creative conclusions. The nuance of radio is something that Israeli Jewish journalist, Eran Zinger, has capitalised on for the good of Jews and Arabs in Israeli society.

A familiar and popular radio broadcaster, Zinger would probably be unrecognisable walking down the street. But his voice is known throughout the land, as is his commitment to the cause of bringing harmony in society. Both these factors have boosted his ratings to make him one of the most popular commentators of the day.

His rise to being one of the most listened to men in Israel has been methodical, determined and pragmatic. Flawless in Arabic, he chose to live in Haifa, a city of exemplary co-existence, studying the language at the city's university. His aptitude for linguistics did not go unrewarded. He was soon offered a position on Israel's national radio as a reporter on Arab Affairs. As Israel was dragged into the Second Intifada and the Second Lebanon War six years later, Zinger reported from the front line.

When hostilities came to an end - albeit temporarily - Zinger was given his very own radio show, which, for the most-part, co-hosts with an Arab broadcaster. Skipping over the Israeli Arab politicians who take joy in complaining about everything and can't decide whether they are Palestinian or Israeli, Zinger interviews the man on the street: Arabs who are fluent Hebrew speakers and



Old radio broadcasting tower in downtown, Tel Aviv, Israel. | Photo: Shutterstock

immersed in Israeli culture. He offers a platform for them to air issues prevalent in Arab society. There are a wide range of topics, including agriculture, theatre, music, economics, and even crime.

Every afternoon, Jews tune in and learn about the cultural richness of their Arab 'cousins.' Likewise, Arabs interviewed by the skilful Zinger talk fondly of their country, showing that they are Israeli citizens with the same ups and downs as their Jewish neighbours. Zinger is successful in expelling the Jewish or Arab issue - which many politicians inflame - and instead, he highlights humanity. Although Jews and Arabs may be culturally different, the banter and wonderful humour between

Zinger and his interviewees reveal that everyone likes a good laugh. Israelis all over the country, whether Jew or Arab warm to each other because Zinger shows that behind the black and white, the Left and the Right are people - and people are people, whoever they are.

The fondness shown towards him by both Arabs and Jews interviewees is remarkable. Void of an agenda, our favourite broadcaster creates space for people and allows them to be known beyond their ethnic or religious labels. In doing so, Eran Zinger skilfully skips around contentious issues and instead inspires empathy and respect - which is the only way to make waves in the Middle East.

Resolution to Combat Holocaust Denial

■ Times of Israel

Only 2nd time an Israeli-led measure has ever passed; initiative earns 114 cosponsors, is approved by consensus; Iran opposes but can't force vote since it hasn't paid its UN dues.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution aimed at combating Holocaust denial on 20 January 2022, in what was just the second time since Israel's establishment that a measure its delegation brought before the forum managed to pass.

The resolution provides a specific classification for Holocaust denial, using the working definition put together by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). It also provides actions expected to be taken by signatory countries in order to address the phenomenon and demands social media networks remove posts that fall under the IHRA definition.

One hundred and fourteen countries cosponsored Resolution A/76/L30, and only Iran publicly voiced its opposition. The representative from the Islamic Republic — whose leaders have a long history of Holocaust denial — claimed the resolution marked another attempt by Israel "to exploit the suffering of Jewish people in the past as cover for the crimes it has perpetrated over the past seven decades against regional countries."

However, because Tehran has failed to pay its UN membership dues, its delegation has been stripped of some of its rights, and it was, therefore, unable to call for a formal vote on the Israeli resolution. As a result, the initiative was approved by consensus.

In an impassioned speech introducing the resolution, Israel's Ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan said that "Holocaust denial has spread like a cancer. It has spread under our watch. It has spread because people have



Israel's Ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan, holds an enlarged copy of the resolution passed on 20 January 2022, to combat Holocaust denial, flanked by Holocaust survivors at the General Assembly. | Photo: Israel's Mission to the UN

chosen to be irresponsible and to avoid accountability. As the number of Holocaust survivors diminishes, Holocaust denial is growing at a terrifying speed... The younger generations are being indoctrinated on social media to doubt reality and trust deception," Erdan continued, claiming that social media platforms are "shirking responsibility."

"We are only service providers,' we hear from media executives. We recognise those words. We've heard them before. As you dodge responsibility, evil grows... Social media giants can no longer remain complacent to the hate that spreads on their platforms," said the Israeli envoy.

He began his speech recalling the story of Chaim, a Holocaust survivor from a small village in Romania whose wife and eight children were exterminated by the Nazis.

Erdan called the resolution his "most important initiative" as ambassador. "Not only because I represent a Jewish state, not only because I am a Jew, but also because I am the grandson of Holocaust survivors." He then revealed Chaim to be his late grandfather.

The envoy invited a group of five Holocaust survivors and Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, a child of survivors — to attend the vote. The resolution was introduced — and passed — on the 80th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference organised by the Nazis to coordinate the implementation of Hitler's Final Solution.

Abridged by Managing Editor. The full article can be found here: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/un-general-assembly-adopts-israeli-resolution-aimed-at-combating-holocaust-denial/>

A Year of Innovation for Café Europa in Jerusalem



Jerusalem Foundation

In many ways, the world is not what it used to be.

And, just like 2020, 2021 presented its fair share of challenges as the world continued to navigate its way through the global coronavirus pandemic.

And yet, the ability of special organisations and individuals to shine through the darkness, and provide light to those that do need it, was as evident as ever in Jerusalem.

The Cafe Europa network - which provides social and support opportunities for elderly Holocaust survivors in Jerusalem - continued its special mission in the face of ongoing challenges to its usual work. With the elderly being the group at highest risk from the virus and facing the challenges of loneliness and isolation faced by those shielding at home, the six branches of Café Europa in Jerusalem have had to adapt in creative ways to reach out to members in new ways.

Café Europa worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to provide essential services, including online, Zoom gatherings, discussions and activities to help deal with anxiety and extreme loneliness, assistance getting medications and food, and almost daily telephone contact.

A special new project which took place last year enabled elderly Holocaust survivors and 12-year-old girls to celebrate their Bat Mitzvahs together. The survivors enjoyed a series of six meetings with sixth-grade students from Jerusalem's Yehuda Halevi School. The girls were preparing to celebrate their upcoming Bat Mitzvah (a Jewish coming-of-age ritual for girls at age 12, marking the beginning of their maturity and responsibility as adults).

Most of the survivors at Café Europa never had the chance to celebrate a Bat Mitzvah at age 12 during the war. By helping the schoolgirls prepare for this new stage

in their lives and creating art together, they remembered their own stories decades later and (belatedly) celebrated this special milestone with young girls from the future generations.

Keren Naveh, Director of Community and Welfare at the Jerusalem Foundation, commented that Cafe Europa is one of the most exciting projects she is involved in.

"Seeing the smile on the faces of the elderly, when they are invited to a concert we produced especially for them in Mishkenot Sha'ananim or when Holocaust survivors participate in a multi-generational Bat Mitzvah project with girls, is incredible."

"Cafe Europa holds special importance to us and is a priority for the coming years," says Jerusalem Foundation President Shai Doron. "It is our duty to continue to support the Holocaust survivors living in the city, to give them a warm and welcoming 'home'. Friends of the Jerusalem Foundation around the world have helped make this possible, but there is more to do. Our moral duty is to allow them to grow old with dignity, to have a sense of security and love in a world that gave them too little of these things when they were just children."

Mira Gol, an 83-year-old Holocaust survivor who came to Israel from the Netherlands and is a regular at Cafe Europa, says: "This project is a highlight of our routine. For many of us, it is a place that is a social gathering and a home. Unfortunately, the coronavirus has caused a lot of damage to our entire age group, but, despite the restrictions in place, we are determined to continue this wonderful project."

Your support for Café Europa allows it to continue its operations and innovate new programmes in this era of uncertainty. On behalf of the Jerusalem Foundation and the Holocaust survivors, we thank you for your support! To donate, complete the coupon on the back page.

during these dark and difficult times. And yes, courageously we continue to pack the food parcels with care and distribute them with love.

In the short term, we hope to be able to stockpile thousands of kilos of extra supplies in a number of places in Eastern, Northern and Southern Ukraine, so that if the situation were to deteriorate drastically, we would still be able to provide for the elderly and needy Jewish families.

Will you help us?
Each food parcel costs NZ \$17 | AU \$15 | US \$11 | €10. To donate, complete the coupon on the back page.



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!

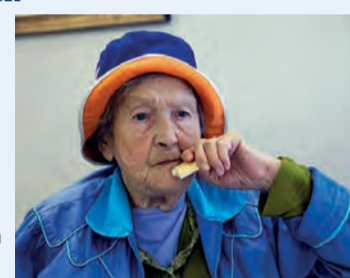
Aliyah

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

Project Update

Prepared with Care, Given with Love

Koen Carlier

Aliyah Fieldworker | Christians for Israel Ukraine

From December to mid-January, we packed and distributed no less than 5,100 food parcels and distributed over 56,000 kg.

The packing with local volunteers goes reasonably smoothly, but the distribution, with long distances to drive, takes a long time. We always try to combine it with other visits.

The circumstances are far from ideal: it's winter and cold, with quite a lot of snow and there is Covid-19. People pay a lot of money for heating, prices are rising, especially for basic necessities. On top of this the tensions rise between Ukraine and neighbouring Russia and the question is whether there will be an escalation and if so, what's next?

We hear from the Jewish elderly that our food parcels delivered at regular intervals really help

Help to Reunite Ethiopian Families



Members of the Falashmura community arrive at Ben Gurion airport on 11 March 2021. | Photo: Flash90

The civil war raging in Ethiopia poses an imminent danger to the lives of thousands of Ethiopian Jews in the camps of Gondar and Adis Ababa, who for decades await airlift to Israel and reunification with their families. Already facing mortal danger from Covid-19, severe food shortages, malnutrition and other harsh living conditions, Ethiopian Jews are more desperate than ever to reach Israel.

Many thousands are waiting in Ethiopia to join their families in Israel. Most have left their homes and villages to wait in the major cities of Gondar and Addis Ababa. Despite their ongoing limbo and harsh conditions, the communities in these cities maintain a strong Jewish identity and carry out daily Jewish rituals.

Aliyah from Ethiopia in Recent Years

The Israeli Government announced a decision in December 2020 to raise the number of Ethiopian immigrants allowed entry under the Family Reunification Program to 2,000, laying the foundation for the immediate *Aliyah* of hundreds more Ethiopian Jews in an operation known as *Tzur Yisrael*. This decision was especially timely due to the extremely harsh living conditions for Jews waiting in Ethiopia, which has only worsened due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The intensifying civil war in Ethiopia has also played a factor in the Israeli Government's decision to increase the number of new immigrants from Ethiopia and expedite the process.

Operation *Tzur Yisrael* officially ended on 11 March 2021, after bringing nine flights with a total of 2,112 Ethiopian *olim* (immigrants) to Israel. At the time when the last of the 2,000 Ethiopian new *olim* landed in Israel, Jewish Agency Chairman Isaac Herzog (now President of the State of Israel) said of the operation: "The final Operation *Tzur Yisrael* flight arrived reuniting countless families after far too many years apart. This is a moment that tugs at the heartstrings, reminding us that our mission to bring the remaining members of the community waiting to make *Aliyah* is far from over."

Thanks to the continued leadership of Minister Pnina Tamano-Shata, Minister of Aliyah and Integration, the continuation of *Aliyah* (immigration to Israel) from Ethiopia was approved by the Government

of Israel in November 2021. This important and historic decision will bring 3,000 Ethiopians to Israel and reunite them with their families in the spring of 2022. This operation is particularly important as some families have been separated between the two countries for years, sometimes more than a decade.

Together, we can help these Ethiopian Jews to reach their dream of returning to Zion. Our goal as Christians for Israel is to support this historic airlift by bringing one plane with 250 new immigrants from Ethiopia.

Please help the Ethiopian Jews who are eligible to make *Aliyah* and reunite them with their families! To donate, complete the coupon below.

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

- Aliyah Ethiopia
- 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

- | | QTY | PRICE |
|---|-------|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christians for Israel NZ Calendar 2022 New | | \$19.95 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christians for Israel NZ Israeli & Friends Cookbook New | | \$34.95 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calendar and Israeli & Friends Cookbook Bundle Deal | | \$49.95 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Until - Fourteen Prophetic Horizons by Rev Willem Glashouwer Sale | | \$10.00 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Towards the Establishment of the State of Israel by Edda Fogorollo Sale | | \$10.00 |

Please add \$5.50 for postage & packaging (or \$9.40 for rural postage) \$.....

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Check out our website for a full list of essential resources

Thank you for supporting Christians for Israel. If you are donating via online banking for the first time, 'thank you!', please don't forget to put your name as the reference. If you receive the paper via a group or church and you are not on our database, please give us a call or email us so we can allocate a supporter number to you. It saves administration time if we have all the details and allocate your donation correctly. Please don't hesitate to contact us, as we are here to help through the 'no cheque' transition phase.

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N.B. Donation statements are generated annually at the end of the financial year. Christians for Israel NZ does not currently qualify for charitable status.