

ISRAEL

& Christians Today

NEW ZEALAND
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CHRISTIANS FOR
ISRAEL
NEW ZEALAND

Understanding Israel and world events from a Biblical perspective

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On the 25th anniversary of our campaign, 'Bring the Jews Home', 130 Ukrainian Jews left for Israel on a special charter flight on 14 September. Among them were many young people. They were sent off by representatives of Christians for Israel: in the front row, Rev Cornelis Kant, Executive Director of Christians for Israel International, Koen and Ira Carlier, who are leading our work in Ukraine, and Frank van Oordt, Executive Director of Christians for Israel Netherlands. Read more on pages 6 and 7. | Photo: Christians for Israel

25 Years

**BRING
THE JEWS
HOME**

“Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’

Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth— everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.”

Isaiah 43:5-7

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ADI Offers Children a Chance



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

Colophon

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

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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Arab Christians Say No to Islamic Palestinian State

■ Andrew Tucker

International Editor | Christians for Israel

The 'international community' is allowing the further ethnic cleansing of the Middle East of Jews and Christians.

The West's 'Two-State' policy not only undermines the position of the Jewish State of Israel, but it also imposes an Islamic state on the remaining Palestinian Christians who have clearly stated that they don't want to be part of an Islamic state and exposes them to great danger.

'East Jerusalem' is often spoken about as being 'Arab'. It is important to appreciate that 'East Jerusalem' encompasses the Old City (and its environs, often known as the 'Holy Basin') – everything that constituted Jerusalem before it expanded in the 20th century. It is the traditional home to both Jews and Christians.

Jordan ethnically cleansed East Jerusalem of Jews when it controlled it in 1948-1967. Since then, the 'international community' has ignored the precarious position of the Jews who have returned, as well as the 16,000 Christians who live in Jerusalem.

12,600 of these Christians in East Jerusalem are 'Arab' Christians. About 9% of Israel's Christian Arab population lives in Israel's capital, making it the third-largest concentration of Christian Arabs in all of Israel. The city with the largest Christian Arab population is Nazareth, with Haifa coming in second place.

Elias Zariana represents the Jerusalem Initiative, a non-profit organisation established to empower Arabic-speaking Israeli Christians. According to Zariana, Christian Arabs living in Israel enjoy full religious freedom under Israeli law. The Arab Christians in East Jerusalem do not want to be part of the Arab Palestinian state that the EU and many other states want to establish, with 'East Jerusalem' as its capital.

In his submission to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in March 2020 on behalf of the Jerusalemite Initiative, Zariana wrote that "Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem extends over several important Christian holy sites, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Via Dolorosa and the Church of All Nations. The State of



Birds eye view of the Old City of Jerusalem; the Dome of the Rock is seen in the background and the Jaffa gate in the foreground. On the left is the Jewish quarter and on the right, the Christian quarter. | Photo: Flash90

Israel protects these sites according to the Protection of Holy Places Law."

Zariana was responding to the arguments made by the ICC Prosecutor that the Palestinian Authority should be recognised as having jurisdiction over East Jerusalem.

The Prosecutor argued that, under international law, East Jerusalem is 'occupied Palestinian territory', and Israel is not allowed to administer the city or change the status it had when it was under Jordanian occupation (and later annexation) between 1949 and 1967.

Zariana told the Court that most Christians in East Jerusalem much prefer to be under Israeli governance and do not want to be part of a 'Palestinian' state.

He continued: "Opinion polls demonstrate that large percentages of Arab residents of Jerusalem, Christian and Muslim alike, would prefer to remain under Israeli control, as opposed to being transferred to PA jurisdiction. Subjecting them to PA jurisdiction would not be likely to respect their right to self-determination. Jerusalem's Arab residents would face severe human rights violations under PA jurisdiction. For example, Palestinian law forbids the sale of land to Jews, and those convicted of that crime risk severe punishment and even death. Zariani's pleas fell on deaf ears. In

February 2021, the Court decided that 'Palestine' is a State for the purposes of the Court's own constitution (the Statute of Rome) and that the 'territory' of that state includes East Jerusalem.

The Court preferred the legal and historical narrative presented by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab League, and the left-wing and Arab lawyers who agree with them, over the views presented by Zariani, countries like Germany, Austria, Australia and Israel, and the more conservative lawyers who agree with them.

This is deeply troubling. Over the last century, the Western world has gradually acquiesced in the Islamisation of the Middle East. The victims are peace-loving Muslims and all non-Muslim minorities – especially Jews and Christians.

Afghanistan is just the latest example of a long and tragic trend.

The attempts by Western governments over recent decades to build Islamic states in the Middle East has failed. Instead, they should be giving more attention to the protection of human rights of Jews, Christians and Muslims.

Israel is the only country in the Middle East that does exactly that. Although it is not perfect, its sovereignty should be supported, not undermined.

the Mediterranean Sea. Furthermore, it trains Palestinian terrorist groups in the production of rockets. Pray for the protection of Israel against the increasing danger from Iran.

- The new Israeli government is seeking to improve relations with the European Union. Pray that the European Union will become a better ally of Israel. Pray also that the relationship between Israel and the United States will remain strong, especially now that the danger from Iran is increasing.

Christians for Israel

- Give thanks for all the opportunities that Christians for Israel has had recently to spread the message worldwide of God's faithfulness to Israel. C4I Nepal was able to start up a WhatsApp messaging service, and in Russia, one of our partners is setting up a new internet TV channel focusing on Israel. Pray for a blessing on these developments.

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

Prayer Points

By C4I Prayer Team

Israel

- "If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot disown Himself." 2 Timothy 2:13. God's faithfulness reaches to the skies (Psalm 36:5). Praise God for His faithfulness to Israel and us. When we are unfaithful, God remains faithful. That is a great miracle!
- "This is what the Lord says: 'I will restore the fortunes of Jacob's tents and have compassion on his dwellings; the city will be rebuilt on her ruins, and the palace will stand in its proper place.'" Jeremiah 30:18. Give thanks that this prophecy became reality for the people of Israel and that there is now a Homeland where Jewish people can go when antisemitism in other countries is increasing.

Israel & the Nations

- Iran is rapidly expanding its power in areas bordering Israel. For instance, Iran has gained more and more power over the Syrian Golan Heights; it has converted merchant ships into warships and uses them to patrol

Afghanistan's Lessons for Israel

■ Jeremiah Rozman

The United States has definitively lost Afghanistan. US military power ousted the Taliban and prevented its return for 20 years. As forces withdrew, the product of two decades of nation-building melted away as if it never existed, save for the heaps of military hardware left behind.

The collapse of America's Afghanistan strategy highlights the risks that Israel would incur in creating a Palestinian state, as these projects hold key similarities.

First, both the United States and Israel were involved in nation-building. The United States sought to build an Afghan democracy capable of governing Afghanistan and maintaining peace and stability. Since the Oslo Accords, Israel has been working with America to build a Palestinian democracy capable of governing a future Palestinian state and making peace with Israel.

Both of these efforts involved building and training armies capable of suppressing terrorists. Both involved introducing Western-style democracy into regions without prior experience with it. And both sought to defeat and marginalise well-organised Islamic fundamentalist groups with a strong sense of purpose and robust support networks. Both attempts at nation-building ultimately failed.

The corrupt US-backed government never had much legitimacy in Afghanistan, and its military quickly dissolved when US forces withdrew. The corrupt Palestinian Authority never enjoyed legitimacy either. Its US-trained forces were swiftly routed by Hamas when the Israel Defense Forces withdrew from the Gaza Strip in 2005, and it lost an election to the militant group in 2006. To the north, Israel's forces in Southern Lebanon were quickly defeated by Hezbollah when the IDF withdrew in the spring of 2000. History demonstrates that organised, internationally supported, and motivated Islamist groups usually win in power vacuums.

Both the United States and Israel had the military ability to defeat their Islamic fundamentalist enemies. Still, they only had sufficient political will necessary to keep them at bay and maintain a manageable status quo. For Israel, international pressure and low domestic tolerance for casualties drove it to risk its security by removing its forces from Gaza and Lebanon. The botched US withdrawal from Afghanistan was an unforced error. There was no major domestic or international demand for America to withdraw its remaining 2,500 troops immediately. In fact, international allies were left blindsided by President Joe Biden's rapid pullout. No US soldier had been killed in combat there in more than 18 months, and the cost of maintaining an effective counter-terrorism base of operations was sustainable.

The US decision to withdraw under minimal pressure bodes ominously for



Paratroopers assigned to the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division conduct security as they continue to help facilitate the safe evacuation of US citizens, Special Immigrant Visa applicants, and other at-risk Afghans out of Afghanistan, 25 August 2021 | Photo: Sgt. Jillian G. Hix/U.S. Army via AP

countries that are promised protection. Will that protection be rescinded when there really is pressure? After the United States appeared to flee before its own shadow, abandoning billions of dollars of sophisticated equipment to an enemy with no air force, no satellites and no nuclear missiles, are Taiwan and South Korea still truly confident in protection if nuclear-armed dictators come knocking?

In 2014, US Secretary of State John Kerry offered Israel technology and promises of international protection if it withdrew its military from the strategically important Jordan Valley to allow a Palestinian state to include that territory. The US withdrawal from Afghanistan suggests that Israel was right to rely on itself.

Both Democrat and Republican US administrations promoted the 'two-state solution,' which in essence sought to nation-build in the Middle East. The Trump administration was the first to break with that thinking, which had persisted since Clinton. The Biden administration is back to the old playbook. It officially supports the creation of a Palestinian state. From Clinton's Oslo Accords to George W. Bush's 'roadmap' and 'disengagement,' the United States has reassured Israel that a future Palestinian state would not pose a security threat.

However, America's poor track record at nation-building in the Middle East is mirrored by its poor track record predicting outcomes in that region. The Oslo Accords ended in a bloody intifada; disengagement from Gaza ended in Hamas capturing the coastal enclave and turning it into a terror platform. De-Ba'athification in Iraq ended in a bloody insurgency, and the withdrawal from Afghanistan yielded a rapid Taliban victory that apparently caught the Biden administration by surprise.

The world now has one more fundamentalist Islamic state: the Taliban-run Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

There is little doubt a future Palestinian state would be the same. According to recent polls, Hamas would still win

Palestinian elections, but in the Middle East, more important than ballots are bullets, as the 2021 Taliban takeover of Afghanistan and the 2007 Hamas takeover of Gaza clearly show.

The US military kept the Taliban at bay in Afghanistan, and the IDF kept Hamas from taking over Judea and Samaria. While a fundamentalist Islamic victory is surely a tragedy for liberty, tolerance and human rights, it is first and foremost a security threat. A Taliban-run Afghanistan harboured Al-Qaeda, resulting in the attacks of 11 September 2001. Many fear that it will once again become a safe haven for terrorists and that the next big attack is only a matter of time.

For Israel, a Hamas-run state bordering Israel's major population centres, economic centres and an international airport would pose an existential threat. All of Israel would be within range of a variety of short- and long-range rockets, mortars and sniper fire and easily infiltrated through tunnels. In the 21st century, oceans are no guarantee of national security, but at least for now, the Taliban or Al-Qaeda cannot fire volleys of rockets at Washington, DC, from Afghanistan.

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan tells the world's dictators and terrorists that America is no longer interested in its post-World War II role as the military guarantor of freedom. Any country would be wise to understand that it can ultimately only rely on its own power. "The strong do what they can, and the weak suffer what they must." Suppose Israel severely weakens its ability to defend itself by withdrawing its forces to create a Palestinian state. In that case, it must understand that it will assuredly be left to suffer what it must when that state falls to Islamic fundamentalists, as history and the facts on the ground strongly predict.

Jeremiah Rozman is a publishing adjunct at The MirYam Institute. He has a PhD in International Relations from the University of Virginia, focusing on strategic/security studies, counter-terrorism, conflict resolution, and asymmetric warfare.

Short News

Antisemitism on TikTok



Social media app TikTok, which allows users to create short videos, has gained immense popularity. While most of the content is fun, there is a dramatic increase in antisemitism on the platform. A recent study by the University of Haifa shows that antisemitic content on TikTok increased by 912%. The huge increase consists of antisemitic comments, which grew from 41 in 2020 to 415 in 2021. The number of antisemitic posts grew from 43 in 2020 to 61 in 2021. Leader of the study, Weimann, said of the increase: "TikTok's catering to young, impressionable and naive audiences, combined with bad-faith actors who are posting hateful content online, is something that should be taken very seriously." | Photo: Unsplash

Robots Dispense Medication

An Israeli medical device company called RescueDose has developed a robot that automatically dispenses medication to patients, cutting down on human error that can occur when liquid medications are prepared.

The robot software scans the required dosage from the patient's original prescription — it can also be typed in — and the robot is then able to mix the medicated powders and liquids into the accurate dose, which is then labelled and ready to be delivered to patients.

Israel-Jordan Ties by Rare Alignment



As scientific warnings of dire climate change-induced drought grow, many in Israel and Jordan cast worried eyes at the river running between them and the critical but limited resources they share. In September, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change showed unequivocally that the climate is changing faster than previously feared, heaping pressure on finite water supplies even as demands grow greater than ever before. But experts say that instead of provoking an argument, Israel and Jordan could be poised for an unprecedented boom in water cooperation amid technological advancements, climate pressures, and stronger ties.

PA Salary Payments to Terrorists

Sbarro pizza restaurant suicide bombing - Jerusalem

■ Palestinian Media Watch

A suicide bomber murdered 15 people, including seven children, and wounded 130 when he detonated his bomb in the Sbarro pizzeria in Jerusalem on 9 August 2001.

The Terror Attack

On 9 August 2001, 20-year-old Ahlam Tamimi and 22-year-old Izz al-Din Shuheil al-Masri drive to Jerusalem, both Palestinians but dressed as Jews. Tamimi drops off suicide bomber Al-Masri at 2pm at pizza restaurant Sbarro, which is filled with families at the time. In addition, the streets are bustling; the location, the corner of Jaffa Street and King George Street, is one of the busiest pedestrian intersections in Israel. Al Masri steps into the restaurant and detonates his bomb, which contains explosives, nails, nuts and bolts.

The Victims

In the attack on Sbarro, fifteen Israelis are killed, seven of them children. More than 130 people are (seriously) injured. Chana Nachenberg, 31 years old at the time of the attack, is still in a vegetative state twenty years later.

Among the dead are five members of the Dutch-Israeli family Schijveschuurder: Mordechai (44), Tzira (42) and three of their children Ra'aya (14) Avraham Yitzhak (4) and Hemda (2).

Daughter Chaya, 8, survived the attack: "We were hungry, so Mommy said we could go to a restaurant to eat. In that restaurant, you have to pay first, and only afterwards do you sit down to eat. When we were at the cash register, we suddenly heard an explosion. I ran out as fast as I could. I didn't look at anything. I just ran out. A medic took me to an ambulance, and that is where I saw Avraham Yitzhak for the last time. I said to him, 'Avraham Yitzhak.' But he didn't say anything. Three of my brothers were not with us in the restaurant, and they found me first.

After that, they found out that our parents, one of my sisters, my little brother and my little sister were killed. My little sister was always happy. I remember her so well. She used to laugh all day long. Now our parents are not alive either. But soon the Messiah will come, and all the people who have died, and all the people killed in wars and terror attacks, will come back to life."

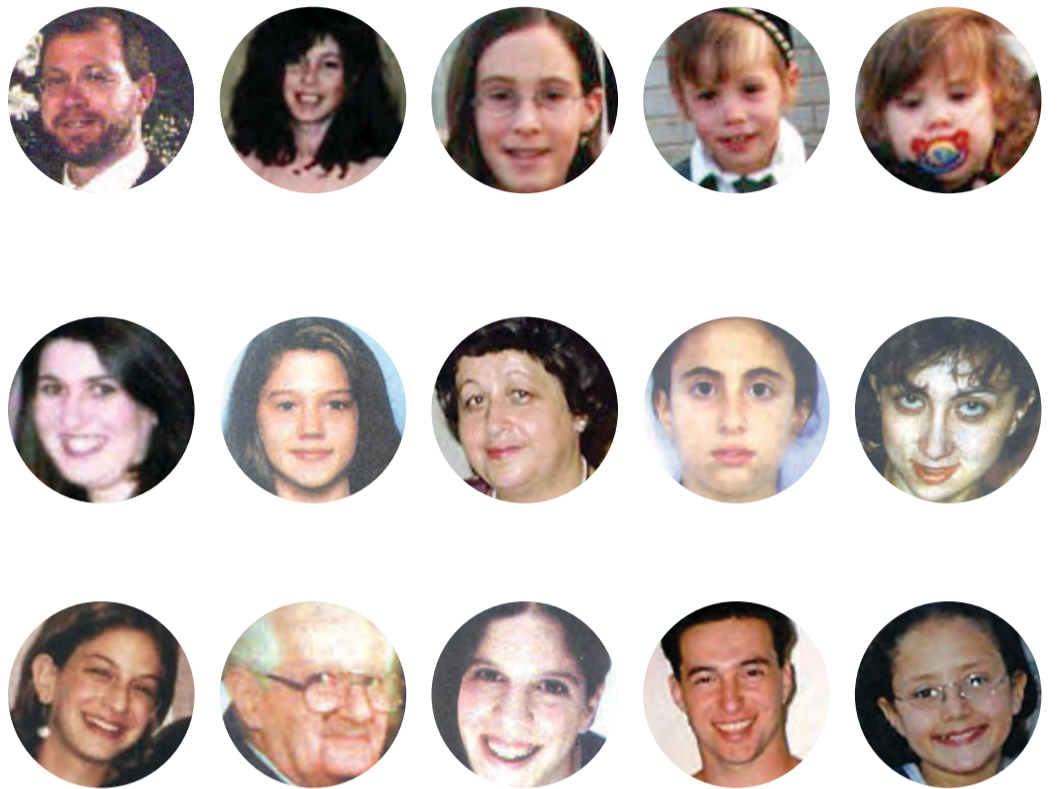
The Terrorists and their Rewards

Abdallah Barghouti made the bombs for terrorist attacks in which a total of 67 people were killed. Israel sentenced him to 67 life sentences. Barghouti comes from an influential Palestinian family, which also includes BDS-founder Omar Barghouti.

Barghouti and thousands of other terrorists receive a monthly salary from the Palestinian Authority while in prison. The amounts they receive are set out in Palestinian law. Since his arrest in March 2003, Abdallah Barghouti has received over 900,000 shekels (US \$285,571) from the Palestinian Authority.

His current salary of 7,300 shekels per month will increase to 12,300 shekels per month as his imprisonment progresses, about 8.5 times the minimum wage in the Palestinian Authority.

Like Barghouti, Al-Tamimi was arrested by Israel for her involvement in the attack. She was sentenced to 16 life terms but was released in 2011 together with 1026 other Palestinian prisoners in exchange for the kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit. She was paid until her release, and now she leads a free life in Jordan.



UN Watch asks for transparency from UNRWA

Report 'Antisemitism Among UN Personnel'

UNRWA reacted rather upset to a report by UN Watch, an independent human rights group based in Geneva. The report states that over 100 UNRWA educators and staff have posted a message on social media that promoted antisemitism and violence. UNRWA is the UN organisation for aid to Palestinian refugees and their families.

The UN Watch report mentions several examples. For instance, there is the message from the math teacher Nahed Shrarawi. She posted a video of Hitler along with inspirational quotes, which according to Shrarawi, will "enrich and enlighten your minds and thoughts." Husni Masri's message is also mentioned. He lists himself as a teacher at UNRWA in the West Bank. Masri shared a post promoting conspiracy theories about Jews, including the idea that Jews want to rule the world and destroy Islam and that Jews are created the coronavirus.

Statement

UNRWA confirmed in a statement ten employees who will be subjected to further investigation and that the other twelve people mentioned in the report are not 'associated with the Agency'. Furthermore, the organisation states: "We are concerned that some of the posts violate our rules and policies, and should misconduct be found, UNRWA will take immediate administrative or disciplinary action." And it continues: "UNRWA's mandate is to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to over five million Palestine refugees, a responsibility the agency takes very seriously."



Palestinian students at the Dheisheh Girls School, at the UNRWA Dheisheh Refugee Camp near Bethlehem, August 2018. | Photo: Flash90

Missing the Point

UN Watch Director Hillel Neuer reacted to this statement: "UNRWA's reply misses the point entirely. If the agency employs dozens of teachers and school principals who quote Hitler and praise Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorist attacks, the issue isn't their social media posts and their so-called 'neutrality breaches,' but rather the fact that UNRWA's education system is repeatedly

hiring and putting in the classroom teachers that admire Hitler and propagate hatred and terrorism." (...) [The Agency] needs to show minimal transparency and accountability by publicly detailing which charges they reject, and to explain why they are not firing UNRWA teachers who publicly propagate antisemitism and support for terror.

Iran and Israel Closer to an all-out-war

■ **Yochanan Visser**

Christians for Israel Correspondent | Israel

Certain developments are going on in Iran's largely covert war against Israel that are largely hidden from the public. The developments make it clear that a military confrontation between Israel and Iran seems inevitable in the long run. Also, the United States is now more aware of the fact that under no circumstances should Iran obtain a nuclear weapon.

The current US administration now seems more open to paying attention to Iran's bellicose activities in the Middle East. Until recently, it seemed that President Biden's administration focused exclusively on 'nuclear programme. According to Prime Minister Bennett's statement after his meeting with Biden in late August, this now seems to have changed.

In the presence of Biden, Bennett said that Iran is the world's biggest exporter of terror. He also said that he had discussed his plan of action against Iranian aggression in the region with the US President. Bennett said that this aggression must be stopped and added that Israel is now virtually surrounded by allies of Iran. These are the Palestinian terror movements in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Shiite militias in the Golan Heights that are armed and supported by Iran.

Israeli military and security experts had held extensive discussions with Biden prior to Bennett's official visit about Iran's aggressive activities in the Middle East. These experts also discussed the growing threat that Iran poses to Israel's survival.

Iran's Military Advance

Ehud Yari is one of the most experienced TV commentators in the Middle East. At the beginning of September, he revealed that Iran and Hezbollah, despite repeated Israeli military action, have managed to control the Syrian Golan Heights. In fact, Iran is now handing out orders to the Syrian army.

Since June, an Iranian-led offensive against Sunni rebels in the Dara district bordering the Syrian Golan Heights. The city of Dara was under siege until the rebels had to accept a humiliating cease-fire that didn't last for a long time.

The uprising against the regime of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad began in 2011 in the city of Dara. The rebels there never gave up their resistance against the Bashar regime and the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). The resistance against Assad and Iran also continued when the Syrian army returned to the south in the summer of 2018.

In principle, the Russian army in Syria should have stopped Iran's advance. However, in practice, the agreements between the Assad regime, Russia, and the rebels turned out not to be worth the paper they were written on.

King Abdullah II Worried

Abdullah II, the king of Jordan, is seriously concerned about the activities of the Iranian coalition on the Golan Heights.



Members of the Iranian Jewish community demonstration to support Iran uprising, Israel. | Photo: Flash90

Abdullah, therefore recently travelled to President Putin for urgent consultations with the Russian leader in Moscow. Abdullah would like to restore relations with the Assad regime to gain more influence over what is happening along Syria's border with Jordan. Under no circumstances does the King of Jordan want the IRGC and Hezbollah to have a foothold along the kingdom's border. The king knows that the IRGC's Quds Brigade commands the fourth and seventh divisions of the Syrian army. The same applies to the supreme command of that army.

Iran, together with Hezbollah, has succeeded in controlling the Syrian Golan Heights and is now handing out orders to the Syrian army there.

So far, the Iranians have refrained from a massive military build-up on the Golan Heights. They have limited themselves to flying in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and setting up look-outs and intelligence facilities along the border with Israel. However, Yari expects the next phase to begin once the main road to the city of Dara'a is fully in the hands of the IRGC and the Syrian army. That phase will be when the Iranian axis completely takes over the border area with Israel and Jordan.

Israel's Dilemma

Israel has a dilemma here. It has an agreement with Syria regarding the demilitarised zone on the Golan Heights that dates back to 1974 and was reaffirmed by both sides in 2018 after the Syrian army regained control over the Golan Heights.

The agreement provided quiet until 2015, but then Iran began its drive to use the Syrian war for its grand scheme of establishing the 'Golan Liberation Brigade' and began to heat up the Syrian Israeli border. This was done by launching mortar shells and rockets at the Israeli Golan Heights and, later, by sending armed UAVs into Israel. The latest Iranian 'suicide drone' was sent into Israel during the eleven-day war between the Palestinian terror groups in Gaza and the Israeli military last May.

Despite the reaffirmed ceasefire agreement, Israel's military repeatedly took preventative action over the past three years to prevent Iran and its proxies

from setting up camp on the other side of the border on the Golan Heights. To this end, the Israeli air force (IAF) repeatedly bombed Hezbollah positions and the look-outs used by the Lebanese terror organisation to spy on the Israeli army.

However, this didn't prevent Iran from slowly taking over the Syrian Golan Heights. The latest news by Israeli media like N12 (20 September) is that Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad has given Iran the green light to take over the area along the Israeli border completely.

If Hezbollah and the Quds Force start the military build-up on the Syrian Golan Heights, Israel will have to take military action and could launch a ground offensive.

In that case, the Americans will not intervene, nor will the Russians, although the Russian army could frustrate such an offensive.

Bennett made it clear in Washington that Israel wants the full support of the Biden administration in its 'war between the wars' against Iran. However, he also made it unequivocally clear that Israel does not expect US military intervention if it decides to take military action against Iranian aggression.

Ten Ships with Weapons

For years, Iran has been arming the terrorist groups that threaten Israel. Iran also trains them in producing missiles and UAVs. These groups include the various Shiite militias in Syria and the Palestinian terror groups Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ).

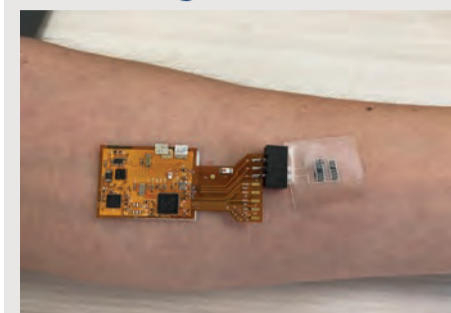
This was once again confirmed by Talal Naji, the Secretary-General of the central command of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLFP). Naji gave an interview to the Iranian TV station Al-Alam on 11 August this year and said that Qassem Soleimani had sent ten ships with weapons to the Palestinian terrorist movements. Soleimani was the commander of the Quds Brigade of the IRGC until he was assassinated by the US army in the Middle East on 5 January 2020.

Only one ship sent by Soleimani, the Karina A, was intercepted by the Israeli Navy. The weapons it was carrying were destined for Arafat's Fatah movement.

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Short News

A Skin Sticker that can Diagnose TB



Researchers at Israel's Technion have developed a revolutionary method of diagnosing tuberculosis without blood samples, X-rays or other invasive procedures. The new method, A-Patch, uses a sticker that absorbs compounds released by the skin upon contact, which are then analysed by an artificial intelligence-based system. This can determine whether or not an individual has tuberculosis quickly and accurately.

58% US Jews Target of Hate Crimes

Jews in America are the target of 58% of all religiously motivated hate crimes in the US despite constituting a mere 2% of the population, newly released FBI statistics for 2020 have shown. The data also showed that Jews constitute the third-largest target of hate crimes out of all minorities in the entire country, more than, Hispanics, Muslims, Asians, and virtually all other groups.

Israel Celebrates 9 Paralympic Medals



Israel, which sent 33 athletes to compete across 11 sports, won 9 medals at the Games, its highest total since 2004 in Athens when it took home 13 medals. Six of Israel's medals this year were gold, which is the highest figure since the 1988 Paralympic Games in Seoul. All but one of Israel's Tokyo Paralympic medals came in swimming, where three Israeli swimmers — Mark Malyar, Ami Dadaon, and Iyad Shalabi — dominated the waters and the podium, each shattering world records along the way.

Jewish Man Attacked

Recently a 48-year old Jewish man was punched and abused in a Brisbane city street during broad daylight while on the way to the synagogue with his 11-year old son. After seeing the Jewish communal member wearing a *kippah*, the unknown attacker started shouting 'Heil Hitler' and giving Nazi salutes. "At first, I didn't realise what he was shouting, but when I looked into his eyes, they were filled with hate towards me," the victim said. "I could feel his hatred directed at me right down into my bones. He punched me in the face and then just walked away." This attack comes as reports of hatred against Jews in Australia, is increasing.

25 Years of Helping Jews Home to Israel

■ Sara van Oordt

Christians for Israel Netherlands

It is Tuesday, 14 September 2021, 4:30pm. 130 Ukrainian Jews will, from this moment on, call Israel their new homeland: 90 teenagers and a number of families. They emigrated to the Promised Land thanks to the support of many Christians around the world.

'Making Aliyah' is what this is called in Israel. This moment marks the 25th anniversary of the *Bring the Jews Home* campaign. 25 years in which Christians for Israel has helped more than 150,000 Jews to make *Aliyah*. Here is the story of three of them.



**BRING
THE JEWS
HOME**

Ariel Dynin (14)

We enter the home of the Dynin family in the city of Zaporozhe, eastern Ukraine. They live in a small Soviet apartment on the fifth floor. Ariel (14) opens the door; we are invited inside. These are the last moments before his departure to Israel. His mother, Nataliya, is making tea; she is stressed and cries a lot. It is a day of mixed emotions because a little later, she proudly shows us the pile of diplomas that Ariel has managed to obtain in recent years: for chemistry, music, mathematics, and even for 3D printing.

Compared to his mother, Ariel looks relaxed. He is about to have a farewell party with his friends. The dream he has had his whole life is about to come true. He is determined to start a new life in Israel. His mother says: "In my head, I support and encourage him. But in my heart, I am his mother, and my heart breaks to have to let him go." Ariel leaves on his own, without his two sisters or his parents. He is participating in the Na'ale programme, where children finish high school in Israel.

The day before his departure, we pick up Ariel together with Igor and Alina from the Christians for Israel Ukraine team. After a twelve-hour drive, we arrive in Kiev. The plane leaves the next day at two o'clock in the afternoon. Ariel is tired and a little sad about having to say goodbye to his family. But he is hopeful and happy about what lies ahead. His dream is to be of significance to his new home: Israel.

Chief Rabbi Jonathan Markovich of Kiev offers a prayer for a safe and blessed journey. He stresses: "When you arrive in Israel, go to the synagogue. Make sure you pray to Hashem so that you begin your new future in the right way."

Kjsushya Korotkova (13)

It is noon when we take Ksushya to the Jewish school in Mariupol, an industrial city by the Black Sea with 500,000 inhabitants. In the distance, we hear explosions. Just a few miles away is the military front, where violence between the Ukrainian army and the Russian separatists flares up regularly to this day. The Jewish community of Mariupol is fairly small. Many Jews leave the area because of the hopeless situation and the lack of future prospects.

At the Jewish school, the children are waiting because they know that Ksushya will leave today. Her friends are there to hug her and wish her a good journey. Later on, when we are at the synagogue, we meet Alisa, who assisted Ksushya for years: "When her mother, Victoria, became seriously ill and was unable to take care of Ksushya, there were no others who could take over her care. Therefore, with the help of the Jewish community, Ksushya was lovingly looked after for a year in a shelter for children coming from difficult home situations. When her mother was able to care for her again, she returned home."

Ksushya certainly did not make the decision to go to Israel alone. Mother Victoria: "Ksushya has no future here in Ukraine. I was also worried that she would have the wrong friends here, so I am glad that she is now taking this step." In Israel, Ksushya will live at a boarding school in Jerusalem. As soon as her mother and stepfather have the right papers, they will also leave for Israel to join Ksushya there.

From Mariupol, it is an 850 km drive to the capital Kiev. From Kiev, she will leave for Israel. Ksushya at the airport in Kiev: "I cannot begin to describe how I feel right now. I am so grateful that this was made possible with the help of Christians for Israel, and I am really looking forward to Israel."



Yegor (40), Elena (37), Angelina (12) & Emilia (18 mths) Pismichenko

For Yegor and Elena, moving to Israel is a logical step: they are the third in line. They follow his younger brother and sister, who made *Aliyah* before them. Yegor and Elena are used to carefully planning everything. But this is a step into the deep: they have never been to Israel, but they know that this is where their future lies. In Israel, they will spend a year at *First Home in the Homeland*, an integration project whereby families live in a *kibbutz* for a year and receive intensive language training and a warm welcome from its residents.

Elena: "Of course, it is a big step. We leave our friends here, and our parents, and Yegor's grandmother. But we want to do this for the children because they will have far more opportunities in Israel." Daughter Angelina shows that she is already busy learning Hebrew words. She proudly shows her notebook in which she has written some Hebrew phrases.

They make one last visit to grandmother Ludmilla Yefimovna (90). The old lady is in tears as she realises that this might be the last time she sees her grandson and great-granddaughter. Yet, she is determined to let them go since it was her idea. She chose to accept her own sadness so that her grandchildren will have a hopeful future in the Jewish homeland. My father was an inveterate communist," says Ludmilla. "At home, it was never mentioned that we were Jewish. Later in life, it became much more meaningful to me. I never dared dream this when I was young, but now my grandchildren are going to their new homeland." Emotionally, Ludmilla gives a Hanukkah menorah to her great-granddaughter Angelina. A reminder of her 'babushka' who stays behind in Ukraine.

After an emotional farewell and the long drive from Zaporozhe to Kiev, the family arrives at Boryspol Airport. A short panic ensues, as the date on the certificate of the mandatory PCR test is incorrect. Fortunately, the error is quickly corrected, and the Pismichenko family can finally leave. A long-cherished dream finally comes true for them.



25 Years Bring the Jews Home

A quarter of a century ago, Christians for Israel launched the *Bring the Jews Home* campaign. They found inspiration for this in the Bible, which speaks countless times about the return of the Jews to the land. After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, millions of Soviet Jews went on *Aliyah*. But also Jews from many other countries worldwide are also returning home. Rev Cornelis Kant, Executive Director of Christians for Israel International: "God is bringing His people home, prophecies are being fulfilled. We are grateful that we can be witnesses of this."

Koen Carlier has been the coordinator of Christians for Israel in Ukraine from the beginning: "We have a dedicated team of twenty people in Ukraine who visit Jewish communities on a daily basis, comforting the people and helping where they can. We assist Jews who want to make *Aliyah* with the necessary documents, trips to the embassy and the airport. We support poor families and Holocaust survivors with food parcels and a special sponsorship programme. But above all, we want to listen to them and stand by their side. Because of the support of many Christians around the world, we have been able to do this for 25 years now. And we are highly motivated to continue doing so!



Our driver Igor helps one of the youngsters checking final details. | Photo: Svetlana Soroka



Arriving in Israel. | Photo: Jewish Agency for Israel



Emotional moments as parents say goodbye to their children. | Photos: Svetlana Soroka

Will you join us? Help with the Return

Through your faithful support over the years, Christians for Israel has been able to help Jews from many countries return to Israel. Thank you for supporting this work both with your prayers and financially.

Ukraine

For NZ \$300, Koen Carlier and his team can help Jews in Ukraine with transportation to the consulate and the embassy, and later to the airport. Time and again it turns out that all these people find it very special that there are people who are willing to help them selflessly.

India

Jews in the north-east of India are also returning to Israel, the Bnei Menashe. We help them with the tickets for their journey, which consists of many layovers. The difference in purchasing power between Israel and India is so large that, without your help, they would never be able to go to Israel, because they simply cannot afford the NZ \$1460 trip themselves.

Other Countries

We help Jewish people from other places to make *Aliyah* as well, but because of security issues in some of these countries we cannot report on them. You may contribute a general donation to support this work.

If you would like to make a donation, Please complete the coupon on page 16.

From the Ends of the Earth

■ Raphael Jordan

National Leader | Christians for Israel Fiji

In the recent months between July to September, Christians for Israel (C4I) Fiji has been excited to explore opportunities that have opened up during this pandemic. In the distribution of our bi-monthly newspaper, *Israel & Christians Today*, it has become a bridge to meet new Christians who have come to support Israel.

Our fortnightly zoom prayer meetings see the fluctuation of numbers of attendants due to varying reasons. C4I Fiji forges ahead with our zoom prayer meetings regardless because we recognise the need to remain consistent and united in our prayers for Israel. We take comfort in the word of God, for it states in scripture (*Matt 18:20*), "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I with them".

An ongoing activity that has increased momentum is the promotion and distribution of C4I Fiji merchandise creating awareness about Israel, such as caps, face masks, t-shirts, embroidered polo shirts, bumper stickers, all tagged with Magen David Israel table flags and car flags.

We also contributed to the C4I International initiative to

work with the International Coalition for Israel and the European Coalition for Israel and be part of the Worldwide Celebration for Israel Marathon to wish the Jewish State a Happy New Year (*Rosh Hashanah; 5th September 2021*). A 15-minute video was compiled and made up of Fijian individuals and families who expressed their blessings to Israel and her people for the above project for 'God Loves Israel' (*Deuteronomy 7:8; Isaiah 43:4*).

C4I Fiji was also blessed to speak to the Global Network Discipleship (GND). Ana and I were really encouraged to talk to young adults about Israel for God's everlasting covenants with Israel, God will fulfil for Israel (*Jeremiah 32:37-41*) and the need to deny oneself to follow Christ. The audience was mainly from Fiji and across the South Pacific Islands and Alaska. It was an excellent opportunity



C4I Fiji team with Member of Parliament and SODELPA Party Leader, Viliame Gavoka. | Photos: C4I Fiji

to encourage young people to support and stand with Israel in this time, where both anti-Semitism and Replacement Theology are on the rise. The feedback we got from this meeting was positively overwhelming. We learnt that the idea to form GND came to the founders when they were visiting Jerusalem.

C4I Down Under

■ Bryce Turner

Executive Director | Christians for Israel New Zealand

It is a privilege to bring you an update on the work taking place in New Zealand. Even though we find ourselves on the very bottom of the world (well, almost), we – along with our brothers and sisters in the Pacific islands – are still very much alive and well, despite Covid19.

As this article is being written, New Zealand is again in the grip of a lockdown. Auckland (the largest city) remains at a 'level 4', the most secure level of restrictions, in an effort to stamp out the Delta variant. This means working from home and no meetings or events.

Whilst this makes life somewhat difficult, our passion for Israel does not diminish. We are grateful for the modern technology that allows us to keep informed and continue

to communicate with thousands of faithful supporters. Just starting to return to a normal schedule of speaking engagements and meetings, the latest lockdown once again sees us having to think through new ways of communicating our message, 'social media', whilst ensuring 'social distancing'. These words, unheard of only a couple of decades ago, are now prominent topics of discussion. Hours spent on internet meetings, poring over books and articles, followed by what seems like days typing on computers, has become the 'new normal'. We have recently been involved in a social media campaign, for example, encouraging New Zealanders to voice their opposition to the 'Durban 4' fiasco in New York when the New Zealand government refused to state their position. We were delighted when the minister finally announced that NZ would again boycott the event, acknowledging

the sham of racism and anti-Semitism that the conference has continued to be.

Our main work continues to be the production of the *Israel and Christians Today* paper. The team produce this publication from Auckland, coordinating with our editorial panel around the world. Thousands of printed copies are distributed throughout NZ and the Pacific Islands, as well as being adapted for circulation in other English-speaking countries and published online. Although on the opposite side of the world from our Israeli cousins, Christians for Israel New Zealand continues to advocate and inform, encouraging people to understand a true biblical understanding of Israel. We long for the day when we can once again take New Zealanders to visit the Holy Land in person.

...Continued from page 5

Iran and Israel Closer to an all-out-war

Israel then launched a media campaign to convince the world community that the PLO leader had never intended to pursue peace after signing the Oslo accords. However, the campaign made no impression. The other ships with weapons reached Lebanon, and from there, the weapons were shipped to Hamas in Gaza, Naji said.

Soleimani and Hamas

The Palestinian rocket and weapons industry was developed on Soleimani's orders in cooperation with 'the brothers in Syria'. The military training needed to use the weapons was also given in Iran, Syria, and Lebanon. Soleimani oversaw the whole operation and ordered the Palestinian terrorist movements to be able to produce weapons and rockets independently. The weapons and rockets that Soleimani sent to Gaza were packed in waterproof containers and thrown into the sea. Soleimani worked closely with Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and also arranged for the anti-tank missile to be made available to Hamas. This was used in the more recent wars against Israel.

Iranian Warships

Iran has also converted commercial ships into warships, which are now used to patrol the Mediterranean. The two large vessels carry helicopters, UAVs, and speedboats that the IRG also used to carry out attacks and piracy against Western nations and Israel ships.

According to Lenny Ben-David, the two ships were most recently spotted in the Strait of Gibraltar, where they were escorted in dense fog by Russian warships. Ben-David is a retired Israeli diplomat and researcher for the pro-Israel American lobby organisation AIPAC and The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs (JCPA).

Iran's Nuclear Programme

Then there is Iran's nuclear weapons programme that is advancing steadily. Since the talks with the Biden Administration about a revised nuclear agreement with the Islamic Republic stalled in June, Iran has made significant progress in its drive to produce a nuclear warhead for its long-range ballistic missiles. The Iranians stopped cooperating with the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna and are enriching uranium hexafluoride up to 60% now. The Iranians did this by breaching the 2015 landmark nuclear deal with six world powers and installed hundreds of advanced centrifuges in their nuclear facilities. The Iranians now also produce uranium metal, the material needed to make the core of a nuclear warhead. Producing uranium metal makes no sense if your nuclear programme is for civil purposes only, as Iran claims all the time. The Iranian Foreign Ministry announced at the end of September that the negotiations about the nuclear deal would be resumed within weeks. This must be regarded, however, as another ploy to buy time and nothing else.

Since Iran's new extremist president Ibrahim Raisi came

into office at the beginning of August, expectations about a restart of the negotiations between the US and Iran have hit a snag. Raisi, like Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, is not in favour of returning to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the official name of the nuclear accord.

Meanwhile, Israel continues to warn the world community that Iran is a little more than a half-year away from developing the nuclear warhead. We are not talking about enriching uranium up to 90%, something that will be the first step to producing the bomb. After that, it will take another half year to finish the process of assembling a nuclear warhead, according to Israeli experts.

Israel will retain its right to do whatever is needed to prevent Iran from producing a nuclear weapon and has warned that it will act alone if necessary. This doesn't necessarily mean that Israel will launch airstrikes on Iran's nuclear facilities. Through its spy agency Mossad, the Jewish state has already proven that it uses other means to frustrate the Iranian nuclear weapons programme. The past year, Mossad assassinated the head of this programme via a remote-controlled Belgium rifle that was assembled on a truck and launched cyberattacks that destroyed parts of Iran's nuclear facilities.

All this makes it clear that Iran is working hard on its plan to wipe Israel off the map and establish a second Persian empire and that Israel will do whatever is necessary to prevent this evil Iranian plan.



Spring is in the Air

■ Bryce Turner

New Zealand Executive Director | Christians for Israel NZ

Welcome to this edition of *Israel and Christians Today*. Thank you for joining us, as we bring you news and articles from New Zealand, the South Pacific, and around the world.

Coming from our office in Auckland – something of a ghost town still with Covid19 lockdown – we look forward to the coming summer. The weather is just starting to settle, Spring has officially begun, and before we know it we will be celebrating Christmas and looking forward to another year. Many people I speak with are still very reserved, not wanting to get too excited or make any large plans for the coming year. If nothing else, the Covid19 pandemic has caused us to reflect a little on our own insecurities, that we – ‘mankind’ – are perhaps not the all-powerful force that many had come to accept. Will it be another year of change, a year of ongoing uncertainty, of restrictions and a level of isolation as the world continues to battle the Covid19 virus? Who could have predicted even just a few years ago, how the world would change so rapidly?

It seems that no matter where you sit on the spectrum of opinion, there are some undeniable truths presented by the Covid19 pandemic. Completely aside from the stories of those who have recovered from a battle with the virus, irrespective of those who take opposite views of the actual physiological impact, the underlying component that has brought the world to a screeching halt is... Fear. We have seen this on our televisions from countries like India, with tens of thousands of people clambering for vaccines, testing and medical attention. Pictures of patients being supported on ventilators have challenged us all. Villages have run completely out of food, not because there isn't any food, but because fear of the virus prevents those growing, producing, harvesting, packing and distributing from doing their jobs. In a painful irony, it appears in many cases that where people are desperately short of food, only a few kilometres away food is rotting on the ground. Here at the bottom of the world, with outstanding – by world standards - medical systems and resources, a ‘system’ now well practised and prepared for lockdown, as the latest lockdown was announced we still watched as tens of thousands stormed the supermarkets, buying... toilet paper by the gross. In

the fullness of time, there will no doubt be books written and documentaries made, analysing the worldwide response to this pandemic. It will be compared with previous pandemics, and there will no doubt be much reflection on the decisions made and how effective – or otherwise – the international response was. Social media has been full of amateur critique for some time already!

As a bible-based community, the Christians for Israel family and supporters all over the world really shouldn't be surprised. The Bible tells us that there are going to be challenges, that all kinds of events will take place as we see God's plan coming to fruition. Exactly when and how this will happen? That's a topic for a whole separate discussion. Suffice to say, it will happen. To me this is an encouraging reminder of who is actually in control, because it clearly isn't mankind, no matter how brilliant we (think we) have become. The Bible also speaks very clearly of another part of God's plan, the return of the Jews to Israel. And so for those of us involved in supporting Israel, watching God's plan unfolding right before our eyes is very powerful. Supporting Israel does come at a price. Even here in NZ, the anti-Israel brigade is getting louder. As we have seen elsewhere around the world, facts don't seem to matter when someone is spouting an impassioned, emotional – but inevitably fictitious – narrative through a megaphone or the modern equivalent, social media. This was painfully apparent recently when it appeared – until the 11th hour – that the New Zealand government was still planning to send a delegation to the ‘Durban 4’ conference in New York. Based on the racist farce of rampant antisemitism that the first three Durban events have been, it seemed a ‘no-brainer’ that New Zealand would join with our allies – nearly forty other countries - in boycotting the event; an event that has become a platform for racial hatred, disguised as a conference against racism. Congratulations must go to Minister Hon. Nanaia Mahuta for making the right call, ultimately



Lupins blooming on Lake Tekapo in springtime. | Photo: Shutterstock

recognising that the racist conference was not in keeping with New Zealand's stance against racism, and therefore joining our allies in boycotting it. Thank you to the many concerned citizens who wrote to the minister to express this view.

Our New Zealand edition of *Israel and Christians Today* once again brings you some fantastic articles and commentary from around the world, especially for our New Zealand and South Pacific readers. On the Durban conference, international lawyers and directors of *thinc*. explain why the conference and ‘BDS’ are so wrong. Joanna Moss brings us another outstanding piece on Israel the refugee nation, and we are delighted to bring news of the launch of the Indigenous Coalition for Israel (ICFI) here in New Zealand. As our Jewish brothers and sisters have just celebrated the ‘High Holy Days’, we bring you some perspective on the rich biblical and historical basis for this special time in the Hebrew calendar, including a pastoral insight from Keith Buxton in Australia.

As always, we trust you will enjoy this edition of *Israel and Christians Today*. I am grateful to have the opportunity to share such important information, and my personal thanks go to the team that make it all happen – especially our managing editor Cathy who drives it all so capably. From our team, thank you so much for your interest and support of Israel.

COMING SOON

2022 CALENDAR & COOKBOOK

Christians for Israel New Zealand 2022 Calendar and Israeli & Friends Cookbook

CALENDAR: Shows Jewish & NZ holidays

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- Large date area for written notes
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Israel as a Refuge Nation

■ **Joanna Moss**

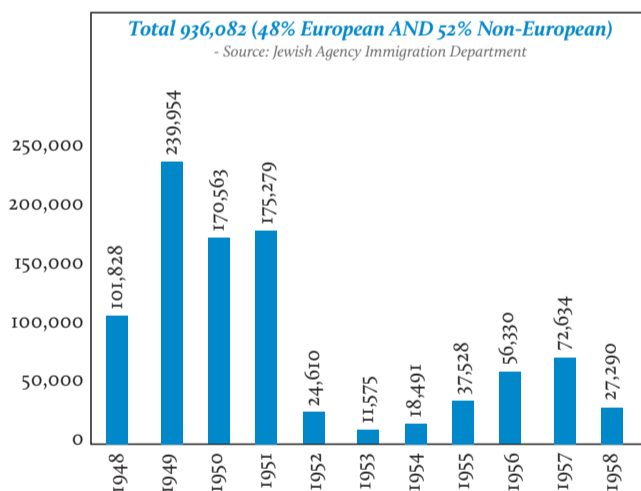
NZ Friends of Israel (NZFOI) | Wellington

If someone asked you to state a case for Israel, would you be able to do so based on Israel being a refuge nation? How about Zionism or the Bible? Focusing on the refuge nation basis, you could point to holocaust survivors as an obvious example, but what about other examples? When we look at it chronologically, we can see that since its inception as a state, Israel has been a refuge for different groups of Jews at different times. A need we do not envisage will change. As we delve into the details of post-1948 Israel remember that some Jews can see trouble coming and can easily leave their lands. Others are exiled or forced out through war, persecution or denial of livelihood, and some simply need rescuing.

Background

Israel's early state history is a tale of immigration from two regions – firstly Europe and secondly the Middle East and Africa, each region making up about half of the new arrivals in the first decade. In Europe, it was a case of what was to be done with the Holocaust survivors and displaced Jews in the face of persistent antisemitism. There was a great deal of sympathy for their plight from Western and other nations including NZ, and hence the case was easily made for Israel as a refuge nation. Lesser known to the European and English-speaking world was the plight of the Middle Eastern and African Jews, whose predicament changed vastly once the notion of a Jewish state came on the radar.

Number of Immigrants to Israel in Its First Decade (1948-58)
Israel's population doubled in size in the first decade.



Holocaust Survivors and European Displaced Persons (DPs)

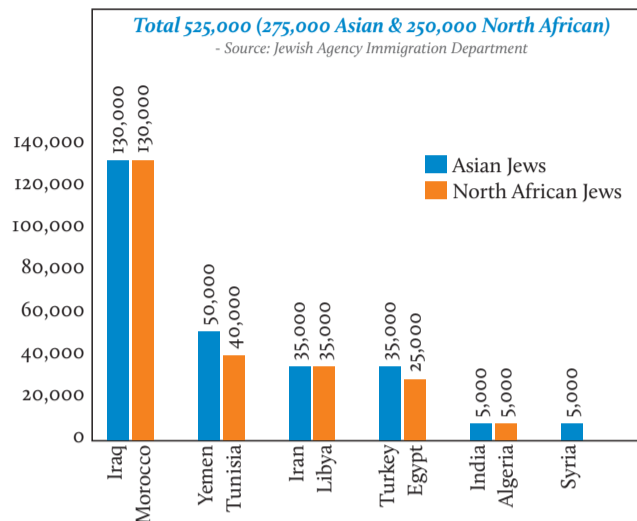
European refugees comprised of 160,000 Holocaust Survivors plus 300,000 displaced persons who had been in countries that came under Soviet control, e.g. The Baltic states, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Many of these escaped through various means to get to Israel. Another much smaller group were those who had already escaped to North and South America temporarily, but wanted to move to Israel.

Non-European

The Holocaust wasn't exclusively European in scope. Hitler extended his killing arm into North Africa, and there Jews were sent to camps and died in the desert. Some Jews were deported to France. Others left post-war from former French colonies for France as many were previously granted French citizenship. Many of these families have subsequently moved to Israel in recent years.

Plans were afoot in 1947 to 'solve' the Palestine problem culminating in the famous two-state partition plan - Resolution 181 in November 1947. At that time, about 1 million Jews lived peacefully in Arab countries, where they had lived for thousands of years alongside Moslem neighbours as well as Christian and other minorities. But this peace was about to be shattered by the 1947 vote, statehood, the 1948-49 War of Independence and the 1956 Sinai War only worsened their plight.

Asian and North African Jews who fled Israel 1948-58



Many Jews found their property was confiscated, their bank accounts blocked, and they were the target of riots. Others faced laws that made their businesses untenable. Consequently, many fled for their lives with little belongings, some with only the clothes they had on. Their trek across foreign lands to Israel also proved problematic and dangerous. Not forgotten today, in November 2014, the Israeli government dedicated 30 November annually as a day to honour the Jewish refugees who were expelled from Arab countries following 1948's Arab-Israeli War.

The Operations

Some of the refugees were rescued in dramatic operations given relevant biblical code names. These missions were undertaken by the IDF primarily in conjunction with other state services like Mossad. Often the Jews who stayed behind were too old to move, and today their numbers are dwindling rapidly. Many countries with formerly significant Jewish populations are almost Jew-free. Here are the main operations:

- **Operation Magic Carpet (Yemen): Jun 1949 - Sep 1950**
Between June 1949 and September 1950, *Operation 'Magic Carpet'* planes brought virtually the entire Yemenite Jewish community - almost 50,000 people - to Israel as refugees. Some Jews from Aden were also rescued.
- **Operation Ezra and Nehemiah (Iraq): 1950-51**
110,000 Iraqi Jews came to Israel in *Operations Ezra and Nehemiah*. At the same time, 20,000 Jews were smuggled out of Iraq through Iran, which was friendly to Israel at that time.
- **Operation Cyrus (Iran): 1952**
Not long after, in 1952, *Operation Cyrus* brought approximately 30,000 Iranian Jews to Israel.

1960s Refuge

Aden 1959 saw another 3,000 Jews flee to Israel while many more went to the USA and England. A smaller, continuous migration was allowed to continue into 1962; then, a civil war halted any further exodus. Today, there are no Jews left in Aden.

In 1963, at least 100,000 Moroccan Jews were forced out from their homes in purges.

- **Operation Yachin (Morocco): 1961-64**
Mossad's *Operation Yachin* brought 100,000 to Israel by plane and ship via France and Italy in exchange for payments of \$50 million. Nearly 50,000 Jews sought refuge in France and the Americas. Some of those who went to France are now seeking refuge in Israel. The Moroccan King is sympathetic to the Jews. Today Morocco has the largest North African Jewish community left 2,000 - 3,000 and is considered the most Jew-friendly country from that region. Moroccan Jews make up the second-largest immigrant group (circa 500,000) after the Russians.

Post-1967 War

This second major victory set off another wave of persecutions across the region, causing many remaining Jews to flee. This was especially so for Libyan and Egyptian Jews.

1970s Refuge

Post WWII Jews struggled to leave the Soviet Union – think Refuseniks. Some had to be bought. Despite a brief spike in 1972-73 when around 30,000 left, numbers were a mere trickle. This was the era when Romania and the Soviet Union traded Jews for hard currency putting a price on freedom.

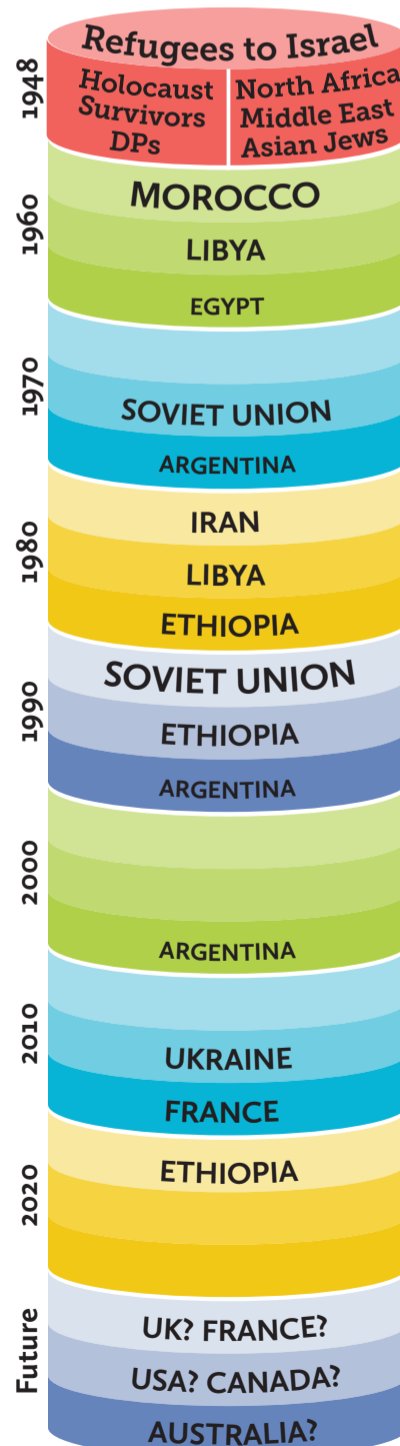
The Pinochet years (1974-1990) were turbulent in Chile, and many Jews left, halving the community by 1997. Today, resident Palestinians number around 300,000, making it the largest community outside the Middle East. In 1976 political conditions deteriorated in Argentina and made life difficult for many prominent Jews. This was the beginning of the exodus from Argentina, both political and economic in nature.

1980s Refuge

During WWII, Iran housed an array of Jewish refugees from Europe, Soviet Central Asia, Iraq, and the Caucasus. Following the 1979 Revolution, 30,000 Jews left within months. Others followed, some directly to Israel and another group via a third country.

- **Operation Moses (Ethiopia): 21 Nov 1984 - 5 Jan 1985**
This operation involved rescuing 8,000 Ethiopian Jews from Sudan during a civil war and famine. Later, *Operation Joshua* was led by the US on 22 March 1985 with another 500-plus.

Continued on page 4...



In every decade since inception one community or another needs to seek refuge. Some groups are large and others small. The few gaps indicate the small number of years when Israel was not needed as a refuge nation.



Why 'Durban' and BDS is Wrong

■ Andrew Tucker & Pieter Hoogendoorn

Directors | The Hague Initiative for International Cooperation (*thinc.*)

More than 15 countries, including the Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Germany, Italy, France, Bulgaria, Israel, the UK and the US, decided to boycott the 'Durban IV' conference held in New York in late September.

They did so because, as Foreign Minister Sigrid Kaag informed the Dutch House of Representatives, they "do not intend to participate in the Durban IV meeting, given the historical burden of the Durban process, the risk of a repeat of the misuse of this platform for antisemitic expressions and the disproportionate and one-sided focus on Israel as reflected in the original Durban Declaration."

In recent months, many governments have been pressured to participate in the 'Durban IV' conference to be held in September 2021 in New York, which is intended to mark the 20th anniversary of the Durban Declaration. The 'Durban Declaration' of 2001 laid the foundation for the current 'Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions' (BDS) movement.

The countries that boycotted Durban IV all realised that the Durban Declaration was morally reprehensible. They were right. It is also deeply problematic under international law.

Durban

The NGO Forum of the UN World Conference against Racism, held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001 ('Durban'), was designed to combat racism and discrimination. This forum turned into a manifestation of open antisemitism and Israel-hatred. Israel was accused of racism, genocide and apartheid policies. Subsequent Durban conferences in 2009 and 2011 also saw their antisemitic incidents, with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad declaring in 2009 that "world Zionism is the personification of racism".

The NGO Forum statement and action programme explicitly called for the use of legal procedures and economic measures to advance the political war against Israel. One of the resolutions at the end of the conference read:

"the imposition of a policy of complete and total isolation of Israel as an apartheid state, as in the case of South Africa, which means the imposition of compulsory and comprehensive sanctions and embargoes, the complete cessation of all ties (diplomatic, economic, social, aid, military cooperation and training) between all states and Israel."

With this statement, the current BDS movement was, in fact, born.

The BDS Movement

The BDS movement was officially launched in 2005 by 171 Palestinian NGOs. Relying on Durban and the precedent of the successful anti-apartheid movement that overthrew the white regime in South Africa, they called for economic and diplomatic pressure on Israel until it submits to Palestinian demands for self-determination, "...in accordance with international law."

The core idea of the BDS movement is that Israel is an illegal state because it was founded on an injustice, namely a racial distinction between Jews and other people, as expressed in the 1975 UN resolution 'Zionism is racism'.

The BDS movement denies the legitimacy of Zionism as an expression of the Jewish people's right to self-determination. Their method is to encourage and/or pressure governments and businesses to boycott products made in occupied territories, divest from Israeli businesses, and impose sanctions on Israel. The ultimate goal of the BDS movement is thus the dismantling of the State of Israel as an expression of Jewish national identity. Essentially, the BDS movement seeks to 'turn back the clock' to the situation as it existed in 1918. This is not possible; in the meantime, based on a series of binding international instruments, the Jewish State of Israel has come into existence, which has the right to be treated as a



President Isaac Herzog speaks to the Global Forum on Combating Antisemitism in Jerusalem, on 13 July 2021. Photo: GPO

sovereign state, entitled (inter alia) to political inviolability and territorial integrity, just like other states.

International Law

The BDS movement claims that boycott, divestment and sanctions are necessary to pressure Israel to comply with international law, but international law does not support the claims of the BDS movement.

On the contrary, both the BDS movement and the actions of states under the influence of the BDS movement violate the fundamental rights of Israel and the Jewish people under international law.

Here we highlight some of the issues.

'Apartheid'

It has become popular to accuse Israel of being an apartheid state. In April 2021, Human Rights Watch (HRW) published a report titled *A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution*, in which HRW 'concludes' that Israeli leaders should be prosecuted for 'apartheid' and 'persecution' because of the oppression and discrimination against Palestinians by Israel, both in Israel itself and in the 'West Bank'.

Apartheid is a crime against humanity under the 'Rome Statute' (the Statute of the International Criminal Court), where it is defined as "widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, with knowledge of the attack ... inhuman acts ... committed in the context of an institutionalised regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any another racial group or groups and committed with the intention to maintain that regime" (*Article 7, Rome Statute*).

No person or state has been prosecuted for the crime of apartheid as it is defined in the Rome Statute, so there are no precedents. The definition sets a very high bar. The HRW report created its own definition of 'apartheid', which differed from that in the Rome Statute.

The HRW report basically created its own definition of apartheid.

Even if it were established that there is widespread and systematic discrimination between Jews and others in Israel (which is highly questionable), the claim that Israel maintains an 'institutionalised regime' of 'systematic oppression and domination', with the intention of oppressing non-Jews, in no way takes into account the history and context of Israel itself and Judea and Samaria.

Another important point is that the Jewish people do not constitute a 'racial group' within the meaning of article 7 of the Rome Statute. Jews come from a diversity of racial backgrounds, so the Jewish people as a whole cannot be regarded as a 'race'.

The 'Palestinian Territories'

The BDS movement is based on the idea that Israel is illegitimately occupying 'Palestinian territory'. This is false. The international community decided that based on the San Remo Resolution (1920), the Mandate for Palestine (1922) and the Covenant of the League of Nations (1922), that the Jewish people should have their own 'home' in the land of Palestine – a home which would respect the civil and religious rights of all communities in the land. This decision covered the whole territory of Palestine, including Jerusalem and what was later called the 'West Bank' (Judea and Samaria). The Arab people (of whom the Arab Palestinians claim to be a part) were granted the rest of the Middle East. In fact, in 1921, even part of Palestine was carved out to become a home for specifically (and exclusively) the Arab Palestinians (Transjordan).

Article 80 of the UN Charter ensured that the rights granted under the Mandate with respect to establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine remained valid, despite the termination of the Mandate itself and the replacement of the League of Nations by the United Nations.

Under these instruments of international law relating to Palestine, Israel has a legitimate claim to sovereignty beyond the 'Green Line' and the right to negotiate this territorial sovereignty with another entity. Indeed, Israel and the PLO committed themselves in the 'Oslo Accords' to negotiate on issues such as borders, the status of 'settlements' and Jerusalem.

Israel's Sovereignty

Israel is a State and a member of the United Nations. Like all other UN Member States, Israel has the right to territorial integrity and political independence and deserves to be treated equally with all UN Member States. This right is enshrined in the United Nations Charter and customary international law.

Israel's right to territorial integrity and security is also expressed in UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. These resolutions prescribe peace negotiations based on "the cessation of all claims or states of war and respect and recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised borders, free from threats or acts of violence".

The PLO – now 'officially' Israel's negotiating partner – consistently denies the right of the Jewish people to exist as a sovereign nation and insists on using violence and terrorism against the Jewish people. Both are contraventions of international law.



...Continued from page 3

Why 'Durban' and BDS is Wrong

Until an agreement is reached with the PLO, Israel has the right to retain control of the 'West Bank' and the Golan Heights and defend itself against threats to its national security, territorial integrity and political independence.

The Palestinian 'Right to Self-Determination'

The right of the Arab Palestinian people to self-determination does not constitute a 'right to a state'. Whether or not the Arab Palestinians will have their own state depends on many factors. A Palestinian state can only come about if a peace treaty is first concluded in which a balance (compromise) is reached between the claimed Arab Palestinian right to self-determination and the pre-existing rights of the Jewish people and the State of Israel, including the right to secure borders.

The Palestinian 'Right of Return'

The Palestinians insist on a "right of return", i.e. the right of all (now over 5 million) Palestinian "refugees" to return to the homes their ancestors left (forcibly or otherwise) in the 1947-1949 war. Persons who are considered refugees under general international law do not have the right to return to the areas they fled. Rather, the host countries have certain obligations to take them in. Thus, even if Arab Palestinians were considered "refugees" under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention (which is not the case for most of them), they have no "right of return" under general international law. Neither does the special UNRWA refugee system (established specifically for Palestinian refugees) confer a "right" of return. UN General Assembly resolution 194 (1948) states that "the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of

or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible". This is a non-binding resolution expressing a political perspective; it does not confer a legal "right of return", as is often claimed.

Antisemitism

The BDS movement and the claim that the Jewish state of Israel is a racist 'apartheid state' are forms of antisemitism as defined by the International Holocaust Remembrance Association (IHRA). The IHRA working definition states:

"Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."

According to IHRA, this includes "denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g. by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour."

BDS - Far and Near

Although a number of countries formally reject the Durban Declaration, and with it the BDS movement, 'Durban' is today approved by a majority of UN member states. The Jewish State of Israel is increasingly accused of apartheid and discrimination, and pressure is mounting to isolate and punish Israel for its 'violations of international law'.

Banks, pension funds and other companies do not want to do business with Jews living in Judea and Samaria or with parties associated with them. In recent months, there has been much ado about Ben & Jerry's decision to stop selling ice cream to shopkeepers in Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria, on the basis that all settlements are illegal under international law.

These examples show that 'Durban' today enjoys popular support in many Western countries. More and more

people believe that Israel is guilty of systematic oppression of Palestinians.

Zionism - Problem or Solution?

It is important to realise that the BDS movement is not just about removing the Israeli military regime in the 'West Bank'. It is also not about creating a viable 'Palestinian state' adjacent to Israel. It is about challenging Israel's fundamental right to exist as an expression of Jewish national identity.

The ultimate goal of the BDS movement is the replacement of Israel as a Jewish state with one state in which Palestinian Arabs will be in the majority. That is why the right of return is a central tenet of the BDS movement. It is clear that this would mean the end of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state in which there is room for all inhabitants regardless of their ethnicity or religion.

This overlooks two important facts. First, Israel is the only true democracy in the Middle East. It protects freedom of religion and provides a safe haven for all minority groups. If Israel were to disappear, it is likely to be replaced by an Islamic regime that will be hostile to the rights of Christians, Jews and others. Christian Arab minorities in East Jerusalem have already expressed fear of becoming a persecuted minority within an Islamic Palestinian State.

Second, Israel has not only generated wealth for all of its citizens (Jewish and Arab), it has become a motor and facilitator of growth and development in the region. A reflection of the region's changing dynamics is that several Muslim countries (UAE, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan) entered into the 'Abraham Accords' with Israel in 2020, committing to peace, normalisation of relations and economic, religious and cultural cooperation.

The Hague Initiative for International Cooperation (thinc.) advocates for the fair application of international law in the Middle East. For more information visit: www.thinc.info

...Continued from page 2

Israel as a Refuge Nation

1990s Refuge

The Berlin Wall came down in 1989, bringing with it an exodus from former Soviet countries. 1990 saw 185,227 arrivals, and in 1991 a further 147,839. They were desperate to get out. Overall, a million would come from 1989-2006 - the largest single immigrant group. Some of these immigrants came to Israel then went on to other countries. The need for refuge isn't always final.

- **Operation Solomon (Ethiopia): 24-25 May 1991**

Again political insecurity in Addis Ababa raised questions about the safety of Beta Israel. Over 36 hours in just 34 flights using heavily-laden El Al stripped-down planes, Israelis rescued 14,325 Jews, a tremendous feat.

2000s Refuge

From 1999-2002 Argentina was suffering from an economic and political crisis. Some Jews decided their future and their children's future was so uncertain it warranted moving to Israel. The unresolved 1994 fatal attack on the Jewish community centre, killing 85 people and injuring hundreds, reinforced the view that Argentina was no longer a safe place. However, Israel's high cost of living has deterred them and some other South and Central Americans from making *Aliyah*, including South Africans, raising questions over at what point does it become imperative?

In 2007, the Tehran Jewish Committee rejected an offer from Israel's government to pay each family of remaining Jews in Iran up to \$60,000 to help them leave the country. Today about 10,000 remain. Since Israel was re-established, over 134,000 Iranian Jews have settled in Israel.

Persecution and poor economic conditions coupled with President Putin's invasion of Crimea and a civil war has promoted a jump in immigrants from Ukraine. The Jewish Agency and Christian groups have been active in helping rescue and providing immigration support.

Increasing numbers of radical Muslims and growing persecution of French Jews began the exodus. What makes this exodus significant is the anticipation and staged nature for the wealthy. For some, it begins with the purchase of a property in Israel; children do their military service and stay on. Families spend holidays then longer periods where possible. Lastly, the elderly leave. For others, it is an antisemitic trigger point or the realisation their children have no future in France.

2020s Refuge

- **Operation Rock of Israel: 2020**

The Ethiopian Falash Mura are not on the same footing as Beta Israel previously evacuated to Israel, who qualify for an automatic right to Israeli citizenship. However, the plight of the Falash Mura deteriorated when fighting between the Ethiopian government and Tigray forces threatened to spread to Gondar city. Compassion set in

for these people. Several hundred were taken to Israel widening the scope of refuge.

Future

The French situation is a red flag to other western nations. Ditto the Belgium situation where many of the non-Orthodox have already left and the government has removed state security for Jewish institutions. British Jews are now contemplating their future. How much anti-Semitism is too much? Economic refugees may also become more prevalent too as rising inflation and Covid bite. For orthodox families, costs matter and the cost of a Jewish education may be the tipping point between staying and leaving. Universities may become too hostile for Jewish students prompting young Jews to switch to study in Israel. It's easier to emigrate when you are young. Evidence shows the refuge motive is a key component of immigration to Israel. Refuge has a number of subcategories based on circumstances. Also, it's not necessarily a forever state, but that does not invalidate the need for Israel. Remember, Israelis have moved offshore knowing that they can go back whenever they want. That's fine if you can get back, but what if you can't? Covid has shown us that possibility and risk.

For those Jews who have been heavily critical of Israel, will the door be open to them in their time of need, or will they be like the spies and the complainers in the wilderness who never made it to the Promised Land? Only time will tell.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST NOW INVITED

Journey to Israel

Tentatively March 2022

At this stage we are looking for 'Expressions of Interest' in joining our tour and then later, when it is required, we offer the security of a small, 100% refundable deposit.

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

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



Indigenous Coalition for Israel

■ Dr Sheree Trotter

Author | Israel Institute of New Zealand

The Indigenous Coalition For Israel (ICFI) was recently launched here in *Aotearoa*, New Zealand. It is an international Christian initiative whose goal is to raise a collective indigenous voice in support of Israel, recognising that Jews are indigenous to the land of Israel and a people to whom we owe a deep debt of gratitude. ICFI is partnering with the European Coalition for Israel, an organisation established in 2003. ECFI has initiated events such as the first Holocaust Remembrance Day at the European Parliament in 2005, and in 2011 it established the Forum for Cultural Diplomacy at the United Nations.

The seed for an indigenous coalition was planted in 2016. Green MP Marama Davidson joined a flotilla protest to Gaza, claiming to be standing in solidarity with the women of Gaza 'as an indigenous woman'. This proved to be a pivotal moment for me. I recognised that aligning indigenous people against Israel stood in opposition to the call to bless Abraham and his descendants rather than curse or esteem lightly. I wrote an article challenging Marama Davidson and later had an unplanned opportunity to speak to her in person. Unfortunately, she was not interested in debating the issues. This conversation highlighted the need for an organisation through which indigenous people can stand with and speak up for Israel.

It is our hope that through writing, speaking, and direct engagement with indigenous leaders, we will be able to educate and equip indigenous communities and cultivate commitment to Israel. ICFI will support and promote relevant indigenous initiatives, produce research-based resources and media, and seek to foster and strengthen indigenous connections and collaboration. Our desire is that our collective support for Israel and the Jewish people will contribute to the fight against antisemitism worldwide.

There have been notable indigenous supporters of Israel, but they have largely gone unheard in the prevailing culture. This has meant that a false narrative concerning the Israel-Palestinian conflict has easily taken hold amongst indigenous peoples - and this has frequently bled into antisemitism.

The relationship between the world's indigenous peoples and the Jewish people flows naturally because Jews are indigenous to Israel with more than 3,000 years of unbroken connection to the land. They display many traits of indigeneity; deep ties to their ancient homeland,



Sheree Trotter is Māori (Te Arawa) and holds a PhD in History from the University of Auckland. Her thesis was on Zionism. In 2012 she co-founded the Holocaust and Antisemitism Foundation, Aotearoa, New Zealand. Sheree is a researcher and writer whose areas of special interest include NZ, Jewish and Māori history.

recognition of the importance of *whakapapa* (genealogy) and cultural continuity, and of course, the remarkable persistence and revival of their ancient language.

For Māori, the relationship with the Jewish people has deep roots. From the time of early European settlement, intermarriage occurred between Jew and Māori. On a spiritual and historical plane, Māori in the 19th century identified with the suffering of the Israelites and this provided inspiration for the development of unique Māori prophetic movements. Some, such as *Ringatū*, saw themselves as Jews. Theories circulated about Māori being one of the 'Lost Tribes of Israel', and while such ideas were debunked, missionaries to New Zealand were so fascinated by the similarities between Māori and Jew that they compiled lists of shared characteristics. Hebrew place names like Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Judea sprang up around the country, and many Māori took on biblical names.

In the twentieth century, the involvement of the Māori in World Wars I and II created strong affinities with the land of Israel and its people. The revival of Hebrew provided inspiration for *Te Reo* (Māori language) advocates, and the Israeli *ulpan* (school for the intensive study of Hebrew) system of full immersion inspired the

establishment of *Kohanga Reo* language nests. The Māori Queen, Dame Te Atairangikaahu, showed her affection for Israel by participating in the Jerusalem 3000 celebrations in the Waikato in 1995, and this support continues with King Te Arikini Tūheitia.

Following New Zealand's shameful cosponsorship of UN Resolution 2334 late in 2016 and the subsequent withdrawal of the Israeli Ambassador from New Zealand, *Ngapuhi kaumatua* Pat Ruka was to lead the way in welcoming back the ambassador. *Matua* Pat has established an ongoing relationship between *Ngapuhi* and Israel, organising several hui and other initiatives.

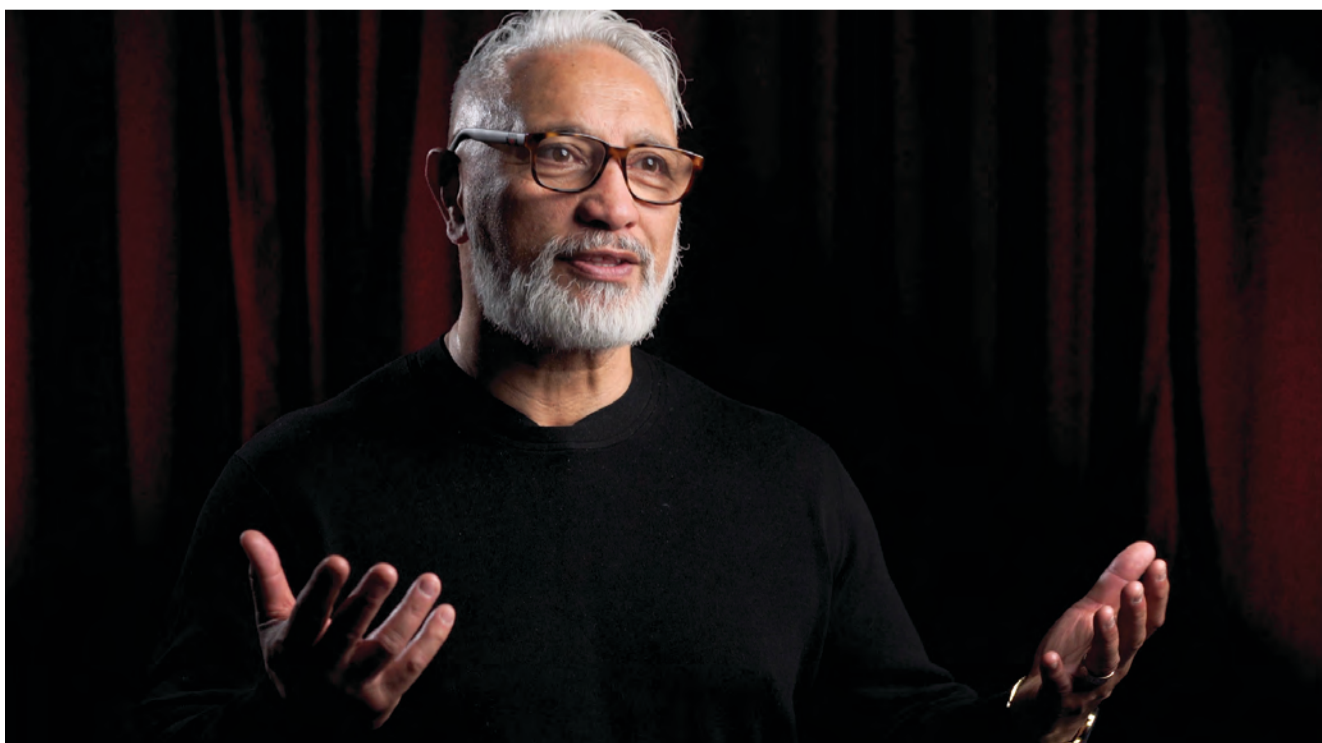
Pat Ruka remembers his forebears' stories of deep regard for the Jewish people. Many Māori in the 19th century had embraced Christianity but became disillusioned by the inconsistency and hypocrisy of the *Pākehā* (Europeans), who seemed, in some cases, not to take their own beliefs seriously. After much discussion on the *Marae*, Pat Ruka's forebears came to the conclusion that although the fruit was bad, the seed remained a good seed. They concluded that 'the Jews are the children of Abraham with promise'. Following World War II, Ruka's forebears travelled to the capital city, Wellington, to offer the government *iwi* (tribal) land for Jewish refugees. His *tupuna* were told to 'go back to their hovels'.

Many Pacific nations also share a love for Israel, and we hope to extend our coalition out to those nations, to the indigenous peoples of Australia, North America and throughout the world.

I am honoured to co-direct the Indigenous Coalition For Israel with former cabinet minister Hon Alfred Ngaro. Alfred has mixed Jewish/Cook Island heritage and has long been committed to Israel. In 2017 he produced an '*I Am A Zionist*' video which received hundreds of thousands of views worldwide. We are also joined on our Advisory Council by Alfred's wife, Moka, along with esteemed members Dr Ate Moala, *Ngapuhi kaumatua* Pat Ruka, and Brad Haami. Each is respected in their fields of expertise and influence.

We hope to present a more balanced picture of Israel and challenge the false narrative that she is a colonialist aggressor and oppressor. We welcome all to be involved in our work. While we believe our indigenous voice brings a unique perspective, we will value the support and engagement of all who share our vision.

We encourage readers to visit the Indigenous Coalition For Israel website and to sign up for our newsletter: www.indigenouscoalition.org. ICFI is also active on Facebook and will appear on other platforms in due course.



Hon Alfred Ngaro was a New Zealand House of Representatives member from 2011 to 2020 and the first Cook Islander elected to Parliament in New Zealand. As an MP, Alfred re-established the Parliamentary Friends of Israel Group. He served as a cabinet minister and was an active advocate on social issues.



Biblical Harp Workshop in Ruins

Massive forest fires raged in Israel in August. After three days of battling the wildfires, the biggest fire in over ten years, the fire was finally under control, and residents could return. More than 2,000 people had been evacuated.

The huge wildfire destroyed 6,200 acres of land in the Jerusalem Hills. There are growing suspicions that the fire was deliberately started. Houses were destroyed by the fire; others lost their life's work.

Micha and Shoshanna Harari

Micha and Shoshanna Harari, residents of the small *moshav* of Ramat Razel, discovered that their Biblical Harp workshop and gallery, King David Harps, with all the instruments that were made by hand over the past 40 years, had been completely destroyed by the fire.

"Everything was burnt, the gallery and the workshop. There is nothing left of it," said Micha. Harari had to flee for his life as the flames raced towards the community.

"When the fire broke out, I was in my workshop, which is 150 metres away from the house," he said. "I saw the flames getting closer. My wife and I immediately fled. We didn't even have time to pack a bag or bring clothes or food. We had to leave as soon as possible."

No Compensation

He posted images on his Facebook page of the approaching flames and the devastation left behind.

"When I saw my life's work burn to the ground, I was crushed," Micha said. "Everything is completely gone; nothing is left of it."

Soshana explains about their work: "For these past 40 years, we have been building the Biblical Harps of David



Shoshanna and Micah Harari at their burned workshop in Moshav Ramat Razel, near Jerusalem. | Photo: Flash90

according to the information of the Bible, archaeology, and the ancient Jewish writings. When we first started to build them, they were declared to be the first Biblical harps to be made in 2000 years. They are our national instrument and one of the recognisable symbols of Israel."

The insurance company had refused to insure the workshop because of its proximity to the forest and the fire risk that entails. "They understood before the disaster

that there was a risk that such a fire could occur here". For this reason, the Harari's will receive no compensation for their destroyed life's work.

The Harari's are determined to rebuild their workshop: "With hope in our hearts, we are now moving into a renewal phase to make this, instead of a tragedy, a new opportunity... to bring King David Harps back in an even better way."

Letters from our Projects

April 18, 2021
Christians for Israel
The Netherlands

As I look back at 2020, as we all look back over a difficult year, it is clear this is a year we will long remember. Who would have believed that in the 21st century, we would be at the mercy of an international pandemic that would shut down whole economies and keep millions of people at home? And the statistics of illness and mortality from this past year are sobering indeed.

Today, I write to you from a place of optimism and hope. Thanks to the enormously successful vaccination campaign, Israel is coming out of this difficult time. There is so much yet to do and so many people to help who suffered greatly during this time, but at least there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Thank God, things are looking so much better today than they did just a few months ago.

But throughout this terrible time, our Christian friends did not abandon us. Even as they were struggling with enormous challenges in their own countries, they did not forget to reach out to the people of Israel and support their needs.

During this past year, we received overwhelming support from Christians for Israel for food and other vital necessities for needy families. We also received ongoing support for so many important needs in communities across Judea and Samaria, including senior citizens programs, programs for special-needs children and protection for all of the people living in these most vulnerable areas of Israel. You continued to give and you gave so generously.

And I want to thank you so much for all you have done.

May God bless you and all of your wonderful supporters with happiness, prosperity and above all, good health.

Sincerely,

Sondra Oster Baras
Director

Jerusalem, 21 April 2021
Christenen voor Israel Nederland
Christen an der Seite Israels Österreich
Christen an der Seite Israels Schweiz
Christians for Israel Australia
Christians for Israel New Zealand

Jerusalem, April 21 2021

Dear Friends of Christians for Israel,

Thank you so much for your ongoing support of ADI (formerly ALEH).

As we reflect on Israel's Memorial Day and Independence Day this past week, we remember those who gave their lives so that our people would live a life of goodness and prosperity in their own land. We also thank you, our partners today in caring for Israel's most vulnerable, for empowering them to enjoy a quality, meaningful life filled with growth and opportunity.

Indeed, your support helped carry us through the pandemic and ensured the safety of our children – our most important priority during the past year. The massive use of personal protective equipment, the private transportation offered to workers to keep them minimally exposed, and the extra medical and rehabilitative equipment purchased for each small group of children were all made possible thanks to your understanding of the urgency of shielding our residents from the virus.

As we slowly and cautiously move forward toward blessed routine, we feel so blessed to have earned your friendship and concern.

Indeed, the light that shines from ADI is a bright spot that keeps us focused on the good and the positive, and gives us hope for a better tomorrow.

Together with your families, communities and loved ones, may you continue to enjoy many more years in good health, happiness, and blessed activity in creating a better, more caring society.

May you always be on the side of those who can give and provide and may the Godly blessing from *Maleachi 3:10* be realized in your organizations, families and businesses.

In deep gratitude and friendship,

Shraga Evers

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Prophetic Meaning: Hebrew Year 5782

■ Pastor Enoch Lavender

Living Way Christian Network | Melbourne, Australia

The number 5782 may not appear to carry any specific meaning to our western mindsets; however, in Hebrew, any number correlates with each of the Hebrew letters, which in turn carry within themselves a range of meanings. Does the meaning of the year 5782 carry prophetic insights into the year ahead?

Examining 5782 - Back to the '80s

According to the Jewish way of reckoning time, we are in the decade of the '5780s' – symbolised by the Hebrew letter *Pey* (the number 80). The letter *Pey* symbolises an open mouth and has to do with our words and our language.

The number '2' in 5782, correlates to the 2nd letter of the Hebrew Alphabet – known as 'bet'. The Bible begins with the letter 'bet', and the Rabbis have noted that as you read the Bible in Hebrew from right to left, it appears that all of the Scriptures come out of what appears like the open 'mouth' of this first letter *bet*. Interestingly, the Jewish sages have concluded that God used the letter *bet* to create the world and that the entire creation came out of this one letter.



While this idea might seem foreign to us as New Testament believers, it begins to make sense as we understand that this 2nd letter of the Alphabet points us to the 2nd person of the God head, the Son of God. The letter *bet* is used in the word 'ben' meaning 'son', and according to John, the Son was there with God 'in the beginning' and 'all things were made through Him' (*John 1:1-3*). It seems that the Rabbis aren't too far off when they say that all things were made through the letter *bet*!

5782: The Mouth & the Son

Applying what we have learned so far, we see that the year 5782 speaks of our conversation and the Son of God. What we keep talking about ultimately reflects the contents of our hearts (*Matt 12:34*).

Some Christians are currently spending most of their time talking and thinking about Covid. Christians are becoming increasingly divided by conflicting Covid narratives, and behind it all lies an increasing level of fear that affects many hearts.

I believe that 5782 teaches us that God wants our conversation to be dominated by faith instead of fear, by Jesus rather than by Covid. But to change the words that we are speaking, we must first change what is filling our hearts and minds. If you are among those whose heart has been affected by fear in the last year, I would encourage you to take time away from the sources of fear in your life (for example, secular news media or social media). Keep reminding yourself instead of how God has protected you in the past and of His promises to you, and as you make this your habit in the year ahead, I'm sure it won't take long before your heart and mouth are both in a much better place.

The Shmita Year - A Year of Faith

Furthermore, this particular Jewish New Year also marks the beginning of what is known as a 'Shmita' year, a sabbatical year of letting agricultural land lie fallow (*see Leviticus 25:2-5*). What lessons can we draw out from the Shmita as we approach the coming year?

The rabbis describe the Shmita year as a year of faith, as they rightly recognise the faith of farmers who choose to rest their land for the entire year. God has promised provision to His people who follow this command (*Leviticus 25:20-21*), and indeed many Israeli farmers can testify of God's miraculous provision in past Shmita years.

One famous example is the story of the agricultural settlement of Komemiyut in 1951-52. Having kept the Shmita the year before, these orthodox farmers looked to be in trouble as they only had access to mouldy, worm-



Setting the table for the seder meal on the eve of Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, on 6 September 2021. | Photo: Flash90

infested seed for the year after the Shmita. Furthermore, the timing of the Shmita dictated that the Komemiyut farmers had to wait until November to sow their fields. By contrast, the surrounding farms were all sowing their fields in September in anticipation of the usual September rains.

However, that year no rain fell during September nor during the month of October. In November, the Komemiyut farmers sowed their fields, and the very next day, the heavens opened! A few months later, the result was clear for all to see: the surrounding secular farmers ended up with a lacklustre crop, while the religious farmers enjoyed a miraculous bumper harvest. Today many farmers in Israel are keeping the Shmita, and even secular farmers have been inspired by the story of Komemiyut.

Apply the Shmita

The rabbis don't believe the Shmita regulations apply to non-Jews; however, the principle of faith in God and obedience to Him applies to all of us, and especially at this time in history. Messianic Rabbi Jonathan Cahn has written at length about how almost every global financial upheaval of the past century has been connected to the Shmita cycles. Especially noteworthy is the Great Depression of 1930-31 and the stock market crashes of 2000-01 and 2008-09 that all occurred during Shmita years.

Could the year ahead feature further economic turmoil? The financial conditions brought into play through our government's record spending during Covid, as well as the financial downturns suffered by so many businesses, are certainly pointing us to choppy waters ahead. If there is trouble ahead, then a very natural human approach is to respond in fear and try to protect ourselves. Yet, the Shmita teaches us a different lesson. It teaches us to trust God and follow His commands simply, and as we do, God Himself will take care of our needs.

Summary

We have seen how the Shmita year teaches us to trust and obey God. The year ahead may well be a challenging year, and it is therefore increasingly important that we learn the lessons of 5782 – of filling our hearts and mouths not with the fear so prevalent in our world today but with faith and trust in Almighty God.

Pastor Enoch Lavender is based at Living Way Christian Network in Melbourne Australia and specialises in teaching about the Hebrew background of the Christian faith. He has a range of teaching articles and videos available for free at www.pastorenoch.com.au

Holocaust Memorials at Yad Vashem

In this regular column, we look at Holocaust memorials at Yad Vashem. Each issue, we will feature a different memorial and tell the story and message behind each one. We thank Mikaela Hood for writing each article.

Jewish Soldiers & Partisans who fought against Nazi Germany

This memorial commemorates the 1.5 million Jewish soldiers who fought in WWII, with allied forces, as partisans and in resistance movements across Europe. Artist Bernie Fink's design was selected from 90 entries for this memorial and was unveiled on the 40th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in 1985. Today this memorial hosts an annual ceremony to mark the anniversary of this event on 9 May.

The plaza leading to the monument is laid out in the shape of a seven branched Menorah. Fink's design uses six hexagonal granite blocks representing the six million victims, these are stacked to form a Star of David. Piercing the star is a metal spearhead symbolising the armed Jewish fighters.

At the base of the Menorah, the inscription reads in English, French, Hebrew, Russian and Yiddish: 'Monument to the Jewish Soldiers and Partisans who fought against Nazi Germany 1939-1945.'



Abraham Accords Impact on Mideast

■ Israel Kasnett

One year since the establishment of the Abraham Accords—agreed to by Israel and the United Arab Emirates on 13 August 2020, and then officially signed on the White House lawn on 15 September—the Middle East is business as usual, but now greatly improved. The accords established normalised ties between Israel and the UAE, followed soon after by Muslim-majority countries of Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco.

There was no catastrophic backlash from extremists, as predicted by so-called experts, and the Palestinian issue is still somewhat on the regional backburner. And in the time since, trade between Israel and the UAE alone has reached nearly \$600 million; it's expected to reach \$1 billion by the end of the year. For many observers, the accords are an example of leaders in the Middle East establishing a new reality based on peace and prosperity.

Asher Fredman, CEO of Gulf-Israel Green Ventures (GIGV), has invested his energies in bridging the greentech leadership in Israel with the robust development in Gulf countries to further sustainable development in the region. As the UAE and Bahrain are transitioning from traditional sources of greentech and cleantech, Fredman and GIGV are working to pair interested users with innovative technologies and expertise.

Fredman told JNS his goal is “to connect between the green tech and cleantech ecosystems because these are areas in which both countries are focused.”

He said the Emirati leadership adopted a vision “to transform the country into a leader in sustainability and innovation, and obviously, there are lots of exciting Israeli companies in that space.”

He noted that ‘there are some differences’ that exist between the two countries. For example, the Emiratis are more used to dealing with large multinational corporations and not small Israeli startups.

“We are very active with our Emirati partners to overcome those barriers so that we can realise the full potential of this cooperation,” he said, adding that the Emiratis “are great people; it's fun to work with them.”

Fredman also pointed out that Emirati business people ‘are smart,’ but they ‘also prioritise trust and personal relationships.’

Alongside his work with GIGV, Fredman also established the Israel-Emirates Forum, a grassroots organisation for people from different backgrounds to encourage dialogue, understanding and cooperation.

A number of recent developments have highlighted the success that the Abraham Accords have brought to the Middle East and North Africa.

Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid met mid-August with Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita in Rabat, where he inaugurated Israel's mission the following day. Lapid's was the first visit by an Israeli foreign minister since 2003.



Former President Donald J. Trump, joined by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al-Zayani, Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Minister of Foreign Affairs for the United Arab Emirates Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, acknowledge applause and wave to the crowd at the Abraham Accords signing 15 September 2020. | Official White House Photo by Andrea Hanks, Flickr

Earlier that week, the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs signed a historic agreement for cooperation between the Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat) headed by Bahrain's Deputy Foreign Minister, Dr Sheikh Abdullah bin Ahmad al-Khalifa, and the Jerusalem Center President, former director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Dore Gold.

Before the signing, Gold said his think-tank decided to “create a network of research institutes in the Persian Gulf region and other countries.”

“Our goal is to create an array of cooperation agreements with the countries of the Abraham Accords and to convey a message to the United States, Europe and other countries of a realistic understanding of the challenges that we share—the danger of Iran's policies in the region and the world,” he said.

The Abba Eban Institute for International Diplomacy at the IDC Herzliya has also signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperation with the Derasat Institute.

‘We created something new here.’

Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Fleur Hassan-Nahum said she was involved in some under-the-radar joint projects with the UAE and decided to set up the UAE-Israel Business Council (of which Fredman is also among the founding members), which, according to its website, aims ‘to build mutually beneficial relationships between Emiratis and Israelis that advance business ties, investment, and understanding.’

She told JNS she was “caught completely by surprise” when the accords were announced but created an online platform within a few short days.

Hassan-Nahum said she didn't even realise the true value of webinars she conducted between Israelis and Emiratis until an Arab from eastern Jerusalem told her he was in a webinar and had met Emirati and Israeli partners with whom he plans to build a business.

“People were thirsty for it,” Hassan-Nahum said of the connection between Israelis and Emiratis. “People needed it; it filled a very important need.”

If the past year was any indication, Israel could be looking at a very lucrative future together with its newfound business trading partners.

The coronavirus got in the way of incoming tourism and a defence trade show usually held in the Gulf. If Israel can succeed in overcoming the challenges posed by the global pandemic, the country could see billions more in trade and revenue.

Hassan-Nahum is also responsible for tourism in Jerusalem. She said she has started to create the infrastructure for ‘a new type of tourist’ Israel has rarely seen, meaning visitors from Gulf countries.

“If we managed to create so many relationships during a global pandemic,” she said of the last year, “I think it bodes well for a future of mutual prosperity.”

“We created something new here,” she said. “We are creating the model for a new type of peace.”

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<https://www.jns.org/how-the-abraham-accords-have-already-impacted-the-middle-east/>

Kippah

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

Jewish boys and men cover their heads. Orthodox men always wear a head covering. More liberal Jewish men do this less often, but at least during prayer, study and while eating. Often, a small round cap is used, the *kippah*, also known by its Yiddish name, *yarmulke*.

The use of the *kippah* is not a Biblical prescription. But several passages in the *Talmud* (the so-called Oral Teachings in Judaism) provide reasons for covering the head: “Cover your head, that the fear of Heaven will be on you.” The *kippah* reminds you that there is a Power above you. Therefore, a *Talmudic* scholar like *rav Huna*, the son of *rav Yehoshua* (4th century),

claimed that he never walked more than four cubits with an uncovered head: “The *Shechinah*, the Divine Presence, is above my head.” Therefore, your doings and dealings and thinking should always be filled with awe for the Most High.

Since the Middle Ages, it has been the custom for *Ashkenazi* and *Sephardi* Jews to cover their heads outside the home. For men, as a sign of holiness, for married women as a sign of modesty. Wearing a *kippah* inside the home is a relatively young custom, going back only a century or so.

The skullcap is somewhat reminiscent of the calotte worn by Roman-Catholic clergy. Some even suppose that this might be the origin of the *kippah*. If this is true, there is a symbolic layer to it. In the Bible, priests had to cover their head. Again, according to the Bible,

Israel is a nation of priests, and she is that on behalf of the nations. In this way, the *kippah* could be seen as a silent undermining of replacement theology.

There are *kippahs* of many different varieties. Often, you can tell, by the style of *kippah*, which branch of Judaism the wearer currently associates himself with. Orthodox men wear the black velvet *kippah*. Some Hasidic groups, however, wear large white *yarmulkes*. Even the form, round or rather angular, tells something about the origins of the wearer. In Israel, the knitted *kippah* (Hebrew: *kippah serugah*) became the mark of the religious Zionists. You often see *yeshiva* (*Talmud* academy) students wearing a small flat, suede *kippah* in Jerusalem.



Recommended Reading

The Challenges of Resolving the Israeli-Palestine Dispute - an Impossible Peace?

Australian political scientist Bren Carlill's new book *The challenges of resolving the Israeli-Palestine Dispute – an Impossible Peace?* (Springer 2021) is a timely and fascinating study.

Carlill's main thesis is that "one of the reasons that the Israeli Palestinian dispute hasn't been resolved is because the West has trouble realising that multiple Israeli-Palestinian conflicts exist - for two related reasons. The first is, the West hasn't fought a religious conflict for centuries. And Westerners don't quite believe it when people tell us they are fighting a religious conflict - we discount their reasons (though the rise of groups like Islamic State has made the concept easier to understand). The other reason is, the West doesn't fight existential conflicts. We haven't actively fought such a conflict for centuries."

"Our natural inclination is to think that all conflicts are territorial, and all conflicts are resolvable. In the West, many think that every conflict, no matter how hard, no matter how intractable, can be resolved one day. Almost all the conflict literature says that!

But it's wrong. Existential conflicts cannot be resolved."

The book contains a detailed history of the conflict and analyses the many (failed) peace proposals (including the Oslo process).

Carlill argues that "Western policymakers need to understand that multiple conflicts exist in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute." Some of the conflicts are territorial; others are existential. Existentialists – those who want to destroy the other side - exist on both the Palestinian and Israeli sides. This means "There cannot be simply a policy to address the dispute. We need to create individual policies to address each conflict in the dispute. And we have to understand that the dispute's existential conflicts cannot be resolved for as long as they remain existential. Since we cannot resolve those conflicts, we must win or manage them."

The author argues that only the parties themselves can create an agreed end to the conflict by marginalising the 'existentialists' within their ranks. All

attempts by the international community to "impose" a solution (such as the "Two-State Solution") will be doomed to fail.

Highly recommended reading.



Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with My People



Mediterranean olive field with old olive tree ready for harvest. | Photo: Shutterstock

■ Johannes Gerloff Theologian, Journalist, Lecturer & Author

This is the first of a series of articles on Romans 9-11, based on the book Rejoice, You Gentiles, with His People by Johannes Gerloff, which is expected to be published in early 2022. In this first article, Johannes Gerloff explains why he wrote the book.

It was in the beginning of the 1990s. The Iron Curtain, which had divided Europe into East and West for as long as we could remember, had come down. The Velvet Revolution had changed Czechoslovakia. We lived near Prague. My wife Krista and I studied theology and taught at a newly founded Bible school in the Czech capital. The air was full of hope. We experienced freedom and saw new opportunities in a society that had been dominated by atheist Socialism for four long decades.

As a young family, we had prepared ourselves to preach the gospel, build the Church and help people grow in their relationship with God. Church ministry in Germany or the Czech Republic or teaching in Europe or Africa were the obvious options. However, we did not wish to follow our own imaginations. We waited for the call of the Lord to know specifically where He wanted us to go.

To make it more difficult, I had been pondering *Acts 13*. There, the Holy Spirit had spoken to the Church in Antioch: "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them" (*verse 2*). Even though Paul had had a direct encounter with the risen Lord, when he had been thrown off his high horse on his way to Damascus a few years earlier (see *Acts 9*), the Holy Spirit apparently had to speak directly to the Church in order to get the two apostles moving.

So, we waited for the Holy Spirit to speak to the Church. But the Holy Spirit did not speak to the churches we were connected with in Germany and Czechoslovakia. Or the Church did not listen to Him, so it seemed, during the last decade of the 20th century. In any case, the call I so longed for did not come.

When the call of God finally did come, it was not to Germany, the Czech Republic or Tanzania, as we had expected. In a quite clear manner, we were called to Israel. And, we were not called to preach the Gospel there but to comfort the people of the Lord. We were asked to get to know the situation in and around Israel – and to explain the significance of Israel to the Gentile nations in Europe and beyond: "Hear the word of the Lord, you nations; proclaim it in distant coastlands: 'He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.'" (*Jeremiah 31:10*). That was the commission we received.

I was puzzled. As a German, I felt a special obligation to the Jewish people and their State of Israel after all that had happened in the Holocaust. Right after high school, I had spent a year in Israel working as a volunteer with Holocaust survivors. But overcoming the past was not the issue now.

Those of my teachers who had helped to prepare me for ministry reacted with incomprehension at best. Some were angry. "What is this Israel fantasy all about? What do you want there?" were some of the questions that were thrown at me.

That is the reason I started my study of *Romans 9-11*. The answers I received to my questions are in this book. I also share some insights that I never even asked for. What started as a puzzling situation in Czechoslovakia and Germany nearly three decades ago has become our life's calling.

We, as a family, are firmly rooted in Israeli society. We are richly blessed. And over the years, the theological puzzle has given way to amazement.

What struck me at the very beginning of my journey into Paul's theology regarding Israel was his confession in *Romans 9:3*: "For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ (the Messiah) for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen (blood relatives) according to the flesh."

Having defended myself and my love for Israel for years, I have been ashamed and humbled to discover that I would never be

able to love Israel like the Apostle Paul loved her. I had assured those that questioned me that I would never put this calling to Israel above Jesus and the great commission! The well-intentioned admonition "don't forget Jesus for the sake of Israel" had been sort of nagging at me.

But now, I discovered that Paul was not only not defending his irrational love for this nation, but even stating on-record to the Church in Rome (and consequently to future generations of Christians all over the world!) that he was even ready to give up his very salvation through Messiah if that would save his beloved people.

To be honest, to this day, I have not found an intellectually satisfying solution to this riddle. Emotionally, it still impacts me very deeply.

"Rejoice, You Nations, With His People" – the English title of this book – is a quote from *Romans 15:10* where Paul picks up on what Moses said to the Israelites preparing to enter the Land of Israel (*Deuteronomy 32:43*).

To the very end of his writings, and in spite of all emphasis that in certain respects "there is no difference", Paul keeps contrasting Israel with the Gentile nations. This differentiation, however, does not lead to degradation of one compared to the other, but rather to unity in praise to the one and only living God.

Just a few sentences before, in *Romans 15:7*, Paul admonishes his readers to "accept one another as the Messiah has accepted you for the glory of the [one, true] God." That means especially accepting those who are not the same but different.

The Creator has created differences from the very beginning – changing dark chaos or disorder into 'the cosmos', i.e. order (see *Genesis 1*). Without differences, the creation cannot bear fruit. This is true for the difference between males and females and the difference between Jew and Gentile. Together we are destined to rejoice over the fruit He will bring forth through us for His glory.

Signs of the Times - Meet the Prophets

■ Kameel Majdali

Director | Teach All Nations Inc.

Afghanistan, Iran, Israel, Turkey, and more ... the Middle East is ever in the news. If you understand the subject of 'world trends' and 'Bible prophecy,' this should be of no surprise. Most of the Biblical narrative, past and prophetic, is based in the Middle East. It is the cradle of civilisation, starting with Mesopotamia, where history began and, according to Scripture, it will culminate.

The change of administrations in Washington and Jerusalem have definitely upset the balance of power in the region. Things were looking hopeful for the war-torn region: The October 2020 Abraham Accords between Israel and four Arab countries: Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Sudan, and Morocco, was absolutely historic. It had been twenty-six years since the last peace treaty was signed with Israel, namely by Jordan, in 1994. Prior to that, it was the Egypt-Israel peace treaty of 1979. Never have so many Arab Muslim-majority nations queued up to make peace with the Jewish state, all at once.

Now that Washington and Jerusalem have new, dovish, leftist governments, it is 'business as usual' with proposals to divide the land (including Jerusalem), kick-starting the Iran nuclear agreement, and renewing financial remittance to the Palestinian Authority - with no strings attached. Jordan's recent tilt towards Iran, considered a Shia menace to the Sunni Arabs, reflects the consternation at what's happening in the US and Israel ... pragmatism dictates making peace with the adversary while you can. And all this was before the controversial, even chaotic, American and Allied Coalition withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021.

When we consider the signs of the times and Bible prophecy, here are some trends to watch:

1. The great universal shaking (*Hebrews 12:25-29*);
2. The theoretical possibility of worldwide destruction (*Matthew 24:22*);
3. Global or world wars, which only began in the 20th Century. Arnold Fruchtenbaum says that the phrases, 'Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom' (*Matthew 24:7*) are idioms for 'world wars.'
4. Famines, pestilence, and earthquakes (*Matthew 24:7*): Despite Covid-19, the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918-1919 was still the greatest yet.
5. Increased deception (*Matthew 24:4*). Though lying and mendacity are as old as time, there is an unprecedented spirit of strong delusion in the world



| Photo: Shutterstock

today (*2 Thessalonians 2:11*);

6. Increase of knowledge and mass travel (*Daniel 12:4*);
7. Global attention and obsession with Judah and Jerusalem (*Zechariah 12, 14*).

When considering these 'signs,' bear in mind the words of Jesus in *Matthew 24:6*: "See to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come."

Considering that some of these signs are troublesome and scary, what is the basis of our fearlessness? How can we keep from being troubled and afraid? Answer: Invest in your spiritual life, accept the spiritual fruit of peace (*Galatians 5:22*), and walk with the Prince of Peace.

Meet the Prophets

To understand Biblical prophecy and its relation to current events, it is important to 'meet the prophets.' Here are two key prophets you may not have considered.

Abraham: The Lord told Abimelech, king of Gerar, to restore Sarah to her husband Abraham '...for he is a prophet' (*Genesis 20:7*).

David: While preaching to the multitudes on the Day of Pentecost, Peter made a bold announcement that David the king was a prophet (*Acts 2:30*).

Chances are you never considered that Abraham and David are prophets. After all, they do not appear to have recorded

prophecies. Yet, consider this: What do you think the Messianic psalms like *Psalms 16, 22, 110* are, if not prophetic?

How about Daniel? In the *Tanakh* (Hebrew Bible - also known as the Old Testament), the Book of Daniel is not listed among the prophetic books but among the writings. Why did the rabbis do this? Because Daniel interpreted dreams and had a few of his own, but he actually gave no known written prophetic pronouncements.

Yet we rightly consider Daniel a prophet and for a very simple reason: Jesus Christ Himself called him a prophet in *Matthew 24:15*. If it was good enough for Jesus, it should be good enough for us.

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Moses in Genesis and Peter in Acts respectively accredited Abraham and David as being prophets. So we need to look at them in that light. If you want to understand Israel, the Middle East, world trends they influence and end-time Bible prophecy, it really starts with these two men: Abraham and David.

Think about it: the New Testament begins with them and ends with Jesus.

Matthew 1:1: The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Next time, we will learn how both men were impactful prophets.



Five Blessings Israel Gave to the World

Many Christians around the world believe the people of Israel are God's people and need our special attention. Other Christians doubt or even oppose this idea. In conversation with other Christians about this topic, tensions arise very quickly. What is the best way to speak about Israel with Christians around you? Maybe the strongest way to show the ongoing importance of Israel is to talk about how Israel blessed the world. In this article, you will find five blessings Israel gave to the world, showing their special place in world history and their meaning for us as Christians.

Here are some of the blessings Israel gave to the world:

- They wrote and preserved the Bible.
- They have shown how good God is.
- They brought forth the Messiah.
- They gave us the good news about the Messiah.
- Their return gives us hope for the future.

Let's face it. Without Israel, without the Jews, we wouldn't have the Bible. As far as we know, all the writers of the Bible were Jewish. The Old Testament,

the *Tanakh*, is certainly written by Jews; however, the books of the New Testament are written by Jews as well. It is uncertain who has written the book of Hebrews, but the name of the book already reveals that the writer must have known the ancient scriptures in-depth, so presumably, he was a Jew.

Secondly, the Bible gives hope and gives us examples of how God is acting in relationships with people. How do we know what God is like? By looking into the history of Israel and seeing how He acts. We can tell by the way He created them, how He loved them, how He cared for them, how He judged them, how He helped them, what kind of God He is. He is a good Father.

Thirdly, they brought forth the Messiah. God chose the Jewish people as the place in which the Saviour of the world (*the snake crusher - Genesis 3*) would be born. Jesus is born into the family of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So out of this family, the blessing flows into the world. The Messiah defeated death and sin once and for all, and we will soon see our victory when He returns in glory.

Fourthly, without the Jewish people, the world would still be in darkness. But because of their task in

salvation history, the good news reached the ends of the earth. As I mentioned, the first followers of Jesus were mostly Jewish. It is only later in the history of the church that we find gentiles coming on to the scene. Think of the eunuch from Ethiopia and Cornelius the Roman centurion. It's because of Jewish people that the good news of the Messiah of Israel started to spread. Because of them, we now know Jesus.

The last blessing Israel gives us is a sense of hope for the future. The return of the Jewish people to the land is a forebode of the coming of Messiah. The Messiah brings back His people from the ends of the earth. In the New Testament, it is said that Jesus will not return until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled and until His people cry out: '*Baruch Haba b'shem Adonai*', Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord. This gives us hope about the times we live in.

The Jewish people will be the first to meet their Messiah and will be the ones that welcome Him into His new kingdom. The fact they are now getting ready for Him in their own land is a blessing. Messiah is coming soon. And almost everything seems ready for His coming.

Shadi Khalloul - an Aramean in Israel



Left: Shadi Khalloul and Roger van Oordt. Middle: Remarkably, above the doorpost there is an image of two mezuzas, to which Roger points with his hand. Right: The destroyed village of Baram, with the church still intact, used by Aramean Christians on special occasions. | Photos: Roger van Oordt

Roger van Oordt

Christians for Israel Netherlands

Last June, together with the Chief Rabbi of the Netherlands Benjamin Jacobs, I attended the commemoration in Enschede (in the east of Holland) of the mass murder of 580,000 Aramean Christians in the Ottoman Empire in 1915. Enschede is home to many Aramean (Syriac) Christians who fled the violence directed against them in the 1970s and 1980s.

One of them connected me with Shadi Khalloul, an Aramean Christian who lives in Israel. He is in his mid-forties and of Aramean Maronite descent. He lives with his wife and two children in the village of Tish in the north of Israel, near the Lebanese border.

I visited him in July. It was a special encounter with a brother with a big heart for Israel.

Warm Welcome

Tish has a mixed population of Muslims and Aramean Christians. It is also the place where the grave of the prophet Joel is located. The Aramaic-Maronite community is one of the oldest church communities in the world. Their language of worship is Aramaic. This was probably also the language of communication in Galilee at the time of the Saviour. Aramaic is now being taught again as a living language in Israel, partly on the initiative of Shadi Khalloul.

When I drove into Tish and found the right street, Shadi's house was easily recognisable by the Israeli flag. It was a warm welcome. Shadi has been committed to the Aramean community for decades. Of the 170,000

Christians in Israel, about 12,000 belong to their community. However, many other Christians in Israel have the same Aramean background and suffered from Islam in the past centuries. Shadi Khalloul comes from a lineage that has its roots in the village of Baram, an entirely Aramaic-Maronite village near the present-day border with Lebanon. The village was destroyed after the 1948 war, and the refugees were dispersed and partly ended up in Tish, an Arab village not far from their original village.

Recognition

Shadi Khalloul is committed to preserving and strengthening the Aramaic Christian tradition in Israel. Until 2015, Aramean Christians were not recognised as a population group, as was the case with the Druze, Arabs and Jews. Thanks to his tireless efforts, this changed six years ago. The Aramean origin of these Christians is now recognised. He proudly showed me his new registration at the civil registry. The Aramean Christians consider themselves as a brother people of the Jewish people. Abraham, Rebekah and Rachel were all Arameans. King Hiram lent and donated a lot for the construction of the Temple of Solomon and received ten cities in return. According to tradition, he too belonged to the Aramean people group.

Own Curriculum

The wish of the Aramean population of Israel is that the once Aramean village Baram will be rebuilt and that the Aramean Christians, now that they are officially recognised in Israel, can also have their own curriculum for education. Many Aramean Christians still follow the

Arabic school system based on the Koran and Arabic history. Shadi's two children and 25 other children from Tish go to kibbutz Sasa to receive a Hebrew education.

Milestone

In the recent Israeli elections, Shadi Khalloul was on the list of Yisrael Beiteinu, Lieberman's party. He just missed out on gaining a seat in the Knesset but will probably become a Knesset member after one of the party members has to give up his seat. According to Shadi, right-wing and religious political leaders in Israel have always shown more understanding of the interests of the Aramean Christians than left-wing politicians. Once, the Supreme Court in Israel ruled that Baram must be rebuilt and given back to the Aramean Christians. For many, this is not realistic, but for Shadi Khalloul, it would be a milestone and an example for the whole world when it comes to cooperation between Jews and Christians.

Letter from the Archbishop

Shadi showed me an extraordinary document from 1947. In 1947, the United Nations set up a commission to advise whether and how a Jewish state was possible in Palestine. The UN did not think it worthwhile to hear the opinion of the Archbishop of the Arameans on this. He was furious about this and wrote a letter to the commission. Some citations from the letter.

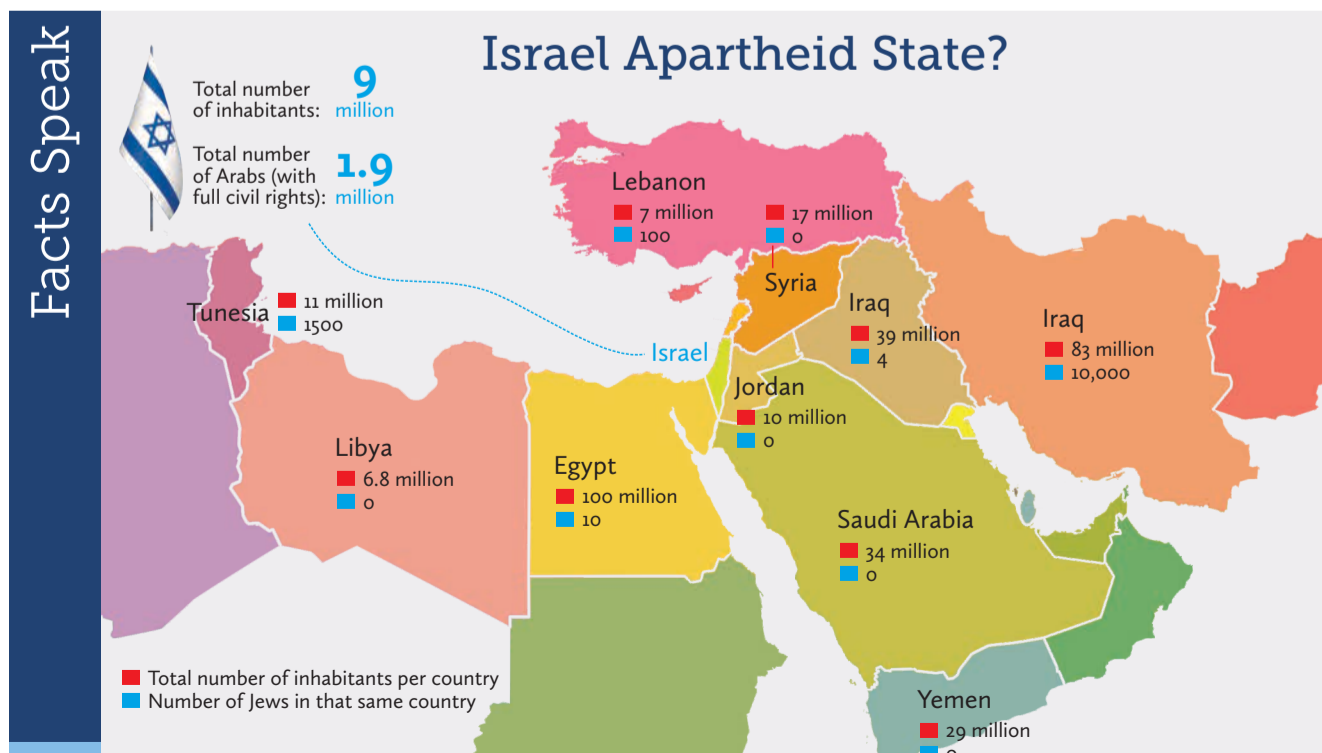
"It is an incontestable fact that Palestine was the home of the Jews and of the first Christians. None of them were of Arab origin. By the brutal force of conquest, they were forced to become converts to the Moslem religion...

To include Palestine and the Lebanon within the group of Arab countries is to deny history and to destroy the social balance in the Near East...The Lebanon has always been and will remain a sanctuary for all the persecuted Christians of the Middle East...The Lebanon and Palestine must continue to be the permanent home of minorities: a Christian home in the Lebanon, as there has always been; a Jewish home in Palestine. These two centres ... will form the necessary bridge between East and West, from the viewpoint of culture and civilisation. The neighbourly relations between these two nations will contribute to the maintenance of peace in the Near East and will lessen the persecution of minorities, which will always find refuge in these two countries.

Behind the closed doors of the Sofar Hotel, you were able to listen only to the words dictated to our so-called legal representatives by the lords and masters of the neighbouring Arab countries. The real voice of the Lebanese was smothered...

The Lebanon demands freedom for the Jews in Palestine as it desires its own freedom and independence.

Signed Ignace Mobarat, Maronite Archbishop of Beirut."



Five fascinating facts about the Jewish Leap Year

■ **Deborah Fineblum**

JNS.org

With the arrival of *Rosh Hashanah*, the Jewish world was thrown headlong into the leap year of 5782.

But the leap year of the Jewish variety may not be exactly what you *think* a leap year is. In the Gregorian calendar, the leap year is no big deal, just an extra winter day.

But the Jewish people are not ones to do things in half-measure, so we add an entire *month* to our leap year. And, what's more, whereas the rest of the world has a leap year every four years like clockwork, it's not so simple in the Jewish world, where it comes, well, whenever it's needed, seven times in 19 years (more on the math later).

Here are five fascinating facts about the Jewish leap year:

1. Why is it Necessary?

Passover in July and *Rosh Hashanah* in January (*northern hemisphere*)? That's what could happen were it not for the ingenious invention of the Jewish leap year. That's because lunar calendars like this one work beautifully until the end of the year, when the 12 lunar months will inevitably miss the solar year by an 11-day shortfall. It wouldn't take long for such a disparity to wreak havoc with the holidays; hence, the spectre of a snow-covered *Rosh Hashanah*. And the *Torah* makes it abundantly clear: *Passover* must be 'in the month of springtime' (*Deuteronomy 16:1*), and *Sukkot* must fall at harvest time when 'God will have blessed you in all your crops and in all your handiwork.' (*Deuteronomy 16:15*).

But why do these holidays need to be timed in these ways?

Ours is an agricultural tradition, says Rabbi Rachel Ain, religious leader of the Sutton Place Synagogue in New York City. "So, on one level, the pilgrimage holidays all reflect the agriculture cycle of the year."

But there's another layer of meaning here, too, says Ain. "Just as spring is the coming out of the darkness of winter into the sunshine, *Passover* celebrates our people's sense of renewal, emerging from the darkness of slavery into the bright light of freedom."

2. Who Can We Thank?

Tradition has it that the great sage Hillel, head of the Jewish 'supreme' court—the Sanhedrin from 320 to 385 C.E.—created the Jewish calendar through some pretty sophisticated mathematical and astronomical calculations. The result: A 19-year cycle with seven leap years to anchor the holidays in their rightful place.

In the far distant past, the Jewish people relied on nature to tell them when a leap year was needed. If the weather, the animals and the crops weren't yet acting 'spring-like', and if the spring equinox didn't arrive before mid-way through the month of *Nissan*, then the judges of the Sanhedrin knew the leap year with its extra month would be needed to keep *Passover* in its rightful place. The extra



More than 2,000 students attended a ceremony ending the 'shmita' (sabbatical) year, in Efrat, on 11 Oct. 2015. It is the seventh year of the seven-year agricultural cycle mandated by the *Torah* for the Land of Israel. During 'shmita', the land is left to lie fallow and all agricultural activity, including plowing, planting, pruning and harvesting, is forbidden by Jewish law. | Photo: Flash90.

month, *Adar I*, was added to the third, sixth, eighth, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th years of the cycle.

"This is as relevant today as it was nearly 2,000 years ago," says Rabbi Morrie Wruble, a longtime Jerusalem-area *Torah* teacher for both teens and adults. "And only two peoples have a lunar calendar: us and the Arabs."

But unlike the Jewish calendar, the Arab one doesn't adjust the dates to keep holidays in place, "which is why *Ramadan* can be in the winter, fall, spring or summer," explains Wruble. "We can't do that because we're guided by our *Torah*, which says *Passover* must come in the spring when we plant, and that things need to be growing during the time of *Shavuot* and harvested during *Sukkot*. Hillel realised that, if we stayed strictly lunar, things would soon get out of kilter, and he put in a system to fix that with the leap year."

3. How Did They Do It? (Calling on Math and Physics Buffs)

Since, unlike the Gregorian, the Jewish calendar relies on three factors: the Earth's rotation (24 hours), the moon's revolution around the Earth (29 ½ days) and the Earth's revolution around the sun (365 ¼ days), by factoring them all in, Rav Hillel and friends came up with a 19-year cycle containing seven leap years of 13 months each.

But without an advanced degree in mathematics or physics, you may not be able to predict when they will arrive (hint: The last one was three years ago). So, what's the only way to know if a certain year is destined to be a leap year? It's by knowing the year's place in the current 19-year *Metonic* cycle. Try dividing the number of the Jewish year in question by 19 and find the remainder. If that number is a 3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17 or 0 (representing the 19th year), then you're looking at a leap year.

"Hillel and his friends were pretty good at math," says Mitchell (*Yochanon*) Bogart, a New Haven, Conn.-based engineer and avowed 'physics buff.'

"Nearly 2,000 years ago, they were sharp enough with their calculations to realise the Jewish calendar had to have a 19-year cycle to keep that 11-day difference at bay. It was the only way to stop the holidays from shifting more than a couple of weeks here and there, nothing significant."

All done without a calculator.

4. How is it Like Being a Little Bit Pregnant?

Why exactly is the Jewish leap year called *shanah me'uberet*, literally 'a pregnant year'? That's because it's simply fuller—and longer—than any other year.

Instead of the standard 365 days, the Jewish world is looking at anywhere from 383 to 385 days, depending on whether in a given year the months of *Cheshvan* (in the fall) and *Kislev* (at *Hanukkah* time) each have 29 or 30 days. The upcoming year 5782, for instance, will have 384 days.

Among those most profoundly impacted by this 'pregnant' year are the farmers in Israel who are keeping the *Torah* commandment of *shmita*—stopping all cultivating to let their fields rest for a year as a *Sabbath* for the land. And though the *mitzvah* (only in effect in the Jewish homeland) rolls around every seven years, this time it happens to fall on a leap year, prolonging the farmers' time away from working the land from the typical 12 months to 13.

5. What's the Leap Year's Biggest Blessing?

And, due to the nature of the month that gets added—an extra *Adar*—one thing the leap year is pregnant with is an extra helping of joy, blessing and *mazal* ('luck') for the Jewish people. As the sages taught, "When *Adar* enters, we increase in joy."

"We know that the 30 days of *Adar* are the happiest of the year for the Jewish people, so in a year when we double the number of *Adar* days to 60, we're also bound to double our joy and our good fortune," says Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles, co-founder of the Ascent seminar centre in Tzfat, Israel.

Short News

Virtually Invisible



A new camouflage technology developed in Israel can make soldiers virtually 'invisible'. The Kit 300 uses thermal, visual concealment material that combines metals, microfibers, and polymers to reduce soldiers' detectability by the human eye and thermal imaging equipment. | Photo: The Media Line/YouTube

Hospital & Aerospace Industries Unite

Israel's Soroka Medical Center in Beersheba and the nation's largest aerospace and defence company will run an innovation centre together. The aim is to make defence technology usable for the medical world. The idea for this new center arose during the corona outbreak, when the Israeli Ministry of Defense developed a monitoring cockpit to supervise patients who were on ventilators.

Fourth-Century Coins Found



A lump of 1,700 year-old coins was discovered on the beach near Atlit by a family during a camping trip. Yotam Dahan, an Israeli tour guide, was the one who found the 6kg bundle of coins right behind their tent. The coins had been in the water for hundreds of years and may have belonged to an ancient ship sailing the Mediterranean Sea. Dahan handed the coins to the Israel Antiquities Authority and received a certificate of appreciation. | Photo: Ofir Hayat

Israel's Population Rises to 9.3 million

On the eve of *Rosh Hashanah*, the Jewish new year, it was reported that Israel's population topped 9.3 million this year, growing by 146,000 people from the year before representing a rise of 1.6%. There are now 9,391,000 people living in the Jewish state, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics figures published ahead of *Rosh Hashanah*. The number is expected to pass 10 million by the end of 2024. The population comprises more than 6.94 million Jews, or 74%; over 1.98 million Arabs, who account for 21%; and another 466,000 people of other ethnic groups, 5% of the population.

A Modern-day Mordechai

■ **Kay Wilson**

Israeli Tour Guide | Author | Cartoonist

Most Israelis knew Shlomo Hillel as Speaker of Israel's Knesset, Minister of Police, and Minister of Internal Affairs. Few realised he was one of the most daring spies the country has ever known. It is thanks to Shlomo Hillel that over 120,000 Iraqi Jews escaped safely from Iraq and went home to Israel in the middle of last century.

Iraq has always been historically central to the Jewish people, whether it be the genesis of Abraham and Sarah, the Rivers of Babylon where the Jewish exiles sat down and wept, the land of Esther and Mordechai, or the greatest centre of learning the Jewish world has arguably ever seen.

Unlike the diaspora of European Jewry, no matter how successful Iraqi Jews became, they chose to live separately from their Muslim and Christian neighbours. In doing so, they maintained their ancient and distinct traditions. In to such a home, Shlomo Hillel was born in 1923. He was one of eleven kids. It was a happy and Zionist home, but with Hitler's rise to power, the pro-Nazi sentiment was rising in Iraq. When it became illegal to teach Hebrew in Iraqi schools, Shlomo and his family moved to Eretz, Israel.

At 23, he joined the Haganah, the underground prototype for what would become the IDF and later fought in the War of Independence. After the war, he was sent clandestinely to Iraq and tasked with preparing the groundwork for Iraqi Jews to come to Israel. Shlomo helped smuggle out some of his fellow Jews by disguising them as British soldiers and putting them into the back of army trucks that took them to Israel.



Israeli diplomat Shlomo Hillel. | Photo: Flash90

That same day of disappointment was the very day he came up with the idea of having Jews hide at the end of the mile-long Iraqi runway. Just before the plane would take off, the Jews could rush over and jump onboard. The ridiculous plan worked! Full to capacity, the plane carried 50 Jews to Israel and dropped them off in the dark under the nose of the British soldiers before they were even awake. The Mossad met the American pilots, thanked them and handed them over a heavy sack of cash.

which the Mossad were also happy to supply.

His greatest numerical success was witnessing 104,000 Jews leave Iraq with the permission of the Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Siwaidi. 'Surprisingly,' the Prime Minister's next-door neighbour just 'happened to be' Shlomo's cousin. Worried that the exodus of Jews made Iraq look bad, the prime minister persuaded his Jewish neighbour that because it's only a small number of 'disgruntled' Jews who want to leave, it would therefore be prudent to let them go. To do so puts the Prime Minister in a good light. Al-Siwaidi took the mysterious neighbour's advice and issued a decree that permitted any Jew to leave should they so wish. Within a handful of months, it was not a disgruntled few who registered to leave, as he was led to believe, but a whopping 104,000.

Shlomo continued his work over the years using his connections and cleverness, bribery and brilliance, plans and plots and twists and turns. In doing so, he brought more than 120,000 Iraqi Jews to Israel. Without a doubt, a Jewish man like him has not been seen in Persia since the days of Esther and Mordechai.

Kay Wilson grew up in the United Kingdom, but made Aliyah to Israel where she worked as a tour guide, among other things. In 2010 she survived a horrific attack in which her friend, Christine Luken, was killed. Today she is mainly active as a speaker and writer.

Unlike the diaspora of European Jewry, no matter how successful Iraqi Jews became, they chose to live separately from their Muslim and Christian neighbours, and in doing so they maintained their ancient and distinct traditions.

Next, he found some veteran American pilots of WWII and made it clear that people in Israel were willing to pay a lot of money for Iraqi Jews to come home. Shlomo's job was to make sure the pilots landed in the desert, way out of sight of the Iraqis, where the Jews could then get on the plane. But the desert was vast, unsafe and unsuitable. The pilots knew it was impossible to carry out the mission. Plan B was needed.

The plan was so successful it was repeated time and again. It was even adopted to bring Italian Jews to Eretz Israel.

Shlomo's next move was to disguise himself as a Frenchman and check out the Iran-Iraq border. Jews could escape Iraq to Iran and from Iran leave for Israel. Iranian police were only too happy to help turn a blind eye in exchange for an enormous amount of money,

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ADI Offers Children a Chance



Everyone is familiar with it - and maybe even more so after working from home - that one chair which you use and it doesn't sit well. It irritates, takes you out of your concentration, and you may even have back pain at the end of the day.

The same applies to wheelchair users, but often with a far greater impact, because they cannot do without that chair. This can be remedied with wheelchairs that have an adjustable seat, and this gives children the chance to follow the lessons much better. And this is possible thanks to your help!

This spring, the organisation ADI (formerly ALEH) in Jerusalem approached us with a request for five wheelchairs with adjustable seats. The children who come to ADI for

help are multiple disabled and often wheelchair bound. It is also much more difficult for them to make it clear that a wheelchair is not a good fit. However, the teachers and therapists do notice in the long run.

The children have difficulty concentrating during the lessons. It is even harder for them to move around. Or they constantly have to make an effort to keep themselves upright in the chair. And all this costs energy, a lot of energy.

Visible Effect

A wheelchair with an adjustable seat solves many of these problems. It provides support, freedom of movement where necessary, stability. And the effect? "The children eat better, it is better for their digestion, it gives them more independence.

Their concentration at school improves, which means that they are able to pick up more of the lessons. All this is a huge benefit for these children who are faced with a lot of limitations."

Not all children get such a wheelchair. In Israel, the government can be quite bureaucratic from time to time, which means that children who need such a wheelchair cannot get one. This is why ADI asked us for help in purchasing five wheelchairs.

We have already paid for the wheelchairs in advance since the purchase was urgent. Your contribution towards these wheelchairs, several thousands of dollars each, is welcome! Please complete the coupon on page 16.

Help Us Help Them

ADI (formerly ALEH) has grown into a global community founded on the principles of sensitivity, inclusion, commitment and kindness. Join ADI in making a real difference in the lives of Israel's most vulnerable citizens – children, adolescents and adults with severe disabilities and complex medical conditions.



אדי ADI Ability. Diversity. Inclusion.



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

Homecoming

Valeria Zakharova Project Manager | First Home in the Homeland

The charter flight with the olim families and Na'ale students from Ukraine landed in Israel on 14 September. Among them, seven families started their life in Israel through the *First home in the Homeland* programme.

Every year we welcome many *olim* (immigrants) from Ukraine. Most of them are assisted by the Christians for Israel team in Ukraine, who help them prepare emotionally, practically and financially for their return to the Promised Land. September is a good month to take this big step. The special plane will carry the new *olim* from Ukraine to Israel right before *Yom Kippur* – the holiest day of the year in Judaism. We spoke to two of the families right before their departure from Ukraine:

“I am sure my grandfather would have been proud of me”...
Alena Goncharova from Kremenchug has been waiting for this day all her life. Since her childhood, she and her grandfather were sharing a dream about going to the

Holy Land. “My grandpa was a Jew, so I was raised in Jewish traditions. He believed that a big ship would take us to Israel one day. He saw that picture clearly despite being blind. Well, my grandpa died, but our dream is coming true, and I can hardly believe it. I will make Aliyah together with my husband and three children. As my grandfather envisioned, there is no need to go from Odessa to Haifa by sea for three days. Our Homecoming will be much faster as it will just be a 3 hours flight from Kiev to Tel Aviv. I have been waiting for this day for so long. Although I did not realise until recently that it would be like a restart. We are happy and nervous at the same time. I can't but worry about my children's integration and our professional future. That's why any kind of support is vital. So, we feel immense gratitude for everything you do!” says Alena.

“Returning home is exciting”... Pavel Kramarenko from Odessa will make *Aliyah* with his wife Anzhelika and a 7-year-old daughter Amina. Many of their relatives and friends live in Israel. “We have been considering moving

to Israel for several years, but because of Covid-19, our plans changed. What was the main reason for making aliyah? Our friends and family members live in Israel. And we also want to start a new life there because we feel we belong to this land. My daughter completed her first grade at the Jewish school in Odessa, and my wife and I are learning Hebrew and Jewish traditions. We are looking forward to our encounter with Israel. We are glad that so many people are helping us on the way – the Jewish Agency, the coordinators of the *First Home in the Homeland* programme and, of course, Christians for Israel who help us here.”, Pavel Kramarenko said.

In total, *First Home in the Homeland* welcomed 24 people on 14 September. Apartments were prepared for the families; children enrolled in kindergartens and schools. With your assistance, these *olim* received a warm and soft landing in Israel! Costs to assist a family for one month in the *First Home in the Homeland* programme is NZ \$350.

Watch the recently released video about the First Home in the Homeland project! www.c4israel.org/first-home



Goncharov family from Kremenchug – Alena, Evgenii and their children – Dmitrii, Kira and Egor.



Pavel Kramarenko with his family.



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