

NEWS FROM ISRAEL

January 2024

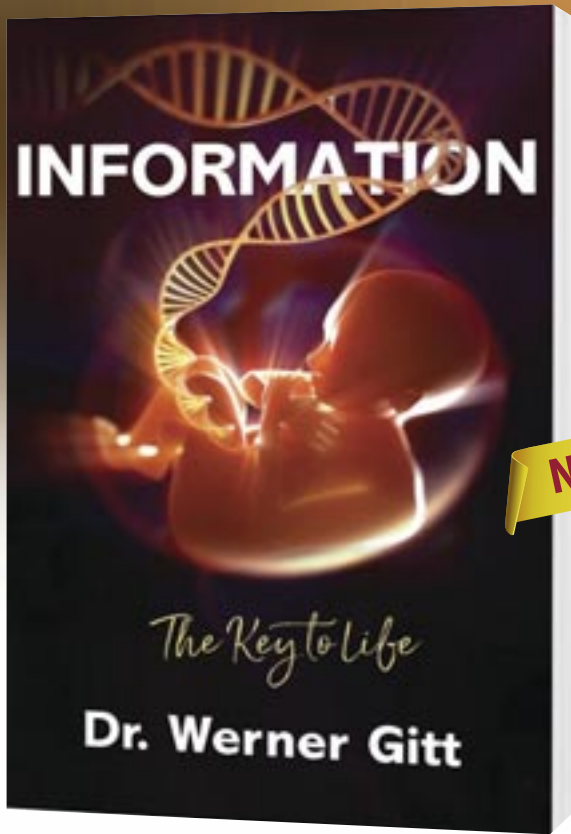
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Israel's Past and Future

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Published twelve times a year by
Midnight Call Ministries, Inc.
PO Box 84309
Lexington SC 29073

Physical Location:
4694 Platt Springs Road
West Columbia, SC 29170, USA

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Local and International: +1 (803) 755-0733

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
U.S.A. \$18
Canada \$26.50
All other countries \$38 U.S.

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SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRY:

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inquiry about your subscription.

INTERNATIONAL EDITIONS

Nachrichten Aus Israel (German), Postfach
290, Ringwiesenstrasse 12a CH-8600
Dübendorf Switzerland • Nieuws Uit Israel
(Dutch), Postbus 193, 3940 AD Doorn,
Netherlands • Notícias de Israel (Portuguese),
Caixa Postal 1688, 90001-970 Porto Alegre
RS, Brazil
• Noticias de Israel (Spanish), PO Box 84309
Lexington, SC 29073 • Nouvelles d'Israel
(French), Case Postale 290,
Ringwiesenstrasse 12a CH-8600 Dübendorf
Switzerland

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Israel's history is the history of God's dealings in this world. God writes His world history as He deals with Israel. Despite all of Israel's failures and despite all the upheavals in world history, God has preserved Israel so that it not only still exists, but also is thriving before the peoples.

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Dear Friends of Israel,

BY FREDI WINKLER

What will become of Gaza following Israel's victory over Hamas? That is the big question that arises. For Israel, only the total destruction of Hamas as a military, political, and religious power is acceptable. Since Israel's civilian population has repeatedly suffered rocket fire from Gaza, the Israeli army has already carried out various military operations. Even though Hamas was severely damaged each time, the terrorist organization always recovered relatively quickly, due to help from Iran and other sympathizers. However, what Hamas has done this time is so outrageous, so atrocious, that Israel concluded: Now Hamas must be completely annihilated, no matter the cost.

It is not easy to eliminate Hamas fighters, because they hide themselves among the civilian popula-

tion: in hospitals, schools, and other civilian facilities. The approximately 500 kilometer (310 mile) long underground tunnel system—which is like an underground city—has to be destroyed. Achieving that is difficult and time consuming. It also must be remembered that Israeli hostages are still being held captive by Hamas. Thank God that during the week-long ceasefire, at least a majority of the women and children were released through a prisoner exchange.

For Israel, it is clear that after the war, Hamas can no longer have any presence in the Gaza Strip. But who will govern in its place? That is a big question, to which there is no real answer for the time being. However, one thing is certain: An Israeli military presence there will have to last for quite a while, to ensure that conditions like those



under Hamas will not return. Yet, hard as it is to believe, there are still those who somehow sympathize with Hamas. After everything it has done to Israeli villages bordering the Gaza Strip, one has to say that Hamas is just like ISIS, which had nothing but violence and bestial murder for everyone that stood in its way. It is to be hoped that Hamas will find the same final international condemnation and rejection that ISIS did.

We should also keep in mind that additionally, Israel is being threatened in the north, with rockets coming from Lebanon. All Israeli towns within a distance of 4 km (2.5 mi.) from the Lebanese border had to be evacuated. Local residents were temporarily put up in hotels. This is another problem that needs to be solved—either through international mediation, or by another war.

In all of this that is yet to come, the United States—which has supported Israel in its war against Hamas in an almost unbelievable way—will have an important and decisive say. Even if restoring Israel's security and relative peace can be

accomplished, concern and fear of a much larger attack remains, since Iran has not given up on its plan to wipe out the State of Israel. For instance, Yahya Sinwar, the leader of Hamas in Gaza, has said that the attack was merely the prelude to something much bigger.

From Ezekiel chapter 38, we know that Israel is indeed facing something far more powerful: Gog's attack from the land of Magog. There have been moments during the present war when there was real danger of a second serious front emerging from Lebanon. God was once again merciful, but Israel must live with the reality of this threat. Current events show that the USA will again be supportive if a further war materializes. But when the situation of Ezekiel arises, the Lord God Himself will intervene to glorify His great name throughout the whole world.

In the knowledge that God is in the process of pursuing His purposes, I greet you cordially with Shalom,

Travis Winkler



Israel's Past and Future



BY NORBERT LIETH

The Lord spoke through the prophet Isaiah: “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. Hearken unto me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness” (Isa 46:9-12).



God's declarations have been completely fulfilled in Israel's history, so we can also assume that the pending promises will also be 100% fulfilled. We have good reason to listen to Him!

Because of Israel's disobedience, God had His prophets tell them that Jerusalem would be taken by the Babylonians, the temple destroyed, and the people taken into captivity in Babylon. Moses foretold this at a time when Israel hadn't even inhabited the Promised Land yet.

"Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long; and there shall be no might in thine hand. The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway: So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see [...] The LORD shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and

there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone [...] The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand" (Deut 28:32-34, 36, 49).

This was fulfilled literally in 586 BC. Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king, came to Israel with his troops, captured Jerusalem, and destroyed the temple. Zedekiah, whom Moses had spoken of, was the king who reigned in Judah at that time. However, in His mercy, God didn't decree Israel's total destruction. He promised that Babylonian rule would only last 70 years, after which He would bring Israel back to their homeland:

"For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jer 29:10-11).

The Jewish State isn't a product of chance or an EU accomplishment, but springs from the actions of the God of Israel among the nations.

In 609 BC, Babylon was the ultimate world power. But in 539 BC, the Persians under King Cyrus arrived and defeated the Babylonians. At this time (538 BC), Cyrus allowed the Israelites to return to their homeland, resettle the land, and rebuild the temple. Babylon's reign lasted exactly 70 years.

Here are some important dates in Babylon's rise and fall as a world power:

- 616 BC: Babylon's first victories over the Assyrians
- 614 BC: Assyria falls
- 612 BC: Nineveh falls
- 610 BC: Harran (major Assyrian city) occupied by Babylon
- 609 BC: The remnants of Assyria's forces, along with Egyptian forces, come from Carchemish in an attempt to retake Harran. They fail, and the remainder of Assyria fades into history. From 609 BC onward, Babylon is the uncontested sole world power.
- 605 BC: The first occupation of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and

the first expulsion of the Jews, including the prophet Daniel (Dan 1:1)

- 597 BC: Another exodus of Jews from Israel, including Ezekiel (Ezek 1:2)
- 586 BC: Jerusalem destroyed; another deportation of the Jews
- 582/581 BC: A fourth captivity (Jer 52:27-30)
- 538 BC: The Persian king decrees that the Jews should return to their homeland and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:1).
- 539 BC: Babylon completely conquered by the Persians (Dan 5—6)
- 609—539 = 70 years: The Lord's Word concerning Babylon was 100% fulfilled.

Why did the Lord limit the length of Babylon's reign to 70 years, and then restore Israel to their homeland? Had the people changed? Had they repented? Had their hearts turned toward their God? Not at all! We find the answer in Isaiah 45:4, where God tells Cyrus, "For Jacob

my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." About 170 years before Cyrus entered the scene, Isaiah, inspired by the Holy Spirit, had already called him by name! Cyrus was a pagan king, and therefore ignorant of the God of Israel. Yet he served Him by helping to fulfill His Word. For the sake of Israel's divine election, he had to send God's people home. The Almighty directs and steers world politics to conform to His will, causing His people to achieve their purpose (Ezra 1:1ff.). And it's the same today. The Jewish State isn't a product of chance or an EU accomplishment, but springs from the actions of the God of Israel among the nations. Everything happening today in global politics, be it for or against Israel, is ultimately serving God's plan for redemptive history.

What was the underlying reason for Israel's release? The answer is that God's promises to the Patriarchs must be fulfilled. The Messiah was to be born a Jew in Israel. But this

could only be possible when Jews were back in their homeland, had settled the land, and were in possession of a new temple. This is because Jesus was to be born in Bethlehem, go to His temple, die in Jerusalem, and rise from the dead. The redemption of the world was to be accomplished in Jerusalem. And so, it was necessary for the Jews to return to their country. Again, the basis for this lies solely in Jesus. The New Testament says, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal 4:4).

Israel's ruling class rejected Jesus when He came, resulting in Him being crucified. Shortly before His death, the Lord prophesied about Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye

Israel is like the pen in God's hand. The Lord didn't throw this pen away; He picks it up again and again to continue writing. And He will eventually record the end of the story with it as well.



shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matt 23:37-39). Other passages record that Jesus also announced that Jerusalem would again be captured by an enemy power, the temple destroyed, and the people scattered—but this time throughout the world (Luke 21:5-7, 20-24). These words were fulfilled in 70 AD, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, burned the temple, and led countless Jews into captivity among the Gentiles. Coincidence or not, the destruction of the second temple happened on the same exact day, centuries later, as the destruction of the first temple by the Babylonians—the 9th of Av (July/August).

The little word “till” in Matthew 23:39 has an oversized meaning. It builds a bridge of sorts, making it clear that the peo-

ple will not remain scattered this time either, but in later times, Jews from around the globe will return their homeland. And indeed, there has been a Jewish State since 1948 (after roughly 1900 years of diaspora), and Jerusalem has belonged to the Israelites again since 1967! Incidentally, that little word “till” also refutes so-called Replacement Theology, which claims that the Church has taken Israel's place and the Jewish people therefore have no future. Israel's history is the history of God's dealings in this world. God writes His world history as He deals with Israel. Israel is like the pen in God's hand. The Lord didn't throw this pen away; He picks it up again and again to continue writing. And He will eventually record the end of the story with it as well.

Why did Almighty God allow the Jews to return, and why did He return their land to them? What was the underlying reason?

The Christian Church isn't a sponge that erases the lines God wrote with His pen, Israel. Instead, Christianity's history is written with a Jewish pen. Despite all of Israel's failures and despite all the upheavals in world history, God has preserved Israel



so that it not only still exists, but also is thriving before the peoples.

In 1933, Hitler's first year as Chancellor, German theologian and professor Karl Barth preached a sermon whose "theme is Jesus as a Jew. Copies were made the following day, and Barth even sent the sermon to Hitler. The Jewishness of Jesus offended some in the church, and they walked out." He preached, among other things, that "the Jew reminds us through his very existence that we are not Jews and therefore really 'without Christ, alien and outside the commonwealth of Israel and alien to the covenants of promise, without hope and with-

out God in the world' (Eph 2:12). The Jew reminds us that it really is something special, new, and wonderful if we are no longer guests and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God' (Eph 2:19). We are not this innately. [...] God's covenant and truth were not broken but rather were fulfilled by those in Israel—but also by those among the Gentiles, who now recognized and accepted God's mercy as the work of his covenant and truth." In other words, the Jews remain God's covenant people, and the Christian Church joins alongside them—not in their place. Barth

“was forced to leave Germany in 1934 after refusing to swear the loyalty oath to Hitler that was required of university professors as civil servants.”

Why did Almighty God allow the Jews to return, and why did He return their land to them? What was the underlying reason? They hadn't improved in exile, and most of Israel still rejects the Lord Jesus. The reason is the same as why the Jews were brought back from Babylonian captivity. They returned from the first captivity so Jesus could enter the world for the first time (Bethlehem). The second time, the Jews returned (and are returning still) from the worldwide Diaspora so Jesus can return the second time, and in glory! His return then is linked to the Jewish people's existence in their own country.

The prophets have testified on behalf of the living God in numerous places that the Lord Jesus will return to Jerusalem (His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, according to Zechariah), save His people, and will rule the whole

world from Jerusalem. A point in Israel's history will and must come when those who once rejected Him and cried out, “We will not have this man to reign over us” (Luke 19:14b), will instead cry out, “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matt 23:39b).

Jesus Himself promised that He would return one day: “And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven” (Mark 13:26-27).

The Lord will indeed return to bring the last dispersed Jews back to the land of Israel. Although Israel will still have to go through a great deal of hardship, armed conflict, and great tribulation in the coming age, it's pointless for anti-Jewish nations to even attempt to erase it from the map. They won't succeed. Matthew 24:34-35 says, “Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth

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shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”

The return of the Jews to their land is an unmistakable sign that Christ's return is close at hand, because the sole purpose of Israel's restoration is His return: “In the latter days ye shall consider it. At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest” (Jer 30:24b-31:2).

In the last days, the Jewish people who escaped the sword (for example, the Holocaust, that most terrible of genocides) will find mercy “in the wilderness.” The desolate places of their homeland will be rebuilt (Ezek 36:33-36). The metropolis of Tel Aviv is one present-day realization of this divine promise. It

was built on Mediterranean sand dunes about 100 years ago. What began as pitiful shacks has become an impressive city. Our generation is witness to the fulfillment of all these Bible prophecies. Israel's return and reconstruction will ultimately result in the Lord returning and bringing Israel to rest in the messianic kingdom (Heb 4:8-9).

God has made a statement with the fact that the Jews are home again in their own country, and with their own state. We who are of another nationality should heed it, since the Bible says, “And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth” (Isa 11:12). An ensign is a “flag or standard, especially a military or naval one indicating nationality.” Israel's gathering into its homeland is therefore given

to us as one such sign. The prophet Jeremiah also says this while explicitly addressing the nations, the Gentile peoples: “Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock” (Jer 31:10).

There have been repeated claims that East Jerusalem should become the Palestinian capital, since it used to be completely Arab. But the fact is, there have been Jews in East Jerusalem for longer than Arabs have lived there. The Jews were also there first, long before our era began.

When King David conquered Jerusalem in roughly 1000 BC, the city was inhabited by the Jebusites (2 Sam 5:6-9). They weren't Arabs in the modern sense, but a Canaanite people group that no longer exists (Gen 10:16; 15:21; Ex 3:8). The Jebusites were no more Arab than any other Canaanite people living in the region at the time (which included the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Hivites). These people groups, as well as the Philistines,

had descended from Ham and not Shem (Gen 10:6-21). Arabs, on the other hand, are a Semitic ethnic group. David purchased the threshing floor in East Jerusalem—on which the Jewish temple was later built—from a Jebusite named Ornan (also called Araunah: 2 Sam 24:17-25; 1 Chr 21:15-29; 2 Chr 3:1).

After the Jews were expelled from their homeland around 70 AD, the Romans initially occupied it. The Muslims didn't conquer it until 638 AD. But even during that era, Israel and Jerusalem were never entirely “Jew-free.” Jews once again formed the largest portion of Jerusalem's population beginning in 1844, and 1882 saw the first major wave of Jews returning and immigrating to their homeland. It wasn't until the 1948 Arab-Israeli War that the Arab Legion conquered East Jerusalem, expelled the Jewish population, plundered Jewish homes, destroyed synagogues, and deliberately desecrated Jewish graves on the Mount of Olives. For justice's sake, it's only fair to ask: Who were East Jerusalem's true “occupiers”? It

The metropolis of Tel Aviv is one present-day realization of this divine promise. It was built on Mediterranean sand dunes about 100 years ago. What began as pitiful shacks has become an impressive city.

wasn't until 1967 that East Jerusalem was again liberated by the Israelis. Any reputable history book would present the facts of the situation. The only question is whether we're willing to consider those facts objectively.

The following timeline makes it clear that the Canaanite period was superseded by the Israelites when God brought them into the land. Since the Canaanites have completely disappeared from history, none but Israel can claim ownership of Jewish lands. All other nations listed only temporarily occupied Jewish lands until 1948, when the Jews regained the State—which belonged to them and nobody else.

- 3300 BC: Canaanites
- 1600 BC: Israel
- 586 BC: Babylonians



- 538 BC: Persians
- 332 BC: Hellenists (Greeks)
- 63 BC: Romans
- 324 AD: Byzantines
(under Constantine)
- 638 AD: Arabs (Muslim)
- 1099 AD: Crusaders
- 1260 AD: Mamluks (a dynasty
of slave soldiers from the
Caucasus and Russia)
- 1517 AD: Ottomans (Turkey)
- 1917 AD: British
- 1948 AD: Israel

(NAI0123/1326)



On the Horizon

NEWS IN
BRIEF



INDIA

Agreement to Send Workers to Israel

In May 2023, negotiations between the Israeli and Indian governments for the arrival of 10,000 Indian workers, split between the construction and nursing industries, were first reported.



However, the current crisis and subsequent shortage of approximately 100,000 workers in the construction industry were unforeseen at that time.

MK Eliyahu Revivo, chairman of the Foreign

Workers Committee, who led the efforts to finalize the agreement, expressed his satisfaction, stating, "We worked tirelessly to secure this agreement, which serves as a lifeline for the construction and nursing industries in our complicated reality."

The agreement's appendix outlines its purpose, stating, "The agreement, subject to government approval, aims to establish a bilateral framework for the recruitment of foreign workers from India."

"It also aims to protect their rights in compliance with labor laws, subject to the regulations and procedures applicable in each country. The agreement further emphasizes that the foreign workers entering Israel under this agreement must receive appropriate training for their respective fields, as stipulated in the implementing arrangements. They must also fully comprehend their obligations and rights in Israel, including their duty to return to their home country upon



Credit: KNESSET SPOKESPERSON/DANI SHEM TOV

IRAN SENDING ANIMALS TO SPACE?

Iran said it sent a capsule to orbit carrying animals as it prepares for human missions in coming years.

Telecommunications Minister Isa Zarepour said the launch of the 500-kilogram (1,000-pound) capsule is aimed at sending Iranian astronauts to space in coming years. He did not say what kind of animals were in the capsule.

In 2013, Iran said it sent a monkey into space and returned it successfully.

It says its satellite program is for scientific research and other civilian applications. The US and other Western countries have long been suspicious of the program because the same technology can be used to develop long-range missiles.

-timesofisrael.com
6 December 2023

the completion of their legal work period in Israel.”

-www.jpost.com, 22 November 2023

Commentary: In view of the Hamas-implemented atrocities on 7 October 2023, and Israel calling to arms some 360,000 reservists, many places of employment are left vacant. So, foreign workers are welcomed.

What is interesting is that this development of labor shortages is also being experienced by countries not at war.

ExplodingTopics.com reveals statistics about global labor shortages.

2018 45%

2019 54%

Then, after the pandemic:

2021 69%

2022 75%

2023 77% (labor shortage globally)

Even in the most populous country in the world, China, we read: “A U.S. geographer and noted authority on China’s urbanization seeks to explain the apparent paradox between reported recent shortages of migrant labor in cities in eastern China’s export-oriented manufacturing belt and the abundant supply of labor in China’s rural areas.”

Indeed, this is a paradox. The labor force has increased dramatically for the last 100 years: from about 2 billion people at the beginning of the 1900s, to almost 8 billion now. Moreover, in light of the Industrial Revolution, the agricultural sector, which once employed over 90% of the population, has now decreased to 1-2%. Women in the labor force were rare a century ago; today, a statistic states, “Women account for 47.7% of the global labor force.” Experts in the field do not present a united opinion, for there are multiple reasons.

From a Biblical perspective, we see the increasing fulfillment of Scriptures such as Revelation 18:3: “For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.” We note, “...the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.” The Greek Bible dictionary identifies the last word as “straining, strenuous, or strength ... figuratively, luxury.” While there seems to be much discontent among people in our days, most do not realize that



NEWS IN BRIEF



BAN SOUGHT ON EXPORTING F-35 PARTS

Human rights lawyers went to court in the Netherlands to call for a halt to the export of fighter jet parts to Israel that could be used in strikes on the Gaza Strip.

The organizations allege that delivery of parts for F-35 jets makes the Netherlands complicit in possible war crimes being committed by Israel in its war with Hamas.

The rights lawyers want The Hague District Court to issue an injunction banning the exports of F-35 parts that are stored in a warehouse in the town of Woensdrecht.

Government lawyer Reimer Veldhuis urged the court's single judge to reject the injunction, saying that even if it were to uphold the rights lawyers' legal arguments and ban exports, "the United States would deliver these parts to Israel from another place."

He added that Israel has the right to self-defense.

-timesofisrael.com
5 December 2023

we never had so many riches of merchandise at our disposal than ever before in history. People are indoctrinated from the media, which promises them satisfaction, peace, and happiness with the purchase of certain products — mostly, things we don't need.

This Bible passage exemplifies the times in which we live. Verse 7b reveals the spirit of luxurious, merchandise-loving, end-time humanity: "for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." That prophecy is progressively being fulfilled today.



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(See *Progressive Globalism*, Item #1092, \$5.50.)



NETHERLANDS

Antisemitic Incidents Up 800%

"It is very worrying that Jews in the Netherlands are held responsible for conflicts taking place in the Middle East," read the CIDI report. "It seems as if Israel is being used to beat Jews."



Activists hold up a banner denouncing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for Israel's actions during the war with Hamas as they demonstrate at the entrance of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands. (Aleks Furtula/AP)



According to CIDI researcher and policy advisor Hans Wallage, it's not only the numbers that have grown—the range of attacks on Jews has increased as well.

"I see way more variety of different incidents that I didn't see before, and also more variety in the place where it happens," Wallage told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "There are a lot of schools—elementary, high schools, universities—having way more incidents that I didn't see before the 7th of October."

Most of the conspiracy theories circulating through Dutch schools follow old anti-semitic tropes, simply repackaged for a younger generation, said CIDI director Naomi Mestrum.

Although it is typical for antisemitism to flare in the Netherlands during conflicts in Israel and the Palestinian territories, CIDI researchers said they have never seen a surge of incidents like this before. And like other Jewish communities across Europe, many Dutch Jews feel they are in new territory.

-www.jta.org, 8 November 2023

Commentary: The Netherlands has been known as having some of the most liberal-minded people in the world. Their strong opposition to Germany's Nazi regime is well-documented. Why then an 800% increase in anti-

semitic incidents? The answer apparently lies in the popularity of social media: "It's the Jews' fault" seems almost natural for the masses to repeat. The article also reports that the *Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad* ("Dutch Jewish Weekly") "switched from its clear plastic packaging to anonymous white envelopes." Why? Because subscribers "didn't want their neighbors to know they were Jewish."

There is another reason, which lies in the spiritual world. Only one nation has been chosen by God Himself to be the carrier of the law and the fulfillment; namely, Israel. The god of this world and his innumerable demons are eager to hinder the fulfillment of the prophetic Word. The nation that brought forth the Son of God, manifested in the flesh, continues to experience what is written in Revelation 12:17: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Someone may now object, "But the Jews do not have the testimony of Jesus Christ." The apostle Paul warns, "Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee" (Romans



NEWS IN BRIEF



FIRST JEWISH UNIVERSITY IN SOUTH AMERICA

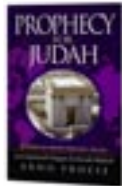
The Latin American Rabbinical Seminary in Buenos Aires—which is affiliated with the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, the Conservative movement’s flagship—obtained legal approval to establish the Isaac Abarbanel Jewish University Institute. The school will confer diploma, bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in subjects ranging from Jewish and religious studies to ethics to ancient manuscripts.

“This makes Argentina better by allowing it to enrich its diversity and, at the same time, expand the scope of its academic proposal to other regions of the world,” said Jaime Perczyk, Argentina’s education minister, in a statement. Rabbi Ariel Stofenmacher, the rector of the rabbinical seminary, said the university will be “a lighthouse beacon for Latin America.”

One other Jewish university exists in the rest of Latin America: the Hebrew University of Mexico, which is located in Mexico City and run by an Argentine rabbi, Daniel Fainstein.

-jpost.com
6 December 2023

11:18). Who is this root? Moses describes them: “For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth” (Deuteronomy 14:2). Thus, we continue to insist loudly and clearly: the Jews are called by God Himself to be a people above all other people in the world. That is not based on what they do or don’t do, but on what they are: chosen by an unconditional covenant of God. In Revelation 5:5, we have additional identification: “And one of the elders



saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”
8129

(See *Prophecy for Judah*, Item #1084, \$17.50.)



ISRAEL

War Costing Economy \$600 Million Weekly

The absence of thousands of workers from their jobs due to the ongoing war with the Hamas terror group has been costing the Israeli economy an estimated NIS 2.3 billion (\$600 million) a week, or about 6 percent of the weekly GDP, according to a research report released by the Bank of Israel.



More than 200,000 people have been displaced from communities along the southern and northern borders in the aftermath of the October 7 atrocities perpetrated by Hamas, which killed over [1,200] people, a majority of them civilians, including babies, children and the elderly after some 3,000 terrorists burst into the country from the Gaza Strip by land, sea, and air.

The Israeli army has called up more than 300,000 reservists—many of whom work in global tech companies and other types



Ro'i, Josh, and Dror, reservist tankers on the Israel-Lebanon border.
(Lazar Berman/Times of Israel)

of businesses—to join the fighting.

NIS 590 million (\$154 million) is the cost stemming from the absence at work of 144,000 evacuated residents from war-affected areas, and about NIS 500 million (\$130 million) is the cost resulting from the extensive recruitment of about 360,000 reserve soldiers.

-www.timesofisrael.com, 9 November 2023

Commentary: War is something horrible. As has been historically proven, the cost of war is mostly borne by women, children, and families. In this case, some 200,000 have been displaced, and 300,000 reservists can no longer fulfill their duties at home and work. Many of these displaced people do not know what happened to their friends and relatives, even immediate family, not to mention the possessions they had to leave behind.

Our question: What will be the end? We quote the prophetic Word: “At that time will I bring you again, even in the

time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord” (Zephaniah 3:20).

While the world is divided, with one group blessing the people—“a praise among all people of the earth”—equally, many nations are in opposition.



Yet Scripture will and must be fulfilled; that is our continued prayer for Israel. 8130

(See *Israel Matters*, Item #2328, \$17.99)



ISRAEL

Digital Iron Dome to Combat Fake News

Fake news is a scourge at all times, but it's especially problematic during war, where dissemination of falsehoods can trigger violence. The recent reporting that Israel had targeted a hospital in the Gaza Strip was debunked by video and audio footage, but not before it prompted tens of thousands of people across the world to intensify their protests, and threats of retaliation [being] made.



Digital Iron Dome is an entirely volunteer effort by high-tech executives, former intelligence unit veterans and major tech giants operating in Israel including Google Meta (Facebook and WhatsApp),



Image by AndryDj via Shutterstock.com



X (formerly known as Twitter), TikTok and LinkedIn.

“The proliferation of violent and false content on social media poses a significant threat, often disseminated by hostile foreign entities. Such content stokes fear, disrupts public discourse, and even hinders the flow of accurate information to decision-makers.”

Digital Iron Dome should not be confused with Cyber Dome, a government-sponsored initiative to combat fake news.

A key ingredient to the Cyber Dome’s “secret sauce” is artificial intelligence. *The Week* reports that the IDF is using generative AI platforms such as ChatGPT “to sift through the vast amounts of information pouring into their systems and identify significant threats. The IDF uses these platforms to build its defense shield and to enhance its attack capabilities during war.”

-www.israel21c.org, 26 October 2023

Commentary: Again, it is not surprising that Israel is at the forefront

when it comes to using high-tech — including AI — to combat the enemy. Doubtless, this will be a prime product for defense ministries throughout the rest of the world. Only Israel has the practical experience directly on the battlefield. Subsequently, this horrific slaughter of civilians by Hamas terrorists, will in the end turn out to be an advantage for Israel.

Here we are reminded of the first Zionist, Theodor Herzl. Way back in February of 1896, he wrote the book *Der Judenstaat* (“The Jewish State”). In the conclusion, he said something rather remarkable; namely, how the world will be enriched by Jewish accomplishment:

“We shall live at last as free men on our own soil, and die peacefully in our own homes.

“The world will be freed by our liberty, enriched by our wealth, magnified by our greatness.

“And whatever we attempt there to accomplish for our own welfare, will react powerfully and beneficially for the good of humanity.” 8132



(See *The Case for Zionism*, Item #2327, \$14.99.)



With a Thankful Heart

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10).

By David Phillips (Ebenezer’s CEO)

It is now fourteen years since I began serving here at the Ebenezer Home, and it is with a very thankful heart that I sit down and write this. In January 2023, I stepped into the role as Ebenezer’s new CEO. It’s been a year since that day, and despite the many challenges and hard work, our Heavenly Father has blessed me in a very personal and deep way: He brought prayer warriors to surround me. *Toda raba* to each one of you who has labored in prayer for the Home, especially for me as I learn this new role. Our Father has used your prayers mightily to uphold, encourage, and guide me as I care for Ebenezer.

This past year has seen many changes, as well as improvements, in the Home. We can’t thank you enough for your love and support as we do the required and much needed projects. It’s a blessing to see the residents enjoy the outside sitting area, and the new entrance that allows them to move around independently. The kitchen staff are enjoying a newly renovated freezer and fridge room (which was a must, as the walk-in fridge and freezer was often breaking down). We were able to replace our old kitchen stove, which was giving us a lot of trouble and becoming very dangerous to operate. And now, we are also working toward collect-



ing the funds needed to purchase our building (see our article from Sept. 2023 for details). This is just to name a few of the projects that have been going on around here.

But we could only accomplish these projects because of your love and support. Our Father has used YOU to bless the Ebenezer Home this past year, and I want to thank each one for standing beside us and helping to carry this ministry onward.

As Ebenezer's CEO, I also want to thank the entire Midnight Call team for your amazing love and support for this ministry and work! Your labor of love for Ebenezer has blessed us so much.

There is one special person I would like to share about, who taught me a lot about life as a young adult over 30 years ago, when I spent quite a few months at Midnight Call Ministry.

Mr. Froese, thank you for teaching me all you did, but especially one particular lesson, which I will remember and practice all my life: to think big and not to hesitate. You used to tell me to "think big," but then you showed me how to put this into daily practice. Learning to

think on a different scale strengthened my faith. Yes, God the Father directs all that we think and do; He gives the faith, courage, and patience. Thank you for teaching me these lessons (and many more).

You all have faithfully stood beside us, encouraging, praying, and helping us in so many ways. You have not only blessed us here at Ebenezer, but also bless our supporters. From the depths of our hearts, thank you! May our Heavenly Father reward you for all that you do.

We truly look forward to watching what the Lord will do this coming year, and will share more about the upcoming events with you all.

Special greetings from here in Haifa. May the Holy One of Israel abundantly bless the year 2024 for you.

Ebenezer and the War

At the time of this writing, Ebenezer has been working hard to bring our preparations up to the highest level, even though we have been prepared to the level of mandatory request and national standard of preparedness. We have



received new instructions and government requests to upgrade to higher levels of readiness, such as: food for 3 weeks (besides what we are required to have ahead of time), extra water, purchasing satellite phones (in the event communication stops working), extra medications and medical supplies, etc.

This war is unlike any other and requires us to be prepared in ways we've never been before. The Ministry of Welfare and the Israel Home Front Command are in daily contact with me. We know Yeshua keeps and protects us, and without Him, all these preparations would be in vain. But we also

realize we must do our absolute best to provide for our elderly in the most complete way possible, and look after those whom He has entrusted to our care. We pray constantly to know how to do this. Thank you for keeping us in your prayers, and may the following verses bless you:

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good” (Psalm 122:6-9).



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“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah” (Jeremiah 31:31).

BY ARNO FROESE

We immediately note that this is directed toward the house of Israel and the house of Judah. What is this new covenant? It is the covenant based exclusively on the blood of the Lamb; thus, replacing the blood covenant of the old, which continually required the blood of animals.

Verse 32 explains: “Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD.” The reason for the new covenant is that Israel did the unthinkable: “my covenant they brake.”

We do well to read this chapter carefully and note the first verse:

“At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.” That is the promise of the new covenant, which does not require Israel to fulfill certain obligations in order to attain it. This, incidentally, reminds those who are born again of the Spirit of God from among the Gentiles, that we have not earned our salvation, but it was given to us freely. Ephesians 2:8-9 testifies: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

When occupying ourselves with the Jewish nation Israel, we must always keep in mind God’s unconditional promise for them: “they shall be my people.”

During the Jewish absence from the Promised Land, they

Jews have always lived in Jerusalem, with 3,000 plus years of proven records. Even as they were dispersed all over the world, on all continents and in virtually every country on planet earth, the yearning, “Next year in Jerusalem” was kept alive.

never forgot Zion. From generation to generation, at the end of the Passover Seder and the end of the Yom Kippur service, they would proclaim or sing, *L'Shana Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim* (“Next year in Jerusalem”). Jews have always lived in Jerusalem, with 3,000 plus years of proven records. Even as they were dispersed all over the world, on all continents and in virtually every country on planet earth, the yearning, “Next year in Jerusalem” was kept alive.

The great majority of Jews were not necessarily religious; thus, the first mass exodus to the land of Israel came from the non-religious camp.

The desire to return to Jerusalem gave birth to Zionism. It was estab-

lished as a political organization in 1897 by Theodor Herzl in Basel, Switzerland. JewishHistory.org reports:

Most historians identify five waves of immigration of Jews to the Land of Israel. The First Aliyah—the first of these waves—covers the period from 1881 to 1901. This 20 year time-frame preceded official Zionism, which Theodore Herzl inaugurated in 1897.

It is significant that its participants did not give their movement a non-descript, generic name such as The Jewish Society for Re-colonization of the Holy Land. They gave it a name based on a biblical verse. Even though theirs was in effect a secular movement, it was built upon a religious impetus and feeling. The verse summarized

their entire philosophy: It was time to get up and leave the Diaspora, the Exile.

Why, we may ask, did they wait 2,000 years? We find the answer in Ezekiel 36, where the prophet is ordered to “prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD.” That is somewhat strange; it does not speak to the people. Further down we read why the topographical land is addressed first: The land is being prepared for the people. Thus, we read in verse 8: “But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.”

There is more. The Jewish people had to have the courage to do something they hadn't done for 2,000 years: be farmers and soldiers. Thus, God had to intervene supernaturally. We read: “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony

heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26). Even today, a Jew in Israel is incomparable to a Jew in the Diaspora. They have received a new heart and a new spirit.

But that's not the end; verse 27 declares that this is not only a new spirit, but also “my spirit.” That is God's goal with His people, and He will bring it to pass in His time.

Summarizing the short history of modern Israel, we see that the motivation was not exclusively religious, but self-determination. Interestingly, it was the Soviet Union (atheists) which greatly contributed weapons to the Jews to defend themselves. At that time, the UK and the USA had an arms embargo on Middle East countries and territories. Later, as Israel progressed and did not become a communist state, they leaned heavily on the French for weapons. The Six Day War was primarily won with French-supplied Mirage jet fighters. That friendship did not last long, and France also placed an arms embargo against Israel. A little later

Even today, a Jew in Israel is incomparable to a Jew in the Diaspora. They have received a new heart and a new spirit.

in 1968, US President Johnson agreed to sell Phantom jet fighters to Israel.

Today, the tables have turned completely. The US heavily depends on military technology developed and proven in Israel. The Jewish nation has become a power to be reckoned with, with superior military expertise, not to mention their advances in agricultural sci-

ence and the ever-growing high-tech industry.

However, all the developments are of a temporary nature. In Jeremiah 31, God guarantees the existence of Israel based on the universe. Verse 36 reads: "If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever." (NFI)

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