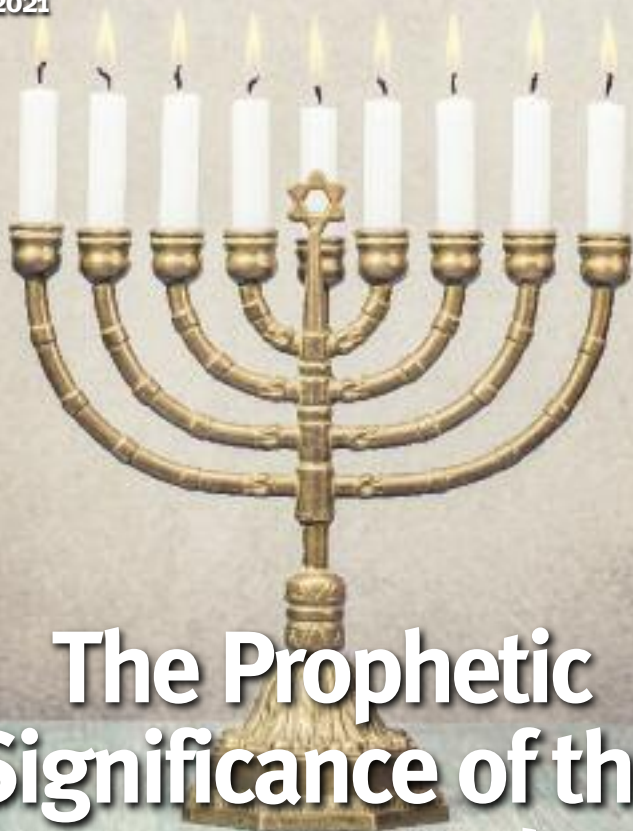


NEWS FROM ISRAEL

February 2021

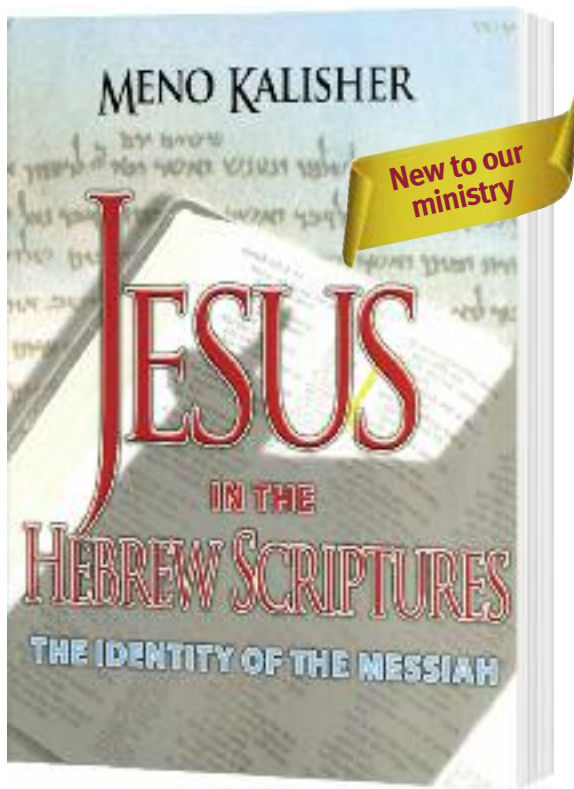
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The Prophetic Significance of the Lampstand

Why the Jews Are Different P.17 • Pandemic Brings Dark Time to Jerusalem P.20

Why should one bother learning all those details out of a book that is nearly 3000 years old?



Jesus in the Hebrew Scriptures? Wasn't He supposed to be in the New Testament only? Of course He is prominently featured in the many prophecies which foretell his first and second comings. This amazing book takes a detailed and comprehensive look at these examples.

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Why should one bother learning all those details out of a book that is nearly 3000 years old? Because Jesus says: "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also" (John 14:7). There is nothing more important in the world than knowing Jesus—and knowing Him well— because "he who does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 John 5:12).

JESUS IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES ITEM #2373

172 pgs. • Paperback

\$9.95 Author: Meno Kalisher

Meno Kalisher is a native-born Israeli whose father was a Holocaust survivor, and mother a Jew from Iran. Meno's parents were among the first Messianic Jewish believers in Israel. Meno pastors the Jerusalem Assembly House of Redemption, a Messianic congregation in the heart of Jerusalem, composed of both Jewish and Gentile believers.



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It's true "that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). The lampstand in the tabernacle will point us to this light. And if we call ourselves Christians, then the Bible is prompting us to live in this light.

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Dear Friends of Israel,

BY FREDI WINKLER



That which didn't seem possible is now happening: new elections will be held in Israel in March. Why did it come to this? The alleged reason is that the Netanyahu government had not yet set a budget by December 23, required by law as the last possible date. As to be expected, Netanyahu blamed the coalition partner Benny Gantz of the Blue-and-White party, for not agreeing to once again postpone the deadline for establishing a budget. Benny Gantz, on the other hand, refused to further tolerate Netanyahu's systematic noncompliance with contractual points of the coalition agreement.

What will be the result of the next elections? Netanyahu

once again hopes that he will emerge with a big victory. Undoubtedly, Netanyahu has achieved some successes, which have earned him points among the people and could give him an irresistible boost. For instance, at the political level, there is the establishment of relations with several Arab and Islamic countries that once viewed Israel with skepticism, if not hostility. And then there is the successful and rapid development of a vaccine against the coronavirus, in which Israel leads worldwide and serves as a role model.

Still, there are serious reasons for Netanyahu to be concerned. Even within his own party, dissatisfaction is growing and resistance to him has



arisen. One of Netanyahu's Likud members in Parliament has resigned to form an opposition party. Another has joined him, and there is a danger that more will follow. Other new parties have also been formed; all aim to remove Netanyahu from office through the elections. They want to bring the Netanyahu era to an end, despite all its merits. It is hard to predict whether this will succeed. But it is apparent that the people are tired of the present situation and want a change.

The establishment of normalized relations with the United Arab Emirates and other Islamic states is without a doubt to Netanyahu's credit; though the good relationship with the United States and the Trump administration did, of course, play a significant role. Allegedly, more Islamic nations are to follow. In view of this almost unbelievable development, the question inevitably arises as to whether this may be the situation of which Paul

writes: "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thess 5:3).

What is striking about these accords with the United Arab Emirates and other Islamic nations, is that there is always talk of "agreeing on peace," even though Israel has not been at war with these countries. In Israel, there was real euphoria about the establishment of relations with the Emirates. About 70,000 Israelis visited this country within a short time...until the coronavirus put an end to travel.

Many of our questions remain unanswered. How will all this continue in our world plagued by the coronavirus? However, trust in our heavenly Lord gives us confidence in this situation.

Strengthened in this confidence, I greet you with Shalom,

Trevor Winkler



The Prophetic Significance of the Lampstand

SAMUEL RINDLISBACHER

“**Y**ou shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand shall be made of hammered work: its base, its stem, its cups, its calyxes, and its flowers shall be of one piece with it. And there shall be six branches going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on one branch, and three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on the other branch—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. And on the lampstand itself there shall be four cups made like almond blossoms, with their calyxes and flowers, and a calyx of one piece with it under each pair of the six branches going out from the lampstand. Their calyxes and their branches shall be of one piece with it, the whole of it a single piece of hammered work of pure gold. You shall make seven lamps for it. And the lamps shall be set up so as to give light on the space in front of it. Its tongs and their trays shall be of

pure gold. It shall be made, with all these utensils, out of a talent of pure gold. And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain” (Exodus 25:31-40).

In the Bible, we come to know the character of God as a trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Three persons, and yet one God. For us as people bound to time and space, this isn’t conceptually plausible. Therefore, one of God’s characteristics is light; as it’s said: “This is the message that we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). The passage about the tabernacle’s lampstand points us to eternal light, and thus God Himself, since God is light.

The Psalmist testifies, “...O LORD my God, you are...covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent” (Ps 104:1-2). And when Jesus Christ lived on this earth, He clarified this and said: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness,

The Prophetic Significance of the Lampstand

“...O LORD my God, you are...covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent” (Ps 104:2).



but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).

The Unapproachable Light of God. Jesus Christ is the light, the light of the world. But the Bible reveals this light to us: “[he] who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen” (1 Tim 6:16). It’s telling us that it’s impossible for a “normal” human to encounter God. But that’s exactly what Israel desired as it was brought out of Egypt under Moses’ leadership to stand on Mount Sinai. The conse-

quence was fear and horror. Moreover:

“On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder

Jesus tore the masks from the faces of the theologians of His time, because they weren't interested in the truth, but in affirmation of their own thoughts, views, and desires.

and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. And the LORD said to Moses, 'Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the LORD to look and many of them perish'" (Ex 19:16-21).

God is holy and pure and wrapped in unapproachable light, a light that men are afraid of and can't enter into.

"Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, 'You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die'" (Ex 20:18-19).

The people were afraid because they knew they couldn't survive in God's presence. Even though we

often forget it and only talk about the "loving" God, who is a good friend and helper in every circumstance, the Bible shows us something else. Today, we want to celebrate Jesus, have a huge party with Jesus, and be on top of the world with Jesus. But if we look into God's Word, we see that the first people hid from God!

"But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, 'Where are you?' And he said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself'" (Gen 3:9-10).

And it says of Moses, the greatest man in the Bible [besides Jesus], "And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, 'I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.' When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the

bush, ‘Moses, Moses!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ Then he said, ‘Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.’ And he said, ‘I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God” (Ex 3:2-6).

Even the prophet Isaiah encountered this holy God and cried out, “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!” (Is 6:5).

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul tells of an encounter with the living God: “...since I could not see because of the brightness of that light...” (Acts 22:11a). He had to be led by the hand, and neither ate nor drank for three days because he had encountered God.

And so, we can read about this God: “The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling has seized the godless: ‘Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who

among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?’” (Is 33:14b).

The Light That Reveals Everything.

Wherever God is, there is light, and nothing can remain hidden. When Jesus Christ (the eternal God in human form) walked the earth, everything in His presence had to come into the light and show itself as it really was. One day, a young man came to Him in such a manner. Outwardly he was flawless, lived a morally perfect lifestyle, and attended religious services regularly. But Jesus saw into his heart. “Jesus said to him, ‘If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.’ When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions” (Matt 19:21-22). This young man was shackled to his wealth, to his good standing, and to his flawless reputation. But instead of allowing himself to be helped by Jesus, he went away from Him saddened.

Jesus tore the masks from the faces of the theologians of His time,

For us, the hammer blows on the Cross are the cause of grace in our lives.



because they weren't interested in the truth, but in affirmation of their own thoughts, views, and desires. Even the demons had to show their true faces before Christ.

“And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him.

Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, ‘What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me’” (Mark 5:2-7).

The demons knew who Jesus is: the eternal, holy God, as James also confirms for us: “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!” (James 2:19).

When we humans encounter God, the reaction is always fear and horror—due to sin! Israel cried out in the same way when God encountered them: “You [Moses] speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.” The great prophet Isaiah cried out, “Woe is me! For I am lost.” And it says of the people in Jerusalem, “The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling has seized the godless: ‘Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?’” (Is 33:14).

Yes, it’s true “that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). The lampstand in the tabernacle will point us to this light. And if we call ourselves Christians, then the Bible is prompting us to live in this light.

“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy’” (1 Pet 1:14-16).

Whoever calls himself a Christian can’t knowingly and thoughtlessly

sin, since the Bible says, “Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil” (1 John 3:8a). By this, the Scripture means a willing and conscious holding to sin, regardless of how it looks. But it doesn’t mean that a Christian isn’t able to sin any longer. Whoever claims that a Christian no longer sins is a false teacher! The Bible clearly states: “We all stumble in many ways” (James 3:2). And, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8).

But a Christian no longer has to sin, because Jesus lives in his heart. Christ is stronger than any temptation! When we do fall, let’s go straight to the Lord Jesus and ask Him for cleansing. Jesus didn’t come to save the perfect and sinless, but the lost.

The Hammer of Divine Grace. The fact that we can’t treat sin lightly is revealed to us in the way that the lampstand was made. It weighed 36 kilograms (around 80 pounds) and was made of pure gold. Let’s remember that in the Bible, gold means righteousness bestowed without any contribution from the recipient: “[All

believers] are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:24). “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph 2:8-9).

The Bible shows us that we’re dealing with a holy, pure God, a God for whom sin is always sin, impurity is always impurity, and holiness is always holiness, because God doesn’t change. Nevertheless, He will grant you His grace. God will take you as you are. If you’ve had an abortion, God still loves you. If you’ve committed adultery, God still loves you. If you’ve destroyed your family, God still loves you! That’s grace, because grace means that God takes you, God intended you, God seeks you—no matter how you are, who you are, or what you are.

God’s grace doesn’t come cheap. God isn’t just letting bygones be bygones. This is reflected in the way the lampstand was made. It was formed from a single piece of gold. It was neither poured nor soldered

together, but hammered into shape; blow by blow, a masterpiece of craftsmanship. Before the lampstand had the desired shape, it had to be heated, beaten, cooled, stretched, bent, heated, and beaten repeatedly.

Let’s remember that gold refers to the righteousness given by God. And the multiple hammer blows that form the lampstand direct our gaze to where this righteousness is obtained: on the Cross at Calvary. Wouldn’t the hands and feet of the living God, Jesus Christ, be pierced by powerful hammer blows there?

In the Bible, the hammer is a metaphor for God’s punishment and judgment. Jael used a hammer and tent peg to kill the enemy commander Sisera (Judges 4:17-22). “Is not my word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?” (Jer 23:29). And, “You are my hammer and weapon of war: with you I break nations in pieces; with you I destroy kingdoms” (Jer 51:20).

It’s a hammer once again—this time in the hands of a brutal Roman soldier—that drives the nail of my sin through the feet and hands of

God's Son with powerful blows. The lampstand in the tabernacle will be beaten into shape from blow upon blow from the hammer. In this respect, the hammer confers brilliance to the lampstand. Jesus will be nailed to the Cross in this way, blow by blow. Pay attention to this! God's grace never, never comes cheap. For us, the hammer blows on the Cross are the vehicle of grace in our lives.

“Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed” (Is 53:4-5).

“And if one asks him, ‘What are these wounds on your back?’ he will say, ‘The wounds I received in the house of my friends’” (Zech 13:6). It was blows from the hammer that illuminated the tabernacle, and once again, hammer blows that brought light to the world 1,500 years later. The hammer blows are the judgment—administered to God Him-

self—so that we can be in His light again.

The Almond Blossoms of the Resurrection. Almond blossoms were also affixed to the lampstand in the tabernacle. These are meant to point us to the strength and might of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. We also see this through the following event:

“Moses spoke to the people of Israel. And all their chiefs gave him staffs, one for each chief, according to their fathers' houses, twelve staffs. And the staff of Aaron was among their staffs. And Moses deposited the staffs before the LORD in the tent of the testimony. On the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony, and behold, the staff of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds” (Num 17:6-8).

This reminds us of the prophecy regarding the Lord: “For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him” (Is 53:2).

The Apostle is saying that he wants to be as well-incorporated into Jesus Christ, as connected with Jesus as the almond blossoms were incorporated into the lampstand. Paul knows that strength for living, strength to overcome, and radiance arise from this connectedness with Jesus.



Jesus Christ came to a barren, sterile soil, completely desiccated, as John 1:11 also verifies: “He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.”

They rejected Him, tore the clothes from His body, spit in His face, nailed him to the Cross with blows from a hammer, and tortured Him to death. Just as Aaron’s staff ripened, blossomed, and bore fruit overnight, Jesus also bore fruit from the midst of the barren earth. And just as He reaped fruit, He also wants to bring us in to be with Him, to bear fruit in the same way, and bring about life in the midst of death. Jesus said regarding this, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live” (John 11:25).

As a sign of life, strength, and expectant fruit, the almond blossoms

show us how this happens. The almond blossoms were inseparably joined to the lampstand. Our lives should be inseparable from Jesus in the same way: plugged into God’s source of strength, as Paul writes: “That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death” (Phil 3:10).

The Apostle is saying that he wants to be as well-incorporated into Jesus Christ, as connected with Jesus as the almond blossoms were incorporated into the lampstand. Paul knows that strength for living, strength to overcome, and radiance arise from this connectedness with Jesus. What the Lord says of Himself is proved to be true:

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matt 5:14-16).

We are light, but only when we’re connected to the Person who says of Himself, “I am the light of the world.” It is our mission—both as individuals and as the church of Jesus—to illuminate, to be light, to give guidance to a humanity that’s living in darkness.

The Three Aspects of the Golden Lampstand. We see three aspects for our life in the golden lampstand. First, are we connected with Jesus through the hammer of the Cross? Are we affirming Calvary and its consequences in our life? Second, do almond blossoms also exist, the strength of the resurrection in a life with Jesus? And third, are we willing to be a light for Jesus? To illuminate the place where Jesus has placed us?

Our strength is small and limited. We’re often fearful and discouraged. Yet in a life with Jesus, we can learn to stand when we willingly submit, as the hymnwriter eloquently states:

Submission to the will of Him
who loves me still
Is surety of His love revealed
My soul shall rise above the world
in which I move
I conquer only when I yield.

This was a daily struggle, even for a great apostle such as Paul. Even he had days when he was deeply depressed and lonely. Nevertheless, he avowed, “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own” (Phil 3:12).

Paul had been made one of Jesus Christ’s own, and that’s why he also did everything in his power to take hold of Jesus. In light of this, may these reflections on the lampstand in the tabernacle be an incentive to really connect our lives to Jesus—as a blessing to us and as light for our dark world. (MR1020/1111)



On the Horizon



ISRAEL

Why the Jews Are Different

There is an interesting theory about the origins of extraordinary Jewish achievement, by Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, *The Chosen Few: How Education Shaped Jewish History, 70-1492*. [See “The Chosen Few,” the *Report*, September 9, 2013].



British author Norman Lebrecht faces the media holding his Whitbread Book of the Year Award entry, 'The Song of Names,' in London in 2003. (photo credit: REUTERS)



They write: “The destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. transformed Judaism from a cult based on ritual sacrifices to a religion whose main norm required every Jewish man to read and study the Torah in Hebrew and to send his sons to school or synagogue to learn to do so. The unifying force of the Temple was replaced by the unifying force of the Torah. But this meant every Jew had to be literate, to know the Torah. As a result, Jews were literate when others were not. This gave Jews a comparative advantage in the burgeoning commercial

NEWS IN BRIEF



ALL ELDER-CARE RESIDENTS VACCINATED

On January 7, Israel became the first country in the world to complete the first phase of vaccinations for all residents and employees of elder-care and assisted-living/retirement facilities, according to Magen David Adom, Israel’s national organization responsible for emergency pre-hospital medical care and blood services.

MDA’s Covid-19 vaccination drive for the elderly in residential facilities took about 10 days to reach some 150,000 residents and employees.

While any Israeli over 60 years old can get the vaccine at his or her HMO clinic, residents of elder facilities did not have to leave home. Specially trained MDA emergency medical technicians came to the facilities, said MDA Director General Eli Bin.

-israel21c.org
10 January 2021



economy, in 'crafts, trade, commerce, moneylending, banking, finance and medicine.' A voluntary diaspora occurred when Jews dispersed in search of worldwide opportunities." Jews simply got a big head start.

Norman Lebrecht recounts the genius of such well-known figures as Marx, Freud, Einstein and Kafka. But there are a great many other Jewish geniuses in his book, far less well-known. Among them: Karl Landsteiner, whose research enabled physicians to transfuse blood without endangering patients' lives; Paul Erlich, pioneer of chemotherapy, who found a cure for syphilis...and Rosalind Franklin, whose X-ray diffraction images of DNA at King's College, London, led Crick and Watson to their pathbreaking discovery of the DNA double helix. Franklin was only 37 when she died of ovarian cancer; the many X-rays she absorbed in her lab may have been a factor. Had she lived, she should surely have shared the DNA Nobel.

-www.jpost.com, 22 December 2020

Commentary: There are innumerable other valid reasons to point to the uniqueness of the Jewish people, but one is above all others: the Word of God. "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people



that are upon the face of the earth" (Deuteronomy 7:6).

7410

(See *What Should We Think About Israel?* Item #2358, \$17.99.)




Israel Attains No. 3 in World of AI Solutions

One of the most significant global reports on regulating artificial intelligence (AI) to date was issued by the Council of Europe.



Artificial intelligence (photo credit:INGIMAGE)

 The report says that, "AI systems are increasingly being used in almost every kind of human activity... In the context of the fight against COVID-19, numerous applications have been deployed to accelerate research, improve case detection and measure the pandemic."



The Council of Europe's 47 member states and connections with human rights groups, civil society, academia and the private sector make it a leader for protecting human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

According to the report, the organization has already "produced pioneering global legally-binding standards involving complex technological issues, such as the protection of personal data, bioethics and cybercrime, reconciling innovation and human rights protection."

Regarding Israel, the report starts by citing statistics that "Israel is now number three in the world for AI solutions. With only 8.5 million citizens, Israel has a market share of 11% and is equal to China. Israel has 40x more AI companies per capita than the market leader USA, and that makes Israel the clear hidden champion of Artificial Intelligence."

According to the report, Israel's approach was to consult hundreds of Israeli experts in various domains, including the academic, industrial and governmental sectors. No less than 15 working groups were established.

In addition, Israel's National Initiative Report recommends that the government launch, in cooperation with the industrial and the academic sectors, four more national projects in the fields of healthcare, transportation, security and agriculture.

-www.jpost.com, 20 December 2020

Commentary: Based on logical analysis, there is no such thing as artificial intelligence. Why? Real intelligence consists of body, soul and spirit. Intelligence goes back to the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve received information and were able to intellectually determine their choices, which were influenced by the serpent's enticing language. The instruction was, "...of the tree of the

NEWS IN BRIEF



800 NEW HOUSING UNITS

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu authorized the government to go ahead with plans for the construction of hundreds of housing units in Judea and Samaria, including more than 100 units in Tel Menashe, home of Esther Horgan, recently murdered by a Palestinian Arab terrorist, and over 200 housing units in Rachelim and Nofei Nehemia, within the framework of legalizing the status of these communities.

In addition, the Prime Minister ordered the Supreme Planning Council to authorize construction of about 400 additional housing units in the communities of Beit El, Evyatar, Shavei Shomron, the Schunat Havatikim, Barkan, Karnei Shomron and Givat Ze'ev at its next session.

-israelnationalnews.com

11 January 2021



knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17). They did eat, as we read in Genesis 3:22: “And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.”

Based on the Word of God, artificial intelligence cannot distinguish between good and evil. However, AI is making headlines throughout the scientific world and is yet to be fully developed.

Asking the Internet about the origin of artificial intelligence, it lists the year 1303 when “Catalan [Spanish] poet and theologian Ramon Llull completed *Ars generalis ultima* (The Ultimate General Art), further perfecting his method of using paper-based mechanical means to create new knowledge from combinations of concepts.” That is, of course, ancient. Next, in 1921 it was Czech writer Karel Čapek who introduced the word “robot.” Then, in 1955, “artificial intelligence” was coined in a proposal for a “two-month, ten-man

study of artificial intelligence” submitted by John McCarthy of Dartmouth College. From then on, research into AI virtually exploded.

Now, the Council of Europe is at work to establish standards to protect human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.

Again, not surprisingly, Israel — with its population at under 9 million — is definitely the world leader. 7411


(See *End-Times Super Trends*, Item #2342, \$15.99.)



ISRAEL

Pandemic Brings Dark Time to Jerusalem

As night grips Jerusalem’s walled Old City, its ancient alleyways become a ghost town of haunting shadows and light.

 Mornings used to reveal bright picture-postcard scenes of tourists from around the world stopping to buy souvenirs at Palestinian shops as they made their way to biblical sites holy to Jews, Muslims and Christians.

But a modern-day plague, the coronavirus pandemic, is now keeping the visitors away



A man closes a shop at night amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis, at a market in Jerusalem's Old City.

REUTERS/Ammar Awad

from the Old City and bringing hardship and heartbreak to residents.

The light from a juice bar, still open at night, is a beacon to customers along a virtually deserted pathway.

Khaled Salfiti, a 70-year-old souvenir shop owner, recalls how the Old City used to be “vibrant and alive” before a series of coronavirus lockdowns.

“Corona paralyzed everything,” he lamented.

-www.reuters.com, 1 December 2020

Commentary: The tiny, invisible to the naked eye, coronavirus virtually turned off the lights of Jerusalem, the Old City. How powerful this microscopic virus is, is self-evident. A recent report indicated that the global economy has lost trillions of dollars.

What is the future? We know this is not the end, but we may call it a shadow of what will eventually happen. Despite all the amazing technology mankind has invented, he seems to be powerless in this case. Of course, medical science is making progress, and a number of promising vaccines are becoming available. That, however, does not solve future problems; for

NEWS IN BRIEF



AIR CONDITIONER KILLS 99.99% OF VIRUSES

A new air purification technology invented by the Israeli Tadiran air conditioner company kills 99.999% of viruses, germs and bacteria, the company announced.

The technology works by generating hydrogen peroxide by using the moisture in the air and converting it to hydrogen peroxide. This then purifies the air and kills 99.999% of viruses and bacteria. The effectiveness of the technology was tested in an FDA-recognized laboratory in the US for testing for viruses, bacteria and mold.

“Research by the World Health Organization has found that our home living environment is five times more polluted than the outdoor environment—something that causes infections among millions around the world. Several years ago, we already decided to lead in the field of treating the air and producing a healthy home,” said Tadiran CEO and controlling shareholder Moshe Mamrod.

-jpost.com
11 January 2021



example, a worse pandemic.

“Corona paralyzing everything” must not affect the Church. Jesus said: “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid” (Matthew 5:14). That encourages and empowers us for our task: to be testimonies to the fact that the originator of light is the God of creation. We read in the Gospel of John, chapter 1, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made

by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (verses 1-3).

7397

(See *The Sure Foundation of the Church*, Item #1066, \$18.50.)



SAUDI ARABIA

Fiber-Optic Network Through Israel

Google is laying the groundwork for a fiber-optic network that for the first time will connect through historical enemies Saudi Arabia and Israel while opening a new corridor for global internet traffic, according to people familiar with the plans.



Those familiar with Google’s Blue Raman project cautioned that it might not materialize. Because it crosses multiple borders, the project will require agreements with several regulators, and one setback could force Google to redesign the route. For example, Google’s consortium still lacks the go-ahead it needs from Saudi government authorities to connect the Blue Raman project, some of these people said.

The route is likely to be made up of a

NEWS IN BRIEF



FOOD DELIVERY DENIED TO JEWS

Two kosher restaurants in the city of Strasbourg, France said they had been declined service by at least one delivery man, who allegedly said he does not

want to serve Jews.

At the first restaurant, the employee arrived to take out an order to a patron and asked the restaurant’s staff what sort of restaurant it was. They told him it served Israeli cuisine, to which he replied: “I don’t serve Jews” and said that he is canceling the order, Raphaël Nisand, a lawyer

representing that restaurant, told DNA.

Later in the day, a second kosher restaurant was also declined service by a Deliveroo employee, DNA reported.

-jta.org

11 January 2021



submarine cable between India and Saudi Arabia with links to neighboring countries like Oman. It would cross overland through Jordan and Israel, likely via current fiber-optic infrastructure, people with knowledge of the project said. From there, Google is helping lay another undersea cable that will travel across the Mediterranean to Europe, they added.

The backdrop to the Blue Raman project is a series of U.S.-brokered deals that have created new diplomatic and commercial relationships between Gulf Arab states and Israel. The U.A.E., Bahrain and Sudan have all formalized government ties with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government, orchestrated by the Trump administration.

Israel's communications minister Yoaz Hendel has welcomed the opportunity to strengthen ties between Israel and countries in the region. "In any place where you can lay down cables overland or undersea, you also create mutual interests," saying Israel "knows how to defend its infrastructure and data."

The cables could still fall foul of regional politics. Israel and Iran built an oil pipeline on Israeli soil in the 1960s to ship Iranian oil to Europe rather than use Egypt's Suez Canal. But after the rise of the Islamic Republic in Iran in 1979, the pipeline lay dormant as Israel and Tehran became enemies.

Recent politics could signal a new beginning for the pipeline: Its Israeli operator said it signed a preliminary deal with a U.A.E. company to transport oil along the route.

-www.wsj.com, 24 November 2020

Commentary: The interconnectivity requires crossing several nations' territory through land and water. Communication is extremely important to solidify globalism throughout the world. Here Israel again plays a major part. The country is located at the center of the three major continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa. Thus, in spite of difficulties, unexpected hurdles, and the war-like behavior of some nations, the world will be connected more and more.

The center of the world is Israel, the center of Israel is Jerusalem, the center of Jerusalem is the temple, and the center of the temple is the Holy of Holies. That fact is vehemently opposed by the entire world, but Ezekiel 5:5 declares: "Thus saith the Lord God; This is Jerusalem:

I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her."

7400

(See *Why Jerusalem Is Jewish*,

Item #1070, \$2.)



“He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit” (Isaiah 27:6).

BY ARNO FROESE

It is of interest that the name Jacob is mentioned first. We recall Jacob's meeting with the angel of God; his name was changed, “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel” (Genesis 32:28). Yet, when reading through the Scriptures, we notice that the name Jacob continues to appear several hundred times—even in the New Testament 27 times. When we ask why, the answer is that Jacob—the old nature, the flesh and blood, the cunning businessman, the smart deceiver—is still there. The same applies to the believer; we receive His Spirit at the rebirth, but our flesh and blood person remains unaltered.

We may rightly say, there is a physical blessing and a spiritual blessing. Long before Jacob received the new name, God revealed Him-

self to him in a dream and stated: “in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 28:14b). We know that this is spiritual, for salvation is of the Jew. Yet, there is also an earthly, physical, practical reason.

Israel's Agency for International Development, the Mashav, was created in 1957. Although still considered a developing country itself, Israel has provided humanitarian assistance to countries in Asia, Africa, South America, Oceania, and Central Europe.

Between 1985 and 2015, Israel sent 24 delegations of the IDF Search and Rescue Unit to 22 countries.

When it comes to agriculture, computer science, high-tech med-

ical science, and especially defense, Israel indeed is second to none.

Thus, it is not surprising that a number of Arab countries are seeking friendship with Israel. It seems that these formerly hostile countries see the benefit on the one hand, and the need for Israel's assistance on the other. Particularly North African countries are in dire need of Israel's agricultural technology, for they too suffer from a lack of water. According to UnitedWithIsrael.org:

Israeli researchers, working hand in hand with local farmers, developed new methods that not only save water, but also improve the quality of the produce.

The agricultural needs of growing crops account for the highest percentage of water usage across the globe. But what if we could learn how to grow more food using less water?

Scientists in Israel have done just that!

Using fascinating technology and cutting-edge techniques, Israel is helping to solve the world's hunger crisis.

But there is more to come. As the last verse of Isaiah 27 proclaims:

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.” That is God's aim: “they...shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.”

We who believe have already experienced this blessing. Our eyes are open to understand what Isaiah 28:16 declares: “Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” The last two verses of chapter 29 read: “But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.” That's future, that's prophecy, and that will be fulfilled in due time. (MC)



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A Request for Prayer

By David Phillips

Project Manager

The dictionary defines prayer as “a devout petition to God or an object of worship.” Another definition, among many, is “a spiritual communion with God...as in supplication, thanksgiving, adoration, or confession.”

But, what does prayer actually mean? If we simply go to a dictionary, it will never show where the word “prayer” was used in the first languages spoken on earth; the language in which the Bible was written.

In the biblical definition of prayer, its object is God the Father and no one else. We will see this in a minute. This means, biblically speaking, any prayers offered to idols or other objects of worship are an offense to the true and living God. Why? Because the

holy God of Israel has commanded us to pray only to Him.

Looking in Scripture, we see the first mention of prayer in Genesis 20:7a, where it says: “Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live.” This is when Pharaoh took Sarah, Abraham’s wife. God revealed Himself to Pharaoh and told him that Abraham would pray for him.

Now, since we see praying to the living God already in the book of Genesis, we want to examine how it was written in the original text. In the Hebrew, it says:

ועתה השׁוּב אֶת־סָרָה אִשְׁת־אַבְרָם כִּי־בָרָא הוּא, וְיִתְפַּלֵּל
 בְּעַדְךָ, וְנָתַתָּה וְאֶת־אִימְךָ מִשָּׁמַיִם—דַּע כִּי־חַיֵּת הַחַיִּת,
 אַתָּה וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לְךָ.


The word ללפתיו comes from the root word pray (palel;



pey, lamed, lamed, or PLL using English letters for the Hebrew equivalent). Hebrew words usually come from a 3-letter root word. Literally, it would be spelled PLL, and this is where it becomes very interesting!

The most ancient Biblical text was not written in the Hebrew or Aramaic letters of today, but in a font called Paleo Hebrew, which is the pictorial language of the ancient times that Abraham might have used. I say “might have used,” because there are slight differences until the time of Moses, when the text was written.

Proto-Sinaitic 

Paleo-Hebrew 

The letter pey (P – p) is the symbol of a mouth. Lamed (L – l) symbolized a shepherd’s rod or staff. In Scripture, when something is repeated, whether a letter or word, that letter or word is being emphasized to show its greater importance, which one must pay attention to.

Breaking these letters down even further, we understand that the first letter, “pey” symbolized a mouth and means to speak, talk, or address someone or something. The “lamed” symbolizes a shepherd’s staff, and is doubled (note: Hebrew is read from right to left, as shown in the picture). These rods or staffs were used by shepherds to lead and guide their flocks with authority. In other words, when we see the word “pey lamed lamed” (palel—PPL) with the double lamed, it is referring to speaking to the Shepherd who has the ultimate authority; praying to the **One true living God**—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. This is to whom we are to address our requests, thanks, honor, and praises. It makes one realize that it must be done in a respectful way; your mouth is speaking to the ultimate authority in existence!

We know the ultimate authority is the **Father** in heaven. While Yeshua (Jesus) was here on earth, as He walked the streets of Israel,



He commanded and taught us how to pray. He taught us to address our prayers to the Heavenly Father and do it in His name. “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:13).

This is something that we need to take into consideration. If we were to write a letter to someone, we would include an address and signature, because without our signature, it has no power or authority; it would be worthless. No one would know who wrote it. We understand that this is very important. So it is when we pray (Mitpalelim—verb; the root is marked bold) to the Father: we pray in the name of Yeshua, which is like it’s being signed by Yeshua’s authority. Yeshua taught us to pray, so let’s pray and understand what we are doing! We are speaking to the ultimate authority, God Himself, and through Yeshua we can make everything known to our Heavenly Father.

This is what we would like to do together. As we make our

plans known to you, we would like you to join us in humble prayer; in speaking to the ultimate authority—our Heavenly Father—that HE would give HIS approval, wisdom, and knowledge for each step we must take.

As you know, the past few years we have been planning to build a nursing ward on top of the existing building, which the municipality in Haifa has approved. It would have added a 12-bed nursing floor to our current building, but we have since found that it is not enough to meet the demands. Over the past years of planning and fundraising, we have received a much clearer picture from the changing circumstances, especially amid the global pandemic time of Covid-19 and the financial changes occurring worldwide. We are continuing on with our vision. During this delay that God allowed in starting the building physically, HE gave us time to update our plans. We will share these details with you, so stay tuned.

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