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October 2021

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# Dear Friends of Israel,



BY FREDI WINKLER

**T**he three feasts of the Lord in the seventh month (or the month Tishrei, according to the biblical calendar), which had been decreed by God to the people of Israel (Leviticus 23:23-44), leave something mysterious in their prophetic meaning.

What Jews celebrate nowadays as Rosh Hashanah or New Year's Day, is called Zichron Teruah in the Bible, usually translated as a loud trumpet sound to remind people to remember. However, *what* should be remembered is not specified. This feast is the only one whose real meaning remains hidden. And therein lies the mystery. In the New Testament, we see many mysteries that are all revealed in Jesus Christ. But one mystery is not fully revealed;

namely, 1 Corinthians 15:51-52. It is written: "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Paul says *what* will happen at the last trumpet, but not *when* it will happen. The point in time remains hidden. Even though we find hints—for example, in the Olivet Discourse that Jesus gave His disciples the last week before His death, where He speaks of the final things to come—the exact time He did not reveal.

What Peter said of the Old Testament prophets, also applies to us concerning this as yet unknown



day: “trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow” (1 Peter 1:11, NIV).

It is good for us to observe the signs of the times and to pay close attention to God’s working in the present. Is God perhaps speaking quietly through the corona pandemic? Remarkable is the fact that the pandemic is of global proportions: no nation on earth has been spared. The return of Jesus will also be an event affecting all of humanity—not like at His first coming, when it was first and foremost about the people of Israel.

Interestingly, Leviticus chapter 23 also does not explain what the trumpet sound was meant to evoke. Of course, for the Israelites back then as well as for us today, there are many things that should be brought to one’s mind again and again. For example, as Psalm 103:2 so wonderfully calls us to do: “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”

Even though the Israelites were not told *what* they should remember (in Leviticus chapter 23), there was still incredibly much to look back on with gratitude. When Moses began his farewell to the people of Israel, he reminded them vividly of the good deeds God had done, and would still do, for His people. He said: “Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage” (Deuteronomy 6:12).

At the end of Deuteronomy, we read these words: “And there arose not a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face” (34:10). At the end of chapter 31, Moses already foresaw the failure of Israel. Why? Because they so quickly forgot the great deeds of God, again and again.

Both Israel and believers of the New Covenant, have every reason to remember and not forget the great deeds of God.

With this reminder, I cordially greet you with Shalom,

*Trevor Winkler*



# Friendship with God

**PHILIPP OTTENBURG**

What does it mean to be a friend of God in day-to-day living? We find clues in Abraham's life. Encouragement from Genesis 18.

James writes, “And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness’—and he was called a friend of God” (2:23).

What a distinction Abraham received from God! He is the only person in the Bible to be called a friend of God. Jesus referred to some as friends (Lazarus, for example). He called others His friends as well: “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you” (John 15:13-14). This also includes us who believe in Him, who want to follow Him and live in sanctification.

Friendship involves serving each other. Abraham, the friend of God, exemplified this for us. His faith, which was credited to him as righteousness, was shown in the most exemplary manner through his service to the Lord.

One day, Abraham received a completely unexpected visit during the hottest part of the day. He was sitting in the shade and resting at the tent entrance: “And the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him” (Gen 18:1-2a).

The remarkable visit was God’s response to Abraham’s obedient faith. Two of the three men were probably angels, and the middle one was none other than God in visible, human form. It is easy to imagine that this involved Jesus Christ, the Son of God, prior to His incarnation, as an angel of the Lord. Jesus could

Friendship involves serving each other. Abraham, the friend of God, exemplified this for us.

rightly say, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58).

So, Abraham stood face to face with the Lord. He saw three strange men, at an hour when few people were out and about, because it was the hottest time of day. “When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth and said, ‘O Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant’” (Gen 18:2b-3).

Abraham served the men and provided for them (vv. 2-8). He brought them water to wash their feet, gave them a shady place to rest, and had Sarah bake flatbread so they could fortify their hearts. Abraham also had a servant prepare a good and tender calf.

What’s remarkable is that in all this, Abraham personally served his Lord (v. 3). He describes himself as a servant to his guests. This also shows his humility. He bowed and welcomed them. He wanted to bring the bread himself (v. 5). So, he didn’t just put everything into the hands of his many servants who were with him.

Let’s imagine the scenery very vividly. Abraham was 99 years old at the time. Still, he chose to serve his master personally. He immediately rushed over when he saw the three strangers.—Have you ever experienced going to a restaurant and not being helped right away? The staff deliberately ignores you. In



Abraham's case, exactly the opposite happened. He didn't hesitate to serve his Master. He was eager and hurried (vv. 2, 6). He ran from corner to corner and mobilized everything he could and possessed (cf. v. 7). This attitude is staggering, and let's not forget that the day's maximum temperatures were prevailing.

When the guests were served and had something to eat, he stayed still and had fellowship with them (v. 8). And then there was Abraham's generosity: the bread Sarah had made was baked with fine flour. The meat was tender and good, as they say—definitely the finest veal. And the meal was topped off with curds and milk. Abraham's guests didn't receive the prior day's bread, or anything that was out of date or second-rate.

What a difference from the priests of God's people during the time of the prophet Malachi! They brought hobbled and sick animals to the Lord, even though it was God's command that the sacrificed animals should be flawless. God said that it would be better for them to shutter the temple than to worship in that way. The altar fire was in vain (Mal 1). Abraham, on the other hand, did exactly as Paul later wrote: "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ" (Col 3:23-24).

We can still use Abraham's service to the Lord as an example today. His heart was concerned with spiritual things. Abraham, God's friend, was very zealous and devoted to our Lord. And what about

What doesn't He show us in His Word! He lets us know what will happen to humanity and Israel in the future.

us? Do we have the same zeal for our friend, Jesus? In his attitude toward service, Abraham is also a metaphor for Christ. Our Lord Jesus didn't come to be served, but to serve.

When we read further in Genesis 18, we learn of the Lord's promise that Sarah would expect a son. Then the three men went on toward Sodom, and Abraham accompanied them. As they set out and turned toward the city, the Lord began to tell of His plan: "The LORD said, 'Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?'" (v. 17).

The words of our Lord are another display of grace. God, whose greatness is unfathomable, whose majesty shines gloriously: His rule endures through all generations. And we, the children of men, are like a breath; our days like a fleeting shadow. "What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?" (Psalm 8:4; cf. Heb 2:6). He pays so much attention to us humans that He reveals His counsel to us in His Word—something He doesn't have to do.

What doesn't He show us in His Word! He lets us know what will happen to humanity and Israel in the future. The Bible tells of the end times. It's not fear-mongering, as has often been preached and discussed. It's grace, grace to know that our Lord is coming again and what that will bring. It's how we can warn our fellow human beings. It was the same with God's

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”



friend, Abraham. “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?”

Jesus Christ says, “No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15). First, Jesus revealed the divine plan to His disciples. This has now been recorded in the Bible, and we can read it any time; thus, He has revealed it to us as well.

And so the Lord told Abraham about His plan: “Then the LORD said, ‘Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grave, I will go down to see whether they have done

Abraham was a servant who lived a devoted life. Spiritual matters came first. That is exactly what defines a friend of God like him.

altogether according to the outcry that has come to me. And if not, I will know.’ So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. Then Abraham drew near and said, ‘Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?’” (Gen 18:20-23).

Abraham had served the Lord beforehand. He had run from corner to corner, with everything being done quickly. Now Abraham was standing still in awe before the Lord, making wonderful intercession. How Abraham pleaded! William MacDonald writes:

“After the LORD revealed to Abraham that He was going to destroy Sodom, and while the two angels were walking toward that city, Abraham’s great intercessory countdown began— fifty ... forty-five ... forty ... thirty ... twenty ... ten. Even for ten righteous people the Lord would not destroy Sodom! Abraham’s prayer is a wonderful example of effectual intercession. It was based on the righteous character of the Judge of all the earth (v. 25) and evidenced that boldness, yet deep humility which only an intimate knowledge of God can give. Only when Abraham stopped pleading did the Lord close the matter and depart (v. 33).”

God listened to Abraham until the end. Only after the prayer was finished did He move on. Our Lord always makes time for His children. Abraham acted as an advocate. An advocate must know the Lord

personally and obey His will. They must be close to Him. When Abraham began to pray, he didn't just remain in place—no, he moved closer to the Lord. Proximity to our God is crucial, because that makes us cognizant of the prayer requests on our hearts. This enlivens our prayer life.

Abraham knew much more about the dire future of Sodom than the people of the city, Lot included. Only the one who aligns himself with the Lord and His Word knows God's "secrets." And Abraham cared about the righteous Lot and his family. He had to spread these heavy burdens before the Lord. This, of course, reminds us of Jesus Christ, who is our Advocate. Indeed, our Lord's present ministry, at the right hand of our Heavenly Father, is intercession for all believers. "Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us" (Rom 8:34).

How often do we come before the Lord for others? Do we intercede for those in need? For believers struggling with sin? It is when we intercede for our fellow men that we are especially like our Lord.

Abraham served the Lord when He was his guest. We also see how he served the believers (Lot and his family) through intercession. Furthermore, God had appointed him to "command his children ... to keep the way of the LORD" (Gen 18:19). Abraham also served his family. He was a servant who lived a devoted life. Spiritual matters came first. That is exactly what defines a friend of God like Abraham. (MR0920/1101)



# On the Horizon



## ISRAEL

### Government Urged to Halt Animal Farming

Activists have taken to Tel Aviv and cities around the world to push governments to fight climate change by putting food systems at the forefront of their green policies.



**Climate activists are seen in Tel Aviv advocating for a Plant Based Treaty.** (photo credit: Israel Climate Save)



This new global campaign is calling for a “Plant Based Treaty,” which will see people put pressure from the bottom on leaders to negotiate global agreements halting animal agriculture and the impact it has on the planet.

“With just five years left, according to the latest IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report, to reverse the worst effects of climate change, business as usual is no longer an option. It’s time to switch toward a plant-based economy to reverse the damage we have caused to the environment, and to promote a healthier society,” Israel Climate Save & Freedom4Animals founder Yael Gabay said in a statement.

“We reached out to the city of Tel Aviv’s environmental representative and deputy mayor, Reuven Ladianski, several times to request a meeting with the city to present them with the Plant

## NEWS IN

## BRIEF



### JERUSALEM STABBING

Two Israeli men were moderately injured in a stabbing attack at a store next to the Jerusalem Central Bus Station in Jerusalem. Two female Border Police patrol officers at the scene shot and wounded the terrorist.

The attacker was identified as 17-year-old Basil Shawamra from the village of Deir al-Asal al-Fauqa near Hebron in the southern West Bank. Two additional suspects were detained.

“We will continue to act resolutely against any attempt to harm Israeli citizens,” said Defense Minister Benny Gantz after the attack. “The vigilance and rapid and professional action of the forces on the ground prevented a much more severe result.”

*-jpost.com*  
13 September 2021



Based Treaty and see how the city can possibly endorse it, to no avail. So we are here today, demanding they take this grassroots initiative seriously. The weather in Tel Aviv, in Israel and in the rest of the world, will continue to become more extreme each year and we are facing an apocalypse if we do not take serious action."

-*www.jpost.com*, 31 August 2021

**Commentary:** Regarding these protests for a "Plant Based Treaty," they certainly have a legitimate reason if none other than just health purposes. It is a fact that the healthy Mediterranean diet – including the consumption of olive products – along with plenty of sunshine, has led to better outcomes in life expectancy for Israelis.

As Christians, we keep to the guideline of 1 Corinthians 10:25, 27: "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake...If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake." 7594

(See *Experiencing Israel*, Item #2367, \$29.99.)



## JORDAN

### Dead Sea Turns Blood Red

A pool of water near the Dead Sea was recently found to have turned red. The Jordanian Water Ministry was sending technical teams to take samples and find out the reason for the color change, according to Jordanian media.



Local residents circulated photos of the red pond on social media, wondering how the change occurred.

Although water turning red may conjure up thoughts of the biblical plague of blood, scientists believe the cause is much more down to earth.

Sakhr Al-Nusour, the head of the Jordanian Geologists Syndicate,

## NEWS IN BRIEF



### CORDIAL MEETING WITH EGYPT

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett met with Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi in Sharm el-Sheikh—on the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula—at a markedly warm summit.

The meeting marked the first public visit of an Israeli premier to Egypt in more than a decade, since former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu met former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak in 2011.

Israel and Egypt have bolstered their diplomatic ties in recent years. The two governments share close security interests in the Gaza Strip—Egypt, like Israel, sees the enclave's Hamas rulers as a serious threat—as well as in Sinai and the eastern Mediterranean.

-*timesofisrael.com*  
13 September 2021



**The bright red color of the waters of Lake Motro between the main Ounianga Lakes of northern Chad, Central Africa**  
(photo credit: DAVID STANLEY/FLICKR)

told the Jordanian Al Ghad news that the red color could have been caused by algae, iron oxide or the addition of substances by humans to change the water's color.

Last year, the Alexander River ran blood-red due to blood from slaughterhouses in the West Bank flowing into the river, according to the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel.

-[www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com), 13 September 2021

**Commentary:** This is food for sensationalists, pointing to Joel 2:31: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come."

We know of a pre-fulfillment that took place in Jerusalem after the day of Pentecost, when 16 groups of Jewish people heard the Gospel being preached in their own language. Some of those present "mocking said, These men are full of new wine" (Acts 2:13). Then, the apostle Peter points to the fulfillment of Scripture: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (verse 16). What did not happen was reserved for the future: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come" (verse 20).

7599

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

## NEWS IN BRIEF



### **PARTNERS WITH EU ON COVID PASS**

Travelers will have an easier time entering and leaving the country now that Israel has joined the European Union's digital COVID certificate program, the Health and Foreign ministries said.

This coronavirus travel program will enable vaccinated and recovered Israelis to travel to EU member states and other countries that are members of the program and have their certificate recognized by their country of destination. At the same time, travelers from member countries will also have their vaccination and recovery certificates recognized in Israel.

The program also allows Israelis to have access to the EU's green pass, which gives entry to restaurants, cultural centers, public institutions and the like in accordance with the coronavirus guidelines in each country.

-[jpost.com](http://jpost.com)  
15 September 2021





## ISRAEL

### 1,000 Immigrants in One Month

Nefesh B’Nefesh (NBN), the leading organization that facilitates Aliyah from within North America, in cooperation with the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, The Jewish Agency for Israel, Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael (KKL) and JNF-USA, is celebrating a record-breaking summer, with 1,000 *Olim* making aliyah in August 2021 alone, surpassing any other month in the organization’s history.



**Rabbi Fass and Minister Tamano-Shata welcome Olim at Ben Gurion** (photo credit: NOGA MALSA)



“The summer is always the highlight of our year at Nefesh B’Nefesh, with the peak in Aliyah culminating during these months. Despite the many challenges surrounding the pandemic, the resilience of our *olim* and dedication from our staff and partners, have enabled us to celebrate our largest Aliyah month ever,” said Rabbi Yehoshua Fass, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Nefesh B’Nefesh.

“We will continue accompanying the *olim* and doing everything in our capacity to provide holistic support to the new *olim* in order for them to feel at home in Israel from the moment

## NEWS IN BRIEF



### AUTONOMOUS ARMED ROBOT

An Israeli defense contractor unveiled a remote-controlled armed robot it says can patrol battle zones, track infiltrators and open fire. The unmanned vehicle is the latest addition to the world of drone technology, which is rapidly reshaping the modern battlefield.

Proponents say such semi-autonomous machines allow armies to protect their soldiers, while critics fear this marks another dangerous step toward robots making life-or-death decisions.

It is operated by an electronic tablet and can be equipped with two machine guns, cameras and sensors, said Rani Avni, deputy head of the company’s autonomous systems division. The robot can gather intelligence for ground troops, carry injured soldiers and supplies in and out of battle, and strike nearby targets.

-timesofisrael.com  
13 September 2021



they arrive, in cooperation with the Aliyah organizations, among them The Jewish Agency and Nefesh B’Nefesh.”

Ronnie Vinnikov, CDO of Keren Kayemeth Lelsrael said, “KKL is celebrating its 120th anniversary and has been working for decades to promote immigration. Even in this challenging period of the Corona crisis, we see the importance of the new immigrants who empower the State of Israel and contribute greatly to the strengthening of the Galilee, the Negev and Jerusalem.”

-*www.jpost.com*, 31 August 2021

**Commentary:** The KKL (Keren Kayemeth Lelsrael) was founded in 1902 at the world’s first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. The purpose: to buy and develop land in Ottoman Palestine, and later in British Mandate Palestine. The Jewish National Fund (JNF) is a non-profit organization that acquired 13% of the total land of Israel by 2007. The success is well-documented. One report states that the JNF planted over 260 million trees throughout the land of Israel.

Now, something new is happening. It’s not the land, but the people. This follows the prophecy of Ezekiel 36:10: “And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be

inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded.”

Later in our Bible, we read the prophet Zechariah confirming this move: “And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my

people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness” (Zechariah 8:8).

7595

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



ISRAEL

## New School Year and Covid-19

Under a host of regulations dictated by the coronavirus pandemic, about 2.3 million children and 220,000 teaching staff will begin the new school year in Israel.



Students have been asked to turn in a form, signed by their parents, confirming they have taken a rapid antigen swab test, and that the results of which were negative. However, these tests are only considered a recommendation on the part of the Education Ministry. Students cannot be barred from school for failing to submit the form or to take the swab test, as long as they were



**Students in Afula on their way to school as new school year starts.** Credit: Gil Eliahu

not in contact with a COVID-19 patient during the past two weeks.

During September, students who have only received one vaccine dose will be considered immune for the 70-percent minimum to hold in-person classes. However, these children are not exempt from the need to isolate in the event of contact with a confirmed coronavirus carrier.

Principals will have access to official data on the Health Ministry website that shows this information.

Starting October 1, students who have had at least two vaccine doses or have recovered from COVID-19 won't have to isolate. All others—except for participants in the Green Classroom pilot program—will be asked to quarantine for 14 days. Quarantine period can be shortened to seven days after two negative tests for the virus.

Vaccination procedure will be conducted by the Israeli national emergency service; however, mobile vaccination units can only enter school premises after at least 50 parents give their consent to inoculate their children.

*-haaretz.com, 1 September 2021*

## NEWS IN BRIEF



### IRAN SHIPS OIL TO LEBANON

Sayed Hassan Nasrallah, leader of Lebanon's armed Shi'ite movement Hezbollah, said that a first ship carrying Iranian fuel oil to help Lebanon through its financial crisis had docked in Syria.

Daily life has been almost paralyzed as fuel dries up because Lebanon lacks the dollars to pay for it.

The state-owned power company is generating only minimal electricity, leaving businesses and households almost entirely dependent on small, private generators that run on fuel oil.

A financial crisis has wiped 90% off the value of the Lebanese pound since 2019, pushed food prices up by more than 550%, and propelled three-quarters of the population into poverty. The World Bank has called it one of the deepest depressions of modern history.

*-reuters.com*  
13 September 2021



**Commentary:** Israel is in the top 10 countries with the highest percentage of their population fully vaccinated. Now comes the children’s turn. How to deal with it seems very complicated. But Covid-19 is real, dangerous, and often deadly. Various countries have been more successful at fighting the virus than others, but no one is exempt. Quite naturally, a so-called “green passport,” documenting that the person is Covid-19 free, is in the works throughout the world. Will Covid-19 eventually be defeated? Based on information from various infectious disease authorities, it becomes more evident that the answer is yes. However, as we have mentioned before, another yet unknown pandemic is likely at our doorstep.

For us, Israel is an example. When it comes to their future, Psalm 128:5-6 proclaims: “The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all

the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children’s children, and peace upon Israel.”

7590

(See *Miracle of Israel*, Item #2303, \$13.99.)




## ISRAEL

### Scientists Reverse Cell Aging

Prof. Doron Melamed and doctoral student Reem Dowery sought to understand why the elderly population is more susceptible to severe cases of COVID-19 and why the vaccines seem to be less effective and wane faster among this population.



**Professor Doron Melamed (right) and Dr. Reem Dowery** (photo credit: NITZAN ZOHAR/TECHNION SPOKESPERSON’S OFFICE)

 The secret begins with B cells, also known as B lymphocytes. These are the cells that produce antibodies against any pathogen that enters the body. They play a key role in protecting people from viruses and diseases.

B cells do not live long, but they are constantly being replenished by new ones sent from the bone marrow, creating what Melamed calls “homeostasis,” a state in which the total number of B cells in the bone marrow and outside remains constant.

What happens when a new pathogen, such as the coronavirus, comes along? There



are no young B cells that can recognize it.

That is one of the reasons why older people are more susceptible to severe COVID-19 and many other diseases.

But this year, they took the discovery another step and figured out a mechanism to override the system.

"We found specific hormonal signals produced by the old B cells, the memory cells, that inhibit the bone marrow from producing new B cells," Melamed said. "This is a huge discovery. It is like finding a needle in a haystack."

It also means that, over time, specific drugs or treatments can be found to inhibit one of the hormones in the signaling pathway and get the bone marrow to produce new B cells.

-[www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com), 30 August 2021

**Commentary:** Sounds fantastic. Numbers do not lie. Life expectancy for Israelis was 67 in 1950; today, it's 82.3 years. What are the reasons? There are a number of them, such as universal healthcare, a healthy Mediterranean diet, and one other reason: compulsory military service. Why? Because of the physical conditioning requirements.

While this development sounds promising, we know it will have only limited effects. There is simply no way around Hebrews 9:27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." 7592

(See *When Death Comes*, Item #1056, \$12.99.)



**UK**

## After 800 Years, An Apology to Jews

British Jewish leaders say an anticipated apology from the Church of England for antisemitic laws enacted in 1222 is "better late than never."



The church is planning a formal "act of repentance" for next year, the 800th anniversary of the Synod of

## NEWS IN BRIEF



### LINGERING COVID SYMPTOMS IN KIDS

About one in 10 children had symptoms that remained after recovering from COVID-19, though that number dropped by more than half as the months passed, [an Israeli] Health Ministry survey showed.

It carried out a phone survey in June among 13,834 parents of children aged 3-18 who had recovered from COVID-19, asking if their kids had lingering symptoms, including breathing issues, lethargy and loss of smell and taste.

The ministry said 11.2% of children had some symptoms after recovery. The figure declined to 1.8%-4.6% at six months from acute disease, with older kids suffering more.

-[reuters.com](http://reuters.com)  
13 September 2021





**MIDDLE STREET Synagogue, Brighton, England.** (photo credit: Wikimedia Commons)

Oxford, a set of laws that restricted Jews' rights to engage with Christians in England, according to a report in the *Telegraph*.

"The phrase 'better late than never' is truly appropriate here. The historic trauma of medieval English anti-Semitism can never be erased and its legacy survives today—for example, through the persistence of the 'blood libel' allegation that was invented in this country," Dave Rich, the policy director of a British antisemitism watchdog group, told the *Telegraph*.

In planning the formal apology, the Church of England is taking responsibility for Christian antisemitism that predates its founding in 1534.

"Among the many perplexing things about this perplexing news story is that the Church of England didn't exist back in 1290 when the Jews were expelled from England," tweeted Jeffrey Shoulson, a professor of Judaic studies at the University of Connecticut.

-[www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com), 14 July 2021

**Commentary:** While this Church of England apology is relatively insignificant, for Jews, it is "better late than never." Jews have suffered discrimination and severe persecution throughout the last two millennia; that cannot be denied, as it is carefully documented in many historic reports.

But we think there is more to it; being presented with indisputable facts, resulting in the Church of England's recognition of such and subsequent apology, leads us to a specific event recorded in the last book of the Bible. Revelation 11 speaks of two witnesses that will appear in the city of Jerusalem. They will be testimonies to God's truth. We read in verse 10b: "because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth."

One question arises: how did these two prophets torment the people on earth? We believe it's simply that they told the truth, and by doing so they will be killed. Yet, after three and a half days, they will arise from the dead and ascend to heaven in a cloud. This miracle will have a positive impact, for verse 13b reads: "and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."

7564

(See *The Non-Prophet's Guide to the End Times*, Item #2353, \$16.99.)

# The Beth Shalom Guesthouse During Corona Days

BY SARAH MARANZENBOIM-WINKLER

The Beth Shalom Hotel, a small Christian guesthouse, has been experiencing a difficult time. For more than a year, we could not take in any tourist groups; could not offer guided tours through the region to visit Biblical sites. This was true also for those Christian and Jewish guests who like to come to Beth Shalom, because they appreciate the pleasant, calm atmosphere, the cleanliness, and the friendly demeanor of the longtime staff. Those guests now stayed away, since everything was closed down.

From one day to the next, all activities had to cease.

The Beth Shalom House, not functioning like a usual small hotel, in time became something of a second “home” for the Bethesda congregation in Haifa. Even before the corona situation, this congregation used the premises of Beth Shalom for children and young people’s ministry, as well as some social activities. During the corona pandemic, the three, relatively large rooms at the hotel (dining room, assembly room, and recreation room) offered an

During the heavy bombardment in the South, we offered our house to congregations in that area; particularly for families that were very much in need of a few quiet days.

ideal way to sidestep some of the limitations. Since the hotel was closed for business, it was an easy decision to let it be used for the congregational activities.

When it was possible again to gather under certain restrictions, Beth Shalom became the place for child and youth activities. And every time, we followed the corona mandates: when 10 or 20 people were allowed to meet in a closed room, we had the capability to separate into groups. When 50 people could meet outside, we would get together in the garden—weather permitting, of course. Given the long time of isolation, these activities became very important for the spiritual and social life of the church members. Not only did the young people of the Bethesda congregation utilize our premises, but also those from an Arabic church in Haifa.

Since for a long time, church services were possible only over Zoom, the same applied also for the “Sabbath school” for children. When meetings with corona limitations were again possible, we decided to hold the “Sabbath school” on Fridays at Beth Shalom. In addition to the spiritual values, social contact was also very important for the children. Just as during the youth activities, we consistently had to improvise to adhere to corona regulations. Besides the child and youth activities, various other meetings for prayer and get-together were also held at Beth Shalom.

During the heavy bombardment in the South, we offered our house to congregations in that area; particularly for families that were very much in need of a few quiet days. It was a most difficult time, especially



for families with children. One family, which had no safe place in their home, was forced to find protection in a public bomb shelter. Staying at Beth Shalom was relief from an untenable situation. It was also a great blessing for this family: their children got to know our children, played and did crafts with them, and together they listened to Bible stories.

We thank the Lord for all we were able to do for Him during this time and continue to do presently. In Israel, things are beginning to return to normal [but

the Delta variant is renewing concerns]. The only exception is international tourism, due to continued limits on air travel. But we wait patiently, because we know that all things work together for good to those who love God (Rom 8:28). At present, we haven't yet overcome the crisis, but are confident that with God's help, we will emerge stronger.

Grateful for all prayers and support, we send our greetings to you from Haifa, Israel.

*Your Beth Shalom Team*

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## “For Zion’s Sake I Will Not Keep Silent” – Part 1



“For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not remain quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns” (Isaiah 62:1).

**By David Phillips** *Project Manager*

**T**hese next two months, we will continue to dedicate fundraising for those who cannot afford the entrance fee to the Ebenezer Home. For some, coming up with the entrance fee isn’t a problem, but for others it’s quite a challenge. Currently, we have an urgent need to help raise these funds for a very special, 87-year-old Arab sister in Yeshua, whose family needs help with this initial fee. Will you join us in helping to make the Ebenezer Home a reality for this dear elderly sister? She needs our support.

Join me as I share about her family and how they miraculously came to faith in Yeshua—and changed my life as well!

This special testimony, of how this family came to faith in Yeshua, involves multiple people, which I believe can be a great encouragement to each of us. It really reminds me of the verse above, which says, “For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent.” The Hebrew Scripture puts it



something like this: “For Zion’s sake I will not deny... or be quiet...or hold my peace.” It’s hard to explain the deep meaning of it in a foreign language. The point is, if asked about our faith, do we keep quiet?

Believers here in Israel, and in many places around the world, are used to being hated or not wanted. Years ago, I had quite the struggle to bear witness to our people (especially Jews) concerning faith in Yeshua, until certain circumstances brought me to the place where I almost lost my life. In those milliseconds before I was going to die, God brought to my memory Psalm 118:17, which says, “I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.” I quoted this in prayer to the Lord, asking Him to save me physically, to allow me to escape death. I didn’t think that I would live, but He knew.

I remember quoting the whole verse to the Lord. The second part of the verse says, “and declare the works (or deeds) of the Lord.” This was my side of the bargain. If the Lord spared my life, I was to declare His works. I never thought that God Himself would require me to keep this last part six months later, but He did. What happened?

Someone requested—no, he really pressured me—to proclaim and speak out about my faith in Yeshua. I didn’t realize at the time that this was God’s plan. Fully remem-





bering the promise I had made to God six months earlier, I now understood that God Himself was requiring me to fulfill my part. You see, by quoting the whole verse, I promised Him that I would speak up and would proclaim the deeds of the Lord God, Jehovah. Now it was my time to bear witness to someone who was not a believer. Yes, I was in distress, petrified with fear. I was scared. I didn't know what to say. I prayed and asked God to open my mouth and give me the right words to speak.

Let's take a brief break from my story and go to the story of Johnny, the manager of the Ebenezer Home, who also witnessed to this same person. We hadn't realized at the time that this man was going to both of us, asking each of us the same questions about our faith, the Bible, all kinds of questions. Miraculously, we both always answered his questions the same way, as he continued to ask each of us separately over some weeks. This man was comparing and testing us both (without us even realizing it!), and deeply testing our faith and the Word of God. Was our faith real? Was it true? Was Yeshua really the Messiah of the world?

You see, this person worked with Johnny and me in a factory before we came to work at the Ebenezer Home. Johnny would work in the factory, and I would take a team out to the different building sites. Needless to say, Johnny and I never even had an opportunity to match or compare how we would answer (and remember, we didn't even know he was asking the other person!).

The greatest miracle happened when this man, an Arab, heard the witness and accepted Yeshua...along with his wife and his younger sister! Over a period of a year, as we



would visit him now and then in his Arab village up in the Galilee, his brothers would look at me with such hatred. Their look said, “We want to kill you!” Obviously, since I am writing this article, it never happened, thank the Lord. But another miracle happened.

During the next three years, all seven of this man’s brothers, as well as his mother and father, gave their lives to Yeshua and were saved! And now, over a period of many years, over 48 people from this man’s family have become faithful believers in Yeshua! Each one of them coming out of the Arab world, once hating Israel. Now all loving Israel, and who now love “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exodus 3:6)—and they love their Messiah Yeshua!

To be continued...



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