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Dear Friends of Israel,

BY FREDI WINKLER

According to the Jewish calendar, the 9th of Av is a day of remembrance and mourning, in which the destruction of the First and the Second Temple is commemorated. Usually, this day falls in the month of August. It is noteworthy that, according to the Jewish calendar, the First and the Second Temple were destroyed on the same day, the 9th of Av.

On this memorial day, there are always newspaper articles that discuss the question of how and why the destruction even took place. The Old Testament gives us clear information regarding the reasons for the destruction of the First Temple. However, since the Second Temple was destroyed after the last books of the Old Testament were written, the Old Testament only gives marginal details ... though Daniel did fore-

tell the destruction of the Second Temple in chapter 9, verse 26.

But we do have meticulous accounts concerning the events that led to the destruction of the Second Temple from the historian Flavius Josephus. His book *The Jewish Wars* reads like a thriller even today. It is horrifying what happened back then. The tragedy of the whole episode, however, was the internal division which ultimately led to the greatest catastrophe for the Jewish people.

Again and again, it is pointed out that internal disunity is the greatest enemy of Israel and the Jewish State. What is currently playing out in Israel due to the forthcoming new elections in November, shows once again how even today, the Jewish people are still at odds with each other and split into different camps.



When the Romans advanced on Jerusalem, the city was divided into three rival camps that fought one another. The internal rivalries were such that fanatics murdered roughly 2,000 upper-class people in one night, because they were looking for a compromise with the Romans to end the war. Thus, a civil war had started. Nothing could have been more destructive and more weakening for defensive action than such internal division. These long-ago events are always cited during the Memorial Day (9th of Av) speeches, as a warning for the modern State of Israel—and especially the situation at present.

At the founding of the State of Israel, the Holocaust tragedy was generally so vivid in memory that everyone realized: only an unconditional cohesion could lead to success in dealing with the superior power of surrounding enemies. Differences and disagreements did exist even then among the Jewish people. But those vanished in view of the great goal; namely, the establishment of their own State. Mean-

while, 74 years have passed, and many ideologies have found fruitful ground in Israel. The various religious leanings in particular are increasingly creating conflict and division among the Jewish people. Israel is one of the countries with the greatest number of political and religious parties. Before each election, new parties and factions emerge, which promise the voters a solution to the deadlocked political situation. Unfortunately, usually the ego comes first and the welfare of the nation as a whole takes a backseat.

Israel is not merely one among many national entities—much more is involved in the establishment of the State of Israel; namely, the fulfillment of ancient biblical promises. This fact gives us confidence, confidence that God the Almighty—despite the seemingly hopeless developments—is the guarantor, who is about to bring His plan for Israel and the world to a good end.

In this glorious hope, I greet you with Shalom,

Fred Winkler



Does Israel Have a Future? – Part 3

BY NORBERT LIETH AND JOHANNES PFLAUM

The Biblical Vision for Israel

Only in the post-Reformation revival period did evangelical Christians slowly begin to rethink their stance. Since then, there consistently have been theologians within the evangelical church who saw the course of Israel's redemptive history and opposed anti-Semitism. Examples include Sir Henry Finch (1558-1625), Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752), Jung Stilling (1740-1817), Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 7th Earl of Shaftesbury (1801-1885), Franz Delitzsch (1813-1890), J. C. Ryle (1816-1900), C. H. Spurgeon (1834-1892), and Ernst F. Ströter (1846-1922).

There is a whole progression of Christian theologians in the recent past who advocated for the biblical redemptive-historical view of Israel within evangelical theology and the Church. They were especially well-represented in Pietism [...also known as Pietistic Lutheranism ... a movement within Lutheranism that combines its emphasis on bibli-

cal doctrine with an emphasis on individual piety and living a vigorous Christian life": Wikipedia]. To mention a sample of their names: Walter Tlach, Fritz Grünzweig, Gerhard Maier, David Jaffin, Heiko Krimmer, and Lienhard Pflaum.

Even within the history of the Roman Catholic Church—in which disinheritance theology, mixed with anti-Semitism, is a clear through-line—there were individual voices in favor of the Jews. For example, the mystic Bernhard von Clairvaux spoke out against the “Christian” atrocities against the Jews.

Well-known Pietist and ophthalmologist Dr. Jung Stilling is considered one of the most famous ophthalmic surgeons. He saved a good 3,000 people from blindness through surgery over the course of his working life. Long before the founding of the State of Israel, Jung Stilling testified on the basis of his belief in the Bible:

“The true believer consistently looks at the golden hand on

Belief in Jesus' return and in the subsequent millennial kingdom are inextricably linked to belief in a future for the people of Israel.



the clock high up on the temple wall; and he who doesn't see clearly asks another with sharper vision what time it might be. Some of what you are writing concerning the Jews is known to me. But its return to the fatherland will be an eye-opener to many. That will legitimize the Bible once again to everyone, and we will then definitely know where things stand."

J. C. Ryle wrote in the 1867 foreword to his book, *Coming Events and Present Duties*: "I believe that the Jews shall ulti-

mately be gathered again as a separate nation, restored to their own land, and converted to the faith of Christ, after going through great tribulation (Jeremiah 30:10, 11; 31:10; Romans 11:25, 26; Daniel 12:1; Zech. 13:8, 9)."

Charles Spurgeon preached in a Sunday sermon in 1855: "I think we do not attach sufficient importance to the restoration of the Jews. We do not think enough about it. But certainly, if there is anything promised in the Bible it is this. I imagine that

you cannot read the Bible without seeing clearly that there is to be an actual restoration of the Children of Israel [...] May that happy day soon come!”

And in 1864, preaching a sermon from Ezekiel 38 entitled, “The Restoration and Conversion of the Jews,” Spurgeon proclaimed: “The meaning of our text, as opened up by the context, is most evidently, if words mean anything, first, that there shall be a political restoration of the Jews to their own land and to their own nationality; and then, secondly, there is in the text, and in the context, a most plain declaration, that there shall be a spiritual restoration, a conversion in fact, of the tribes of Israel.

“[...] They are to have a national prosperity which shall make them famous; nay, so glorious shall they be that Egypt, and Tyre, and Greece, and Rome, shall all forget their glory in the greater splendour of the throne of David. The day shall yet come when all the high hills shall leap with envy, because

this is the hill which God hath chosen, when Zion’s shrine shall again be visited by the constant feet of the pilgrim; when her valleys shall echo with songs, and her hill-tops shall drop with wine and oil. If there be meaning in words this must be the meaning of this chapter. I wish never to learn the art of tearing God’s meaning out of his own words. If there be anything clear and plain, the literal sense and meaning of this passage—a meaning not to be spirited or spiritualized away—must be evident that both the two and the ten tribes of Israel are to be restored to their own land, and that a king is to rule over them.”

The last major theological battle that Spurgeon fought was the so-called “Downgrade Controversy.” During the course of this dispute, he co-published a creed which stated in part, “Our hope is the personal pre-millennial return of the Lord Jesus in glory.”

Belief in Jesus’ return and in the subsequent millennial king-

We're liberalizing the infallible Word of God—placing theological constructs, humanistic ideas, and our own reason above God's own Word ... not even noticing that we're only disinheriting ourselves.



dom are inextricably linked to belief in a future for the people of Israel. Spurgeon's insight into Israel's importance is all the more remarkable given that he was a Reformed theologian by training. It stands to reason that Spurgeon, because of his understanding of the Bible and his habit of reading the Holy Scriptures as the inerrant and literal Word of God, came to a different conclusion about Israel than the Reformed theology of his time.

Even during the Third Reich, there were theologians and Christians who stood in opposition to anti-Semitism, because of their biblical convictions about the future of the Jews. In December 1943, Bishop Wurm of Stuttgart wrote to the Reich government, saying that the German people were “often feeling the suffering they were having to endure from the enemy bombing raids was in retribution for what was being done to the Jews. The burning of houses

and churches, the smashing and crashing at night under the bombs, the fleeing from shattered houses with a handful of belongings, the not knowing where to look for somewhere to run to, reminds the public most painfully of what the Jews had to put up with in earlier times.” Bishop Wurm has even been quoted as asking during WWII, “Why is this fire coming down from heaven? It’s punishment for what we’re doing to the Jews.”

What’s more, men like Jung Stilling, J. C. Ryle, or C. H. Spurgeon had to believe that the Jews would return to their homeland without ever seeing it happen. Today, it’s part of history. We can see it before our eyes, although the people’s conversion is still yet to come.

The return of the Jewish people to their ancient homeland is a visible sign from God for the nations, telling them that God won’t disregard His people: “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).

When the Jews return, the peoples are meant to recognize that a living God is acting. But, how is present-day Christianity dealing with such visible evidence of biblical truth? If Stilling, Spurgeon, and others saw what we can today, wouldn’t they be appalled at the lukewarm attitude that much of Christendom has toward Israel, the fulfillment of Bible prophecies, and the imminent expectation of Jesus?

Stilling wrote, “[...] and we will then definitely know where things stand.” It’s almost as if we’re largely unaware; otherwise, we couldn’t possibly be so half-hearted about Israel or so lukewarm about Jesus’ return. We tolerate every religion; we sympathize with Israel’s avowed enemies; we accept compromises concerning the Jewish lands and people; we’re liberalizing the infallible Word of God—placing theological constructs, humanistic ideas, and our own reason

One example of Christianity's pride is expressed in its ignorant attitude toward the State of Israel and how God is working in this people. We're becoming blind to God's miracles with Israel.

above God's own Word ... not even noticing that we're only disinheriting ourselves.

One example of Christianity's pride is expressed in its ignorant attitude toward the State of Israel and how God is working in this people. We're becoming blind to God's miracles with Israel. We consider every idea, no matter how impossible: "Israel, a people like any other..." "the State of Israel, a product of Freemasonry..." "Israel must be prepared to cede land." There is also the effect of acclimation. We're in danger of wrongly becoming accustomed to what is happening in Israel and downplaying the miracle that is its statehood. It has long been said that the Church has taken Israel's place, so it's inevitable that much of the Old Testament was reinterpreted to support such a position. It was proclaimed from

pulpits, taught in Confirmation and Bible instruction, and written in books. Things have been said along the lines of, "When the Bible speaks of Israel, it really means the Church. You can't take the promises that Israel will return to its homeland literally; they're symbolic or figurative. Israel is no longer promised a land of its own."

But in 1948, the Lord Himself took over teaching and clarified to us in a single day that the promises of return (and, by extension, the founding of the State of Israel) were not symbolic, but literal. This was an obvious refutation of Replacement Theology for everyone.

Man's theories and teachings pass away, but we uphold the Word of the Lord: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt 24:35). (NAI0222/1218)



On the Horizon



ISRAEL

Archaeological Dig at Joshua's Tomb

Archaeologists have begun digging at Khirbet Tibnah in the West Bank, a site where humans have settled for about 4,000 years and which is believed to be where the biblical Joshua lived and was buried, the excavation project at the site announced.



Landscape of Tel Tibnah

(Photo credit: Yoram Hofman *Jerusalem Post*)



The dig is being led by Dr. Dvir Raviv and students from Bar-Ilan's Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology, alongside volunteers from Israel and abroad.

The site is also identified as Timnath-heres or Timnath-serah, a town which, according to the Book of Joshua, was given by the Israelites to the prophet and was where he lived and was buried. The tomb of Caleb is also believed to be at the site.

During preparations and surveys conducted at the

NEWS IN BRIEF



IRON DOME RECORDS 97% SUCCESS RATE

The Iron Dome missile defense system has achieved a 97 percent success rate intercepting incoming rockets, amid almost non-stop barrages launched by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad terror group, the Israel Defense Forces said.

IDF data put the number of rockets and mortars launched toward Israel at 580. Iron Dome, which is used when the incoming projectile is headed for populated areas, intercepted 200 of them.

The interception rate marks an ongoing improvement since Iron Dome, first deployed in 2011, faced its first major test during the IDF's Operation Pillar of Defense in 2012, when it managed to shoot down 75% of the incoming projectiles at which it was directed.

That rate rose to 80% success rate during Operation Protective Edge in 2014, and 90% during last year's Operation Guardian of the Walls, the IDF said.

-timesofisrael.com
7 August 2022



hilltop site ahead of the opening of the excavation season, archaeologists found a number of artifacts, including a Roman spear head dated to the 2nd century AD. The spear head had a bent tip, indicating it hit something.

“This area is the largest and most accessible of its kind in the space between Jerusalem and Samaria. In addition, it is the capital of a district and was an important fortified site throughout many periods,” said Raviv. “In general, it is not obvious that an Israeli archaeologist will excavate in Judea and Samaria these days. Today there are only a few who do so.”

-*www.jpost.com*, 29 July 2022

Commentary: This development reminds us of Joshua, who was old yet was told by the Lord, “Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed” (Joshua 13:1b).

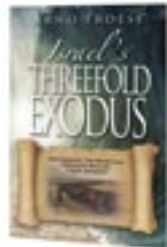
We often occupy ourselves with the articles supplied by various news media relating to the land of Israel and the so-called Palestinian Territories. As believers, however, we must look to our authority; namely, Holy Scrip-

ture. It states that there indeed is very much land to be taken possession of, which was originally promised by God to the people of Israel.

Looking to the north—Lebanon and Syria—much of it is Arab-occupied Israeli territory. That also goes for the east side of the Jordan River, and south to the “River of Egypt.” Most commentaries point to the Nile, since it is called the great Egyptian river. Based on Deuteronomy 32:52, the Nile does not qualify because wherever Moses went, that was not Promised Land. Thus, it is beyond Gaza southwest to the river el-Arish, also called the Brook of Egypt or Wadi el-Arish. Furthermore, Ezekiel 47:19 (NIV) states: “On the south side it will run from Tamar as far as the waters of Meribah Kadesh, then along the Wadi of Egypt to the

Mediterranean Sea. This will be the southern boundary.” 7813

(See *Israel's Threefold Exodus*, Item #1088, \$14.50.)





RUSSIA

Space Agency to Launch Iranian Satellite

The satellite, named Khayyam, was developed and manufactured at enterprises that are part of Roscosmos, according to the agency.



The Soyuz MS-19 spacecraft is rolled out onto the launchpad at Baikonour Cosmodrome ahead of the next crew launch to the ISS (photo credit: Andrey Shelepin/GCTC/Russian space agency Roscosmos/Handout via REUTERS)



The remote-sensing satellite will provide “accurate spatial data” to Iran to improve agricultural productivity, monitoring of water resources, management of natural disasters and monitoring of mines and Iran’s borders, among other uses, according to Iranian media.

Roscosmos Director General Yury Borisov discussed the current status of bilateral projects with Iranian Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali.

“Recently, we have had a very intensive schedule of contacts, and I am sure that in the future we will be able to increase the pace we have already taken and will hold as many meetings as we need so that our relations will only strengthen,” said Borisov.

The two also discussed the importance of joint efforts

NEWS IN BRIEF



12 CHILDREN KILLED BY ROCKET MISFIRE

The Israeli military reportedly believes most of the children killed in Gaza during [the] three days of fighting died as a result of explosions caused by failed rocket launches by Palestinian terror operatives and not due to Israeli strikes.

According to an unsourced report in the *Haaretz* daily, the military believes Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) was responsible for at least 12 of the 15 deaths of children reported by the Hamas-run Health Ministry in Gaza in the fighting.

The military said that approximately 1,100 rockets were fired toward Israel by terrorists in the Gaza Strip. Several of the rockets reached as far as Tel Aviv and towns around Jerusalem.

Approximately 200 rockets fell short of their targets and landed inside the Gaza Strip, the military said.

-*timesofisrael.com*
8 August 2022



aimed at strengthening economic and technological ties between the two countries and the possibility of supplying non-core products by Roscosmos enterprises to Iran.

-*www.jpost.com*, 3 August 2022

Commentary: The camaraderie between Russia and Persia is not surprising. Both are declared enemies of the West; thus, a closer relationship is essential to strengthen each country's position on the global stage.

From Ezekiel 38, we know that a mighty armed force from the distant north of Israel (most scholars identify as Russia) will be joined by Persia (Iran): "And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet" (verses 4-5).

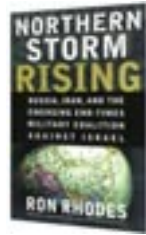
We notice the statement, "I will turn thee back." In plain words, it means that "Gog in the land of Magog" will be doing something

they had no intention of doing. That, of course, will mark the end of this military confrontation with devastating consequences, as we can read in chapters 38 and 39.

A closer friendship between Russia and Iran seems to foreshadow what is yet to come.

7812

(See *Northern Storm Rising*, Item #2294, \$15.99.)



ISRAEL

'We Will Bomb Israel's Center,' Says Islamic Jihad

Khaled al-Batsh, head of the politburo of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip, told *The Media Line* that central Israel is under threat by his organization.



"We have every right to bomb Israel with our most advanced weapons, and make the occupier pay a heavy price. We will not settle for attacking around Gaza, but we will bomb the center of the so-called State of Israel," Batsh said.

"Our goal is to make the occupation pay for its crimes, and to prove that the Islamic Jihad will keep to its commitment to protect the Palestinian people and the



NEWS IN BRIEF



Palestinian Islamic Jihad militants take part in the funeral of their comrade in the southern Gaza Strip

(photo credit: REUTERS/IBRAHEEM ABU MUSTAFA)

resistance anywhere,” he added.

Security officials in Israel claim that both armed forces and civilians are at risk, as the PIJ might attempt to take revenge for the arrest of Saadi, a senior leader in the organization, which took place in the West Bank city of Jenin.

While the IDF is blocking more and more roads around Gaza, the PIJ is keeping a fog around its plans, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty for the communities around the Gaza Strip.

“People here don’t really have a choice. We know where we live and accept the costs. But it’s inconvenient, and tense times like this make everyone more anxious in the long run,” said Eyal Hajbi, the security chief of Sha’ar HaNegev regional council.

An IDF official told *The Media Line* that “the Israeli military is prepared for all scenarios, including an escalation, and is reassessing the situation regularly.”

-themedialine.org, 3 August 2022

BREAKTHROUGH IN CANCER THERAPY

A small molecule that makes immunotherapy available to all cancer patients by being a more accessible and effective alternative to an antibody for treating a range of cancers has been identified and synthesized by a joint Israel/Portuguese team.

“In the second stage, we confirmed that the small molecule controls tumor growth as effectively as the antibodies—it inhibits PD-L1 in animals engineered to have human T cells. In other words, we have developed a molecule that can inhibit PD-1/PD-L1 binding and remind the immune system that it needs to attack the cancer,” Prof. Ronit Satchi-Fainaru explained.

[...] We have already synthesized the small molecule with simple equipment in a short time and at a fraction of the cost. Another advantage of the small molecule is that patients will probably be able to take it orally at home, without the need for IV administration in the hospital,” Satchi-Fainaru continued.

-jpost.com
8 August 2022



Commentary: The key word used by Israel's enemies is "occupation": an interesting definition for territory lost in military conflict. We may search the annals of history and find that all countries in the world have, during wars, simply gained or lost territory. That has been normal procedure since the existence of mankind on earth.

Arab-Palestinians, however, are not really concerned about lost territory, but their declared intention is to eradicate the State of Israel. Therefore, Israel's generous accommodation for Arab-Palestinians is most unusual. Here we may quote the Old Testament: "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee" (Proverbs 25:21-22). The New Testament confirms this: "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:20-21).

7811

(See *The Remarkable Wisdom of Solomon*, Item #2223, \$12.99.)



ISRAEL

Airport Open to Arab-Palestinians

An Israeli plan permitting Palestinian travelers to fly out of one of its airports has received official approval. A first charter flight of passengers from the West Bank is set to leave from Ramon International Airport near Eilat in southern Israel.

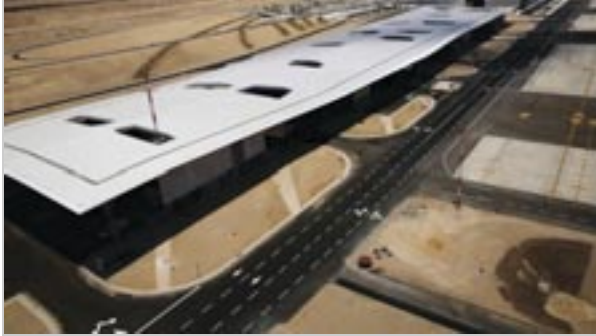


Amir Assi, of Al-Amir Group, told *The Media Line* that after meeting with Israeli civil administration officials, he was given the nod to advertise for a pilot program to fly the first charter plane to Antalya, Turkey for only Palestinian passengers mainly from the southern West Bank.

"For the plan to succeed and (to ensure) the security concerns are addressed, we chose to allow travelers to carry with them the minimum," Assi said.

The only outlet for the Palestinians is Queen Alia Airport in Jordan, but first, they have to travel through Israeli-run border crossings to Jordan, which operate under limited hours and are usually packed with travelers.

"When a Palestinian leaves through Jordan, sometimes they have to spend a night before catching a flight; now they can fly directly to their destination," Assi said.



RAMON AIRPORT in the Timna Valley, north of Eilat.
(photo credit: AMIR COHEN/REUTERS)

Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh has demanded the opening of al-Quds Airport in Qalandia in the West Bank and the removal of all obstacles in order to allow people and goods to move freely to and from the Palestinian territories.

Booking [for Ramon Airport] will be done through Palestinian tour operators in the West Bank. Passengers will meet in one centralized location before boarding charter buses, and then will have to go through an Israeli checkpoint for a security check before the long ride to the airport, along with a security escort.

-themedialine.org, 2 August 2022

Commentary: The Palestinian Authority rejects Israel's offer to use the Ramon International Airport, revealing their desire and insistence that Jerusalem (al-Quds) should accommodate Arab-Palestinians passengers flying out of Israel. Al-Quds literally means "the holy," the Arab name for Jerusalem. In the teachings of Islam, Jerusalem is considered the third holiest place for Muslims, yet the Koran — the authority for Muslims — does

NEWS IN BRIEF



WHERE THE ROMANS BREACHED JERUSALEM

The positions of the Roman army's ballistae used in their attack on Jerusalem may have been found thanks to archaeological evidence and calculations made by the Israel Antiquities Authority.

Regarding the location of artillery, a significant amount of ballistae seem to have been placed in Cat's Square, located around the center of modern Jerusalem.

As for where the Romans likely breached into the city, that would seemingly be the Russian Compound.

Excavations in the area were able to find remnants of the Third Wall, the outermost line of defense of the city. However, this area also had the largest amount of ballistae stones, with hundreds if not thousands found in the area, seemingly directed at this specific spot.

-jpost.com
7 August 2022



not mention Jerusalem.

When reading the Bible, we find Jerusalem mentioned 670 times in the Old Testament, and 144 times in the New Testament, totaling 814 occurrences.

The prophet Zechariah some 2,500 years ago, wrote this inspired by the Holy Spirit: “So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction” (Zechariah 1:14-15).

7810

(See *Why Jerusalem Is Jewish*, Item #1070, \$2.)



ISRAEL

Asian and African Students Learn High-Tech Agriculture

Kelvin Ombongi, 27, stands in a classroom in southeastern Israel, far from his native Kenya.



He’s been at the Arava International Center for Agricultural Training (AICAT) in Sapir since 2019, learning advanced Israeli farming methods that he hopes to plow into a career in urban agri-



Dr. Eyal Policar, a senior lecturer at AICAT, with students from Thailand.

Photo by Abigail Leichman

culture back home.

“By the time we go home, we’ve learned the art of starting something small and building it to completion, and not giving up on the way,” says Ombongi.

“It’s not only education; AICAT is also creating leaders.”

Ombongi’s unscripted words bring a warm smile to the face of AICAT’s director, Hanni Arnon, an educator who founded the center in 1994 with partners including Israel’s Foreign Affairs Ministry and Agriculture Ministry.

“These are students from countries where the main source of income is agriculture. But it’s traditional agriculture,” says Arnon.

“Usually when we ask what they grow, they say ‘rice.’ Why? ‘Because my father grew rice, and his father and his father’s father.’

“So we bring these young people here to the desert and provide them with theoretical and practical courses in agriculture.”



NEWS IN BRIEF



SEA-WAVE ELECTRIC PLANT HEADS TO LA PORT

Israeli company Eco Wave Power is moving its wave energy pilot from Gibraltar to the 35-acre campus AltaSea ecofriendly business center at the Port of Los Angeles, the nation's busiest seaport.

This will be the first US location for Eco Wave Power's energy conversion unit, which is already deployed in Israel and plans further deployments in Spain, Portugal and other locations.

According to the US Energy Information Administration, wave energy off the nation's coasts can generate the equivalent of about 66 percent of all the electricity generated across the country in 2020.

Eco Wave Power's onshore technology turns ocean and sea waves into green electricity, enabling commercial power production from the power of the water.

-israel21c.org
7 August 2022

Starting with about 500 students per year, AICAT now trains 1,200 people annually.

About 20,000 alumni come from Cambodia, East Timor, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Philippines, Rwanda, South Sudan, Thailand, Uganda and Vietnam.

"We cooperate with countries that Israel doesn't have diplomatic ties with, such as Indonesia," says Arnon.

"They see that even though we don't have any natural resources, we do the impossible of blooming the desert. They say, 'Wow, in my country we have good water and good soil, so why are we poor?' And they take inspiration and a new spirit when they go back home. They learn to ask questions and find solutions to their challenges."

Arnon says they also return home as informal ambassadors for Israel, sowing what she calls "good seeds" for a more peaceful and prosperous future.

-www.israel21c.org, 3 July 2022

Commentary: In this case, technology is the key, not tradition. History has taught us that the desert cannot be used for agriculture. That is definitely not true in Israel. While more than half the country consists of desert, agriculture is thriving nonetheless.

Why is Israel different? Because of the promises of God. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose" (Isaiah 35:1). This prophecy is yet to be fully fulfilled; what's happening in Israel today is merely a taste of what's in store for the future.

7796

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



Part 1: The Testimony of Rivka (Rebekah) Lazarocici

*I wrote this testimony in Rivka's words: please understand that her native language is not English.

By David Phillips *COO (Chief Operating Officer)*

My name is Rivka (Rebekah in Hebrew), and I was born into a traditional Jewish family in Romania during 1944. By the Lord's grace, I accepted Yeshua as my Lord and Savior in 1962.

I didn't know the Bible, as Romania was under a communist regime at that time. So, of course at school they didn't teach us religion, but the socialist/communist doctrine. At home I was taught Jewish tradition, but I never understood the history of my people or anything about the Bible.

I had polio when I was one and a half years old. As a result, I later had to go to a sanatorium to receive treatment. During this



time, the Lord provided that I was put into the same room as a gentle girl, who was a born-again believer in Yeshua. She knew I was Jewish, and so she didn't dare speak to me about the Lord Jesus; she only gave me some hints, which I couldn't do anything with. One day, she received a visit from some young people from Bucharest, where she lived. She



only introduced me as, “the girl that is in the same room.” She said they were her friends, but I didn’t know then that they were from the same church and were also believers.

Beginning Steps in Faith

When I had to go back to my hometown where I was studying, she remained at the sanatorium. But in the winter of 1962, after she returned home, she invited me to spend the winter holidays with her and her family. It was New Year’s Eve, and I thought they were going to celebrate it in the typical worldly way: by dancing, drinking and being merry. To my big surprise, they did something completely different. They didn’t drink wine; they didn’t smoke; instead, they read the Bible, preached the Word, sang hymns, and were very, very happy! I didn’t know how to handle all of this.

I heard them singing about the Lord Jesus in their hymns, and after the service finished, my

friend Andriana asked me, “What did you think about what you saw and heard at the gathering?” I answered, “What do you mean?” and she replied, “Well, that we are calling each other brother and sister.” So, I told her, “Well, I thought that’s what you did in this part of Bucharest.” Actually, I was lying because I saw many people came from the surrounding villages, so I thought maybe they did this because they were farmers and not people from the town—but I was ashamed to tell her this.

Then she asked, “What did you think about us talking about the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God?” I told her I thought that was because they weren’t Jewish. She followed this statement by asking me, “Do you believe in God?” I told her that yes, I believed there was a God. Then she asked me, “Do you pray to Him?” “Well,” I replied, “Sometimes when I have a toothache I ask, ‘Oh God, please help me.’” That was prayer to me.

The next evening, her parents came into our room to pray with



us. I prayed, but it was a hypocritical prayer because it was more for their ears than for God's—I didn't know anything at this point. Later, Izzy, a Messianic Jew, came and began speaking to me about the Jewish people and the Lord Jesus Christ. I asked him, "What, do you want to convince me that there is a paradise, hell and all that?" But afterwards, I went to a meeting with them and I started to believe—it was something very simple; not enough, but it was the beginning.

I really wanted to have my own Bible, but I couldn't because it was very difficult to own a Bible in Romania. Someone had a New Testament for sale, but I didn't have money of my own (as I was living with my parents and didn't have an income). So, I left Bucharest to go back to my hometown where I was attending school, but I didn't know where to find believers there. One of the young people in Bucharest had told me there was a certain family by the name Barbun, and they had a daughter who was

about my age—but that's all I knew. I was aware that in an adjoining class, there was a girl with the name Barbun, so I thought maybe it was her. I wanted to see her, and so I asked a girl who was sitting on the same bench as me to go along, and she agreed. Little did I know what God had in store for me with this request.

God Provides

The girl beside me was Ziforah, and I thought this name was strange. I didn't know then that Ziforah in Romanian was Ziporah, the wife of Moses. Anyway, I went with her to this other girl in the adjoining class, and asked her if she had any brothers or sisters. She told me that no, she was the only daughter, so I knew she wasn't the one I was looking for.

On the way back to our class, God brought to my mind that there was something special about Ziforah. Why? Because being communist, it wasn't fashionable to be religious. I remembered the other students would make fun of her



on Sundays when they had to do voluntary schoolwork, but she didn't come because she was religious or something. So, after the Lord brought this to my mind I asked, "Ziforah, tell me, do you have a Bible at home?" She said, "Yes." I asked, "Do you have hymnals as well?" I knew that in Romania, the believers used to have hymnbooks at home, as they didn't always have the liberty of going to the meetings. She replied, "Yes." I was so happy!! Turns out, the girl sitting beside me on the same bench knew about faith! She wasn't a believer, but she was from a believing family and her parents

were believers. They had 10 children, with Ziforah being the youngest. I knew she would know when and where the meetings were, so I asked her to take me to them. She agreed and it was very, very nice!

I then discovered another believing girl at my school, and she used to bring me Scripture verses written on paper. It was such a blessing to me, as I couldn't own my own Bible.

Stay tuned to read what happened with Rivka, a born-again Jewish Holocaust survivor, in the next issue.



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“And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: for the Lord their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity” (Zephaniah 2:7).

BY ARNO FROESE

Ashkelon (or Ashqelon) harbors an ancient history—Britannica says 2000 BC. Like most cities in the land of Israel, it experienced manifold invasions; for example, the Egyptians, later the Assyrians, and then the Babylonians. The city was also conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC.

Much of modern Ashkelon was an Arab settlement named Al-Majdal. After the Israel-Arab War in 1948-49, Arabs left the area or were forced to. It was resettled with Jewish immigrants mainly from the Soviet Union. Today’s population

reveals the interesting number of 144,000 (estimate for 2019). Of course, this reminds us of Revelation 7, where 144,000 from the twelve tribes of Israel are sealed, to become untouchable for the enemy. Obviously, this is just a coincidental number, which continues to change day by day and does not relate to the documented sealing that appears in that chapter.

The Remnant

In the above introductory Scripture, we clearly notice that the area is designated “for the remnant of the house of Judah.” This is

part of the progressive fulfillment that was proclaimed by the prophet Isaiah: “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” (Isaiah 11:12).

When researching the origin of Ashkelon’s population, we notice that the majority came from the “north country”—the former Soviet Union. The prophet Jeremiah confirms this when he proclaims: “But, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land” (Jeremiah 23:8).

This is not surprising when we realize that 37 signers of Israel’s Declara-

tion of Independence were members of the trade union (Moetzet HaAm). Most came from the former Soviet Union, except three who were born in Germany, one in Israel, one in Denmark, and one in Yemen. It was on 13 May 1948 at 16:00 [4:00 pm] that “Ben Gurion opened the ceremony by banging his gavel on the table, prompting a spontaneous rendition of Hatikvah, soon to be Israel’s national anthem.” We notice the absence of spiritual content.

When the 37 members of Moetzet HaAm debated the details of the Declaration of Independence, the minority—two rabbis, Shapira and Yehuda Leib Maimon—wanted the inclusion of God in the last section of the document. But it was strongly opposed by the secularist Mapam party, of which Ben Gurion

was the leader. They settled with the phrase, “Rock of Israel.”

Progressive Fulfillment

When carefully reading the introductory Scripture, we notice the succession: the Jews come to Ashkelon, they build houses, establish farms, and “lay down in the evening”—that means rest and security. Only then, “the Lord their God shall visit them.” Next comes the direct intervention of God. Here the *Tanakh* reads, “for the Lord their God shall remember them, and turn their captivity.”

This succession corresponds to the prophet Ezekiel, who is commanded by God to “prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord” (Ezekiel 36:1). First He speaks to the topographical land of Israel. Then He gives

the reason in verse 8: “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.”

Later in verse 26, we see the same succession again, but spiritually: “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.” The Jews experienced a change of heart: they received a new spirit. But that’s not the end, for verse 27 proclaims: “And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.” Israel is destined to receive His Spirit.

While we observe Israel’s progression as a nation and the continuous change they experienced—often for the worse—we must keep in mind the end result; namely, the pouring out of the Spirit of God upon His people.

Modern Ashkelon

This city, located on the coastal plain of the Mediterranean, is 12 kilometers north of Gaza and 2 kilometers from the ancient Ashkelon site. Diverse economic activity has been established, starting with the Trans-Israeli Pipeline, bringing petroleum products from Eilat to the Ashkelon Port. Also, the Ashkelon Sea Water Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) desalination plant is the largest in the world. Many

foreign companies have established their industry there, including Coca-Cola, beginning in 1968.

In summary, hope for the future is not limited to Israel, but is even more imminent for the Church, consisting of born-again believers who know their destiny: “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). (NF)

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