

NEWS FROM ISRAEL

January 2023

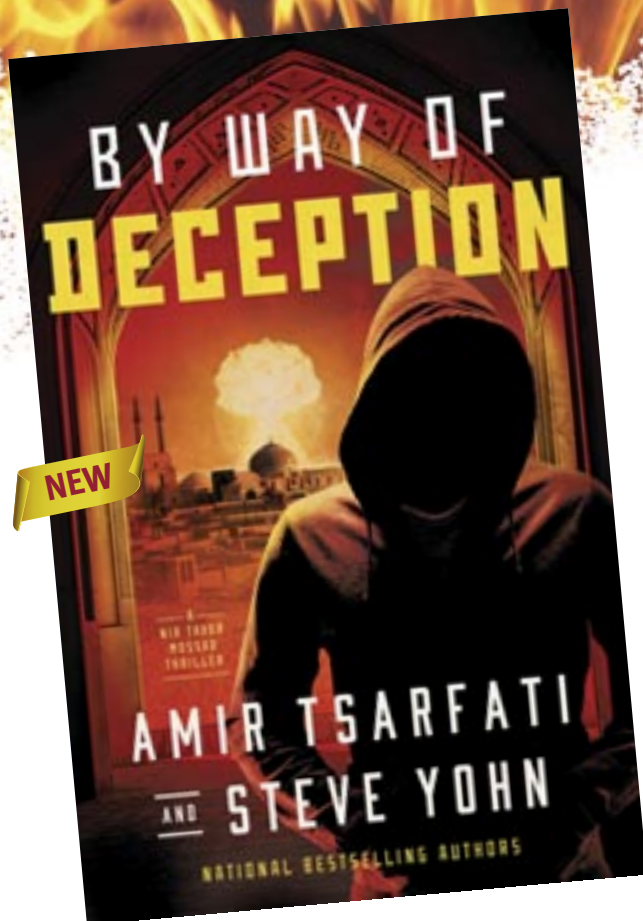
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Does Israel Have a Future?

– Part 7

1,800-Year-Old Roman Road Found P.18 • Lebanese Girl Refuses to Play Israeli P.23

Nuclear Deception



BY WAY OF DECEPTION ITEM #2402
384 pgs. • Fiction

\$15.99 NEW

Authors: Amir Tsarfati and Steve Yohn

The Mossad has uncovered Iran's plans to smuggle untraceable weapons of mass destruction into Israel. The clock is ticking, and agents Nir Tavor and Nicole le Roux can't act quickly enough.

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Inspired by real events, authors Amir Tsarfati and Steve Yohn reteam for this suspenseful follow-up to the bestselling *Operation Juktan*. Filled with danger, romance, and international intrigue, this Nir Tavor thriller reveals breathtaking true insights into the lives and duties of Mossad agents—and delivers a story that will have you on the edge of your seat.



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Dear Friends of Israel,

BY FREDI WINKLER

At the beginning of a new year, it is normal to ask oneself what the coming year may bring. This year, one can rightly say there is more reason for concern than in previous years. First and foremost, there is the war between Russia and Ukraine; beyond that, the resulting energy crisis. And then there are the alleged dangers, which no one really knows how serious they are—for instance, the constant drumbeat about worldwide climate change.

The UN Climate Change Conference, in Sharm El Sheikh on the Sinai Peninsula, was once again an example of how much discussion goes on, but how little is actually achieved. Representatives from all over the world traveled to take part in this conference. But no one mentioned the many flights necessary, which polluted the air. The

same applies to the World Cup Football (Soccer) Championship in Qatar. The worldwide “circus” must continue, whatever the cost. Realizing the expenditure for soccer alone, all the talk about saving energy and climate protection seems like a farce.

In the Mount of Olives Discourse, when Jesus spoke of the time just before His return, He compared it to the time of Noah. What He said about this in Matthew 24:36-39 was really nothing extraordinary: the people ate and drank and got married. There is no evil in that. But then the Lord added: “And [they] knew not...” What will the people not realize? That God is about to judge the world. They carelessly pass God by, as well as all that is right before the Lord.



Isn't that the way the world lives today? For sports in general, billions are being spent, but there is no time for what has value in God's eyes. One passes by without paying attention. God once rebuked His people Israel for spending the Sabbath doing what pleased them, instead of honoring their Creator, who had blessed and provided everything for them. In the Christian world also, Sunday used to be the day in which one gave glory to God for all His blessings, and gave thanks for all His gifts. Today, it is the same as it was back then: God and faith have become a side issue and a private matter. Now, everything else is more important and of public interest ... especially sports.

This raises the legitimate question: is sports a bad thing? Of course not. But when it displaces the most important thing—namely, God and His message through Jesus Christ—then it becomes a bad influence. Nowadays, numerous marathons and other mass sporting events are organized worldwide. People travel halfway around the world to participate.

And when do these events take place? On the weekends, mostly on Sundays. Thus, one can say sports is the idol that is pushing aside the Lord, to whom Sunday (also called the Lord's Day) has been dedicated.

At the beginning of a new year, it is also customary to look back on things that were not good enough and make resolutions to improve them in the coming year. Was there something in our life that removed the Lord from His rightful place? In this world where everything is seen as relative, we are called to place what is most important—namely, faith in the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world—at the center of our lives.

On this occasion, we also want to thank all those who have supported our work, which we are privileged to do by the grace of our Lord. Looking up to Him from whom all things come, we wish a blessed year 2023 to all our readers.

With warm Shalom greetings from Israel,

Trevor Winkler



Does Israel Have a Future? – Part 7

The Land Question

BY NORBERT LIETH AND JOHANNES PFLAUM

The land question has made Israel the focal point of world history. This issue will also trigger the coming of the Messiah and the judgment of the nations.

The promise of land is linked to the Abrahamic Covenant in the Bible (see Part 6). Although the Mosaic Covenant has since been terminated, the Abrahamic Covenant is still in effect. Therefore, the promise of land to Israel still retains its significance (Gen 12:1; 15:7). However, the promised borders will only come to fulfillment when the Messiah returns. It should be emphasized that Israel didn't choose this land, but God designated it for His people (Ezek 20:42; 36:28). God Himself calls it His inheritance (Joel 3:2). Ultimately, everything that people plan or do against the land of Israel is directed against God Himself. In all things that concern Israel, we must always keep two facts in mind:

1. God's judgments against the nations that have sinned against Israel, are a matter of His election and His hon-

or. This is independent of Israel's belief or lack thereof.
2. God's judgment of Israel is for the ultimate purpose of the people's conversion.

That God Himself chose the land for Israel is one of the strongest arguments against Replacement Theology. And at the same time, we have the most impressive proof that God keeps His promises with regard to the land: since 1948, there has once again been a Jewish State in ancient Israel's territory!

The land question has made Israel the focal point of world history. This issue will also trigger the coming of the Messiah and the judgment of the nations (Joel 3:2). The historical facts speak for themselves.

Since the Israelites were scattered by the Romans (AD 70-135), an independent Arab state has never existed in what is now Israel. In that respect, world poli-

Although Napoleon wanted to resettle Israel with Jews, he was forbidden from doing so. On April 20, 1799, he issued a proclamation “to the rightful heirs of Palestine” from his general headquarters in Jerusalem.



tics revolves around a historical lie. Initially, Eretz Israel was under Roman-Byzantine rule. After that, it was conquered by the Persians in 624 AD. Emperor Heraclius ended Persian rule in 629 AD, shortly before the Arab conquest began in 638 AD. The Arab occupation under various rulers was supplanted by the Crusaders in 1071 AD. After

the Muslims recaptured it, further Crusades and Christian/Muslim struggles for the Holy Land ensued. Beginning in 1291, the Mamluks appeared as foreign rulers over the land of Israel. In 1517, they were replaced by the Ottoman Empire. They in turn were displaced by the British in 1917, and England was finally given the Mandate over the country by a League of Nations resolution. In 1948, it was repossessed by Israel.

Israel did not become a Roman state while it was under Roman occupation. Nor did it become a Persian state when conquered by the Persians. It didn't become an Arab state while under Arab occupation, or a European state while under the Crusaders. Israel

didn't become an Eastern European state while under Mamluk rule, and it didn't become a Turkish or Ottoman state while under the Ottomans. It didn't become an English state while ruled under British Mandate. Although Arabs (Palestinians) lived alongside Israelis on Jewish land, a Palestinian state never arose as a result. Since Israel became an expressly Israeli (or Jewish) state under Joshua in around 1400 BC, and there has never been another independent state in that location since, it's only natural that the Jews would be awarded the land again after their dispersal.

Despite a diaspora spanning two millennia, Jews have always been present in Israel (albeit in the thousands or tens of thousands). Although Napoleon wanted to resettle Israel with Jews, he was forbidden from doing so. On April 20, 1799,

he issued a proclamation "to the rightful heirs of Palestine" from his general headquarters in Jerusalem. It says in part:

"Rightful heirs of Palestine! The great nation which does not trade in men and countries as did those which sold your ancestors unto all people (Joel 3:6) herewith calls on you not indeed to conquer your patrimony; nay, only to take over that which has been conquered and, with that nation's warranty and support, to remain master of it to maintain it against all comers."

These plans were thwarted due to Napoleon's failure in the Middle East. From the perspective of redemptive history, the time was simply not yet ripe for Israel's return.

After a trip to Israel in 1858, pastor Felix Bovet wrote: "The Christians who had conquered the Holy Land were not able to keep

it; to them it never was any thing but a field of battle and a cemetery. The Saracens who took it from them saw it in turn taken from them by the Ottoman Turks. These latter, who are still nominally its owners, have made it into a desert, in which they hardly dare to set foot without fear. The Arabs themselves, who are its inhabitants, can only be considered as encamped in the country; they have pitched their tents in its pastures, or contrived for themselves a place of shelter in the ruins of its towns; they have founded nothing in them; strangers to the soil, they never became wedded to it; the wind of the desert which brought them there may one day carry them away again, without their leaving behind them the slightest trace of their passage through it. God, who has given Palestine to so many nations, has not per-

mitted any one to establish itself or to take root in it; He is keeping it, no doubt, in reserve for His people Israel, for those rebellions children who will one day have become the ‘men of a meek and humble spirit’ of whom Jesus said that ‘they shall inherit the earth.’”

At the time when Israel was scattered, the land of Israel lay desolate, just as the Bible had foretold (Zech 7:14; Matt 23:38). L. J. Davis cites various sources which confirm that for centuries, Israel was sparsely populated, and much of the land had become overgrown. There was a lot of swamp land that was a breeding ground for malaria. Large portions of the land were bare, with only the occasional tree or bush, and much of it was left to weeds.

While Israel was dispersed, a separate Palestinian state never emerged. The

The UN's 1947 plan to partition present-day Israel into an Arab and a Jewish state, was rejected by the Arabs at the time. Interestingly, there was no Israeli-Palestinian conflict until the 1960s, when there was talk of the Arab nations' struggle against Israel.

regional designation "Palestine" only became a political entity through the League of Nations mandate. In 1922, the British partitioned off about 80% (!) of the area as Transjordan, which became the Jordan of today.

The term from which today's word "Palestine" originates was invented by the Roman Emperor Hadrian after the suppression of the Bar Kokhba Revolt (132–135 AD). David Dolan writes:

"Judea was given the Latin name 'Syria Palaestina'—anglicized as 'Palestine'—to erase any Jewish connection to the land that the God of Israel calls his own. The Romans plainly intended to insult the Jews by the choice of a name derived from the Philistines, Israel's ancient

enemies who dwelled on the coastal plain."

The UN's 1947 plan to partition present-day Israel into an Arab and a Jewish state, was rejected by the Arabs at the time. Interestingly, there was no Israeli-Palestinian conflict until the 1960s, when there was talk of the Arab nations' struggle against Israel. Only in 1964, when the PLO was founded, was the "Palestinian" ethnic group created. In reality, there is no Palestinian culture, language, or religion. "Palestinians" are really nothing more than Arabs who reside in the land of Israel. They have nothing whatsoever to do with the Canaanites driven out by Israel when Joshua conquered them. These natives were no longer even mentioned by

In reality, there is no Palestinian culture, language, or religion. “Palestinians” are really nothing more than Arabs who reside in the land of Israel.

the time the New Testament was written.

Rudolf Pfisterer points out that a continuity of Arab occupation from the 7th century to the present can't even be discerned. Of course, Arabs have always resided there since Israel was dispersed, but many of the so-called “Palestinians” immigrated to Israel within the last two centuries. Pfisterer points out that in 1977, leading PLO representative Zuheir Mohsen admitted with disarming frankness that the name “Palestinian” was misapplied to Arabs living in Palestine. As he said then:

“The Palestinian people do not exist. The creation of a Palestinian state is only a means for continuing our struggle against the state of Israel for our Arab unity. In

reality today there is no difference between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese. Only for political and tactical reasons do we speak today about the existence of a Palestinian people, since Arab national interests demand that we posit the existence of a distinct ‘Palestinian people’ to oppose Zionism. Yes, the existence of a separate Palestinian identity exists only for tactical reasons. Jordan, which is a sovereign state with defined borders, cannot raise claims to Haifa and Jaffa, while as a Palestinian, I can undoubtedly demand Haifa, Jaffa, Beer-Sheva and Jerusalem. However, the moment we reclaim our right to all of Palestine, we will not wait even a minute to unite Palestine and Jordan.”

Replacement Theology claims that God rescinded Israel's land inheritance, but the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament) itself and history teach otherwise.

It's also a fact that the Gaza Strip and the West Bank had been in Arab hands for 19 years prior to 1967, but no one considered forming a Palestinian state at that time. The Egyptian weekly *El Mussawar* wrote in 1968:

“A Palestinian nation is the product of progressive planning, since the world would hardly sanction a war of a hundred million Arabs against a small nation.”

Our point isn't to trivialize the problem of Arab refugees or to make the opposition look clumsy. It's indisputable that Israeli citizens, Jew and Arab alike, should live together peacefully. However, we can properly sort out the land question only through the lens of the biblical-prophetic Word.



The most surprising thing about the whole situation is that world politics is revolving around, and building upon, a historical myth. Despite all of the political de-liberation, it's important to remember that ultimately, the living God has lifted His hand to swear an oath over the land (Ezek 20:42). Replacement Theology claims that God rescinded Israel's land inheritance, but the Torah itself—and history—teach otherwise.

(NAI0622/1251)



On the Horizon

NEWS IN
BRIEF



ISRAEL

500 Terror Attacks Thwarted

The IDF's ongoing Operation Break the Wave in the West Bank has seen thousands of troops and reservists crack down on Palestinian terrorism, arresting over 3,000 suspects and thwarting over 500 terror attacks.

SAUDI ARABIA WANTS NORMAL TIES

Saudi Arabia is looking to normalize ties with Israel, although it will be a while before this ever properly manifests, Israeli news outlet i24NEWS reported.

In a meeting with US officials visiting Riyadh courtesy of the Washington Institute, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman listed three main demands that must be met for Saudi Arabia to join the Abraham Accords and normalize ties with Israel, according to i24NEWS.

According to the report, these demands did not include anything about the Palestinian conflict or requests for Israel. Rather, they hinged entirely on the US, specifically affirming a US-Saudi alliance, proper weapons supplies to the kingdom as if it were a NATO country and allowing Riyadh to have a restricted civil nuclear program.

-jpost.com

6 December 2022



Members of the South Yamas special forces counter-terrorist unit seen during sniper training in southern Israel. The unit is known for undercover operations in Arab communities in Israel and the West Bank (Illustrative).

(credit: NATI SHOHAT/FLASH90)



The operation began in late March after a series of terror attacks in Israeli cities left 20 people dead. Israeli security forces, including the IDF, Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) and Israel Police have been carrying out raids day and night against Palestinians suspected of terrorism.

In addition to offensive operations against terror suspects, eleven battalions have been deployed to the Seam Line—



the separation barrier that in some areas is a significant distance eastward in the West Bank from the Green Line—which saw thousands of illegal infiltrations over the years as well as the smuggling of guns and other weaponry.

Despite the military attempting to crack down on illegal infiltration and weapons smuggling, the increase in shooting attacks has become a major source of concern for the IDF.

And with the IDF cracking down on weapons smuggling, there has been a dramatic 300-400% increase in the price of ammunition and weapons. If, for example, a bullet for an M-16 used to cost NIS 3, it now costs NIS 20.

-www.jpost.com, 28 November 2022

Commentary: It is significant that Israel, with the most effective military and the best security agency, still fails to maintain smuggle-proof borders. Another unrelated article states that more than 25,000 Arab Palestinians are working illegally in Israel. Thus the question, how is that possible?

When one views this development from international perspectives, the conclusion is simple: borders don't work completely, but only to a certain degree. Apparently, Europe is leading the world

through the Schengen Agreement, which left borders open between EU countries.

The Schengen Agreement signed on June 14, 1985, is a treaty that led most of the European countries towards the abolishment of their national borders, to build a Europe without borders known as the "Schengen Area." Signed in Luxemburg, initially by only five EU countries, the agreement remains one of the world's biggest areas that [has] ended border control between member countries.

-www.schengenvisainfo.com

However, Israel is different. In the heart of the country, Judea and Samaria, Israel allowed Arab Palestinians to operate independently, based on the Oslo Accords.

The Oslo Accords were a landmark moment in the pursuit of peace in the Middle East. Actually a set of two separate agreements signed by the government of Israel and the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)—the militant organization established in 1964 to create a Palestinian state in the region—the Oslo Accords were ratified in



Washington, D.C., in 1993 (Oslo I) and in Taba, Egypt, in 1995 (Oslo II).

-www.history.com

But again, it did not work and is still unworkable, due to extremist elements within the Arab population. With the backing of the prevailing Muslim authorities, terrorist groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad continue to declare that killing Jews is an honorable thing. Thus, Israel has no option: to protect its citizens, Israel will and must continue to act decisively.

In this horrible situation, one thing must be mentioned; namely, the true believers in Jesus Christ, who dare not openly practice their faith within their community. While we refrain from mentioning incidents, Scripture shows that there will be persecution, suffering, even loss of life. That is part of the calling of the Church. Let us pray for Arab Palestinian Christians.



7900

(See *The Palestinian Right to Israel*, Item #2256, \$19.99.)



UAE

Cooperation with Israel in Space

Israeli and Emirati cooperation has placed the two countries at the forefront of space exploration, Israel's President Isaac Herzog said in a speech at the International Abu Dhabi Space Debate.



Israeli and Emirati cooperation has placed the two countries at the forefront of space exploration, Israel's President Isaac Herzog said in a speech at the International Abu Dhabi Space Debate.

"Our two countries are boldly leading our region toward new frontiers in space and leaving our mark on history," he said.

As an example, he pointed to a joint Israeli-Emirati research project to analyze data from the Venus environmental monitoring satellite.

Herzog spoke during a two-day visit to the Gulf to advance the Abraham Accords, under whose auspices Israel normalized ties with four Arab countries including the UAE.

During his visit, Herzog spoke of the importance Gulf countries played for Israel in helping expand ties with other important economic partners outside the region such as China and India, the latter of which had a delegation at the space conference.

-www.jpost.com, 5 December 2022



NEWS IN BRIEF



President Isaac Herzog meeting UAE Foreign Minister HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi.

(photo credit: AMOS BEN GERSHOM/GPO)

SPEECH PREDICTS HEART FAILURE

Speech-processing startup Cordio Medical announced that its HearO app successfully predicted 82 percent of first congestive heart failure cases in patients that took part in a study, on average 18 days before the incident occurred.

Congestive heart failure takes place when the heart doesn't properly pump blood, which in turn can lead to fluid accumulation in the lungs. The HearO system detects that buildup in a person's speech, alerting of future heart failure.

The company recently completed an \$18 million fundraising round and has received approval from Israel's Health Ministry and CE approval from the European Union. It expects to receive FDA approval at the end of 2023 and plans to enter the United States market in 2024.

-israel21c.org
27 November 2022

Commentary: Our focus is not on the space project, but rather on Israel's outreach to an Arab, Persian Gulf country some 2,000 kilometers away. The UAE is located south of Iran, a potentially dangerous enemy of both nations.

The report targets potential joint space exploration, but we know that in reality, there is no such thing. Consider that the nearest planet, Mercury, on average is about 40 million kilometers away. According to "Ten Facts about Mercury" on funkids.com, "Mercury is 430 degrees Celsius during the day and 180 degrees during the night."

So, why space research? It simply is an imitation of what God is going to do: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isaiah 65:17).



7901


(See *The Heavens*, Item #2391, \$19.99.)



ISRAEL

1,800-Year-Old Roman Road Found

Archaeologists have uncovered part of an 1,800-year-old Roman road in northern Israel, built in the time of Emperor Hadrian, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced.

 It said the road, which runs between Acre, Sepphoris and Tiberias, was paved in the 2nd century AD during Hadrian's rule. The road was completed by his successors and later renovated in the Byzantine period.

The Roman Empire established several major roads in the area as part of a need to quickly move military forces, mail and goods, the IAA said in its statement.

During excavation work in the area of the new road section, pottery fragments from the Roman and Byzantine periods were found, as well as metal items and coins dating back to the Roman period.

The excavation works are part of the development works of the Sanhedrin Trail, a 70-kilometer (43-mile) walking path that passes between sites associated with the assembly of 71 sages of the ancient supreme court of Israel.

-www.timesofisrael.com, 3 December 2022

Commentary: Archaeology confirms history, and vice versa. During these days, it is important for Israel to present evidence of Jewish presence through-

out the Promised Land.

The history of the Roman Empire has been recorded and established throughout the world. It was the Romans that occupied the land of Israel during the life of Jesus Christ on earth. A Jewish priest by the name of Flavius Josephus, born in 37 AD in Jerusalem, writes about Jesus:

“Now, there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works — a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day” (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 18, Chapter 3, verses 63-64).

How precise! The Church continued to exist and will remain until completed. It is the spiritual temple



View of a new section of an 1,800-year-old Roman road in northern Israel (Alex Wigman, Israel Antiquities Authority)

VOICE-ACCESSIBLE CROSSWALKS

A subsidiary of Israeli infrastructure construction company Electra won a \$62 million tender to make hundreds of crosswalk signals in Manhattan and Staten Island accessible to pedestrians with visual impairment.

Electra President and CEO Itamar Deutscher said the Ramat Gan-based company is expanding its activities in the United States through its majority-owned New York subsidiaries, Hellman Electric and Gilton Electrical.

He said that he anticipates bidding on many additional voice accessibility projects at intersections throughout the five boroughs of New York City.

-israel21c.org
29 November 2022

of which Jesus said, "I will build my church." When the last one from among the Gentiles is added to that body, it will be raptured into the presence of the Lord.

7902

(See *The Complete Works of Flavius Josephus*, Item #2241, \$59.99.)



ISRAEL

New Crop of Israeli Farmers

Menachem Friedman, 67, is a successful peach and nectarine grower in the Golan Heights. He followed in the footsteps of his parents, Transylvanian farmers who came to Israel after surviving the Holocaust.



Four of Friedman's seven children planted their own roots on the family farm: Sharya, 42; Israel, 40; Ido, 35; and Nachshon, 29.

"We chose agriculture out of a conscious choice that this is where we want to be," Nachshon Friedman tells ISRAEL21c. "Each of us brings with us innovation and a young spirit into a relatively old-fashioned world that has a lot of room for



advancement.”

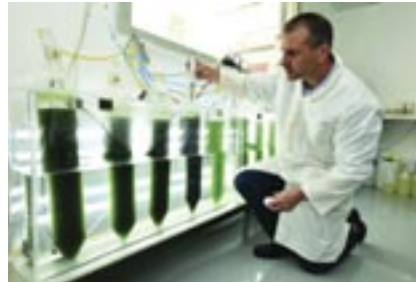
These are not the farmers of yesteryear. Sharya is finishing his doctorate in archaeology, Israel and Ido are certified engineers and Nachshon has a master’s degree in economics and business administration.

It became obvious that the average Israeli farmer is over 60 and the next generation isn’t going into the family business. At the same time, there are some young, business-savvy farmers like Nachshon Friedman with sustainable and fresh ideas needing investment.

“When we started, everyone told us it would be good if we got 50 interested companies, but more than 250 applied and we had to stop taking applications after two and a half weeks,” says Yoel Zilberman, HaShomer HaChadash CEO and founder. “It just shows you how much this area was neglected and needed a push to fulfil its potential.”

In addition to young farmers themselves, Eretz-Noshevet also will support groundbreaking startups from more established agricultural entrepreneurs that will help the next generation of farmers.

Lior Hessel founded AlgaeNite in 2018 to provide a sustainable alternative to today’s chemical and organic fertilizers. Chemical fertilizers leave a large carbon footprint and come from fossil fuels, while organic fertilizers are expensive and often



Lior Hessel growing cyanobacteria to make affordable, organic bio-ammonia fertilizer. Photo courtesy of AlgaeNite

contain pharmaceutical and hormone residues that end up in food.

“We decided to find a third way because we have to supply high-quality food at reasonable prices and it has to be sustainable,” says Hessel.

AlgaeNite’s novel solution, developed by Ben-Gurion University Prof. Sammy Boussiba, turns nitrogen from the air into fertilizer with the help of cyanobacteria, which are half bacteria, half green-blue algae.

AlgaeNite is building its first production facility in southern Israel and will do so in the United States and Europe next year.

“We are focused on organic fertilizer, but they also can be used for plant-based fish or meat protein alternatives, animal feed, cosmetics and bioplastics. This could be the beginning of a new era in agriculture — and it will start in Israel.”

-www.israel21c.org, 1 December 2022



Commentary: The average reader does not fully comprehend what it means to “turn nitrogen in the air into fertilizer with the help of cyanobacteria, which are half bacteria, half green-blue algae.” Quite obviously, however, the Friedmans and this group of scientists



know very well how it works, what it will do, and what the future holds—at least when it comes to growing food. We too believe “it will start in Israel.”

7903

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



LITHUANIA

\$40 Million for Holocaust Survivors

Lithuania’s prime minister made what one Jewish organization called an “important step” by introducing legislation to allocate more than \$38 million as restitution for Holocaust survivors and their heirs.



“Prime Minister Ingrida Šimonytė’s proposal is an important step to providing a measure of justice to Lithuanian Holocaust survivors and their families for the horrors they suffered during World War II and its aftermath,” the World Jewish Restitution Organization said in a statement. “We look forward to the opportunity to review this new legislation that would continue the process of property restitution and support Jewish life in Lithuania.”

The Lithuanian government has previously acted before to compensate Holocaust victims. Over a decade ago, the parliament passed legislation to allocate 36 million Euros, then worth about \$72 million, for a Good Will Foundation that funds projects to benefit the country’s Jewish population. The money was considered restitution for communal property seized from Lithuania’s Jewish community under the Nazi occupation.

NEWS IN BRIEF



EXPLOSIVE GROWTH IN ARMS SALES

Globally, sales of arms and military services among the world’s top 100 arms companies grew to \$592 billion in 2021, according to the latest report from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

Sales by Elbit Systems jumped from \$4.2 billion in 2020 to \$4.75 billion, placing it 28th on the roster of the world’s top 100 arms makers and defense contractors. The ranking was the highest-ever for the company, and the highest for an Israeli defense firm since Israel Aerospace Industries ranked 27th with \$1.2 billion in arms sales in 2002, the year SIPRI began publishing its annual ranking.

According to SIPRI, the five companies from the Middle East among the top 100 saw \$15 billion in arms sales in 2021, a 6.5% jump over the previous year, a larger increase than any other region. The companies included Israel’s Elbit, IAI (\$3.87 billion), and Rafael (\$3.01 billion), and Turkey’s ASELSAN (\$2.16 billion) and Turkish Aerospace (\$1.2 billion).

—*timesofisrael.com*
5 December 2022



“This payment represented only partial value of the properties,” the WJRO explained. However, “it provided much needed funds to support Jewish communal life in Lithuania, restored several Jewish heritage sites, and offered modest payments to needy survivors.”

-www.jta.org, 2 December 2022

Commentary: This relatively small Baltic country, populated by only 2.7 million people, has registered phenomenal growth after breaking off from the Soviet Union. They joined the WTO in May 2001 and became a member of the European Union in 2004. In January 2015, they adopted the euro. The per-capita GDP has reached \$37,100 (2019).

The fact that Lithuania faces its past is to be commended, and so is the WJRO (World Jewish Restitution Organization), which documented that over 90% of Lithuania’s Jews were annihilated during the Nazi era. What is particularly significant is the apparent willingness by the government to restore a significant amount of value lost during the war by its Jewish population. One must also keep in mind that the atrocities, according to WJRO research, took place between 1941 and 1944; that is over 80 years ago.



Lithuanian Prime Minister Ingrida Šimonyte
(Photo by Rokasdarulis via Wikimedia Commons)

Thus, the question arises: will other nations compensate the original inhabitants of their land, such as America’s Native Indians or Australia’s Aboriginals? The answer is probably no, because documentation is somewhat lacking, and the natives of these countries had little to no capacity to record facts and figures.

Now, our question: when will unrighteousness cease? Here the Bible gives the answer: “And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 11:15).

7904

(See *Revealing Revelation*, Item #2394, \$17.99.)





PORTUGAL

Lebanese Girl Refuses to Play Israeli

Contestants worldwide traveled to Portugal late in November, some of which were coming for the teen division of the tournament.



Bissan Chiri has been praised by Lebanese officials for representing the country with honor. (photo credit: WIKIMEDIA)



Contestants in the World Table Tennis (WTT) Youth Star Contender

Vila Nova de Gaia 2022 were set to play in the semi-final round, when 11-year-old Bissan Chiri of Lebanon refused to play her opponent, an Israeli contestant.

Chiri would have played 15-year-old Elinor Davidov, who was representing Israel in the tournament. Instead, Chiri decided to withdraw from the competition entirely. Though her official reason for withdrawing from the competition was not officially shared, her choice to depart the tournament rather than play Israeli athletes received widespread praise throughout the Arab world.

On November 26th, Hamas issued a

press release praising the young girl. Hamas, while based in Gaza, has recently been cooperating in conjunction with Hezbollah. However, operating in Lebanon has landed Hamas in hot water with Hezbollah, whose turf was invaded in the process.

From athletes to chess masters, competitors from countries like Jordan, Sudan, Algeria, Malaysia, and Iran were just a few of those who have broken rules by their refusal to compete with an Israeli contestant in 2022.

-www.jpost.com, 26 November 2022

Commentary: Politics are usually taboo when it comes to international sports, but quite apparently not so where Israel is concerned.

Here, once again we see how Israel is being separated from the nations of the world.

From Scriptural perspectives, we know that in the end, things will be quite different. In his last few words, Moses exclaimed: "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places" (Deuteronomy 33:29). 7895

(See *Target Israel*, Item #2293, \$15.99.)



Passing on the Torch: Ebenezer's New CEO



“But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24).

By Shmuel Aweda (*Ebenezer's Chairman*)

This past year, Johnny, our beloved manager of 24 years, shared that he felt the Lord calling him on to other things... But who would take up the torch and become Ebenezer's new CEO? Our board began praying and seeking the Father's will, in who we should ask to step into this special role.

Being the CEO of the Ebenezer Home is not a task for the weak at heart. As Israel's only believing senior citizens' home (run both by and for believers), it requires having a very special calling to serve the elderly believing community. Not only this, but also it demands adequate leadership skills, having

the ability to serve and care for both residents and team, and retaining and having certain state-related licenses and training. Needless to say, it's a very complex role, and not many people are capable of fulfilling it.

After much prayer and seeking the Lord's direction concerning Ebenezer's future, on behalf of our board (and after praying about a few candidates) as Ebenezer's chairman, I asked our COO, David Phillips, if he would become Ebenezer's new CEO. David already has much of the required skills, talents and experience, along with a deep love and knowledge for both the team and residents. Looking back over



the years David has served the Ebenezer family, I felt like the Lord had prepared him for such a time as this. To our great joy and appreciation, David agreed.

David: on behalf of the board, residents, and team, thank you for agreeing to pick up the torch and run the race the Father has given you; for your heart for this ministry, and also for your great love for the gospel! May our Heavenly Father be with you, guide and direct you, and bless you with the wisdom and under-

standing you need as you transition into this new role as Ebenezer's CEO. We, the board of Ebenezer, stand behind you.

To all who are a part of the Ebenezer family, on behalf of the board of directors, I would like to take this special opportunity to thank each one of you. Thank you for faithfully standing with us; for your support, prayers, encouragement, and for keeping our new CEO in your prayers! It is so special to each one of us... Again, thank you!



Note: Donations for the project by check/money order should be made out to Midnight Call, and specify Ebenezer Home in the memo line.

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“And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done” (Daniel 11:36).

BY ARNO FROESE

The epitome of narcissism is described in the above Scripture. It is he who wishes to be equal to or even replace God the Creator. The prophet Isaiah describes his desire: “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” (Isaiah 14:14). Who is he? It is Lucifer. In the New Testament he is called the great dragon, the old serpent, the devil, and Satan.

The center of his activity is God’s chosen land, Israel. The land we so dearly love; the land wherein the patriarchs dwelt—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; from which the prophets came and proclaimed God’s message.

But, above and beyond all, it is the land where God was revealed in the flesh; whose coming to Israel



was prophesied long ago. His work is documented in the four Gospels and Acts in the New Testament. It is a land incomparable to any other country on earth. As a matter of fact, the Bible makes this devastating statement about all the nations: “All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity” (Isaiah 40:17). That is enough reason for us not to unnecessarily worry about what’s happening on planet earth, what transpires among the nations. The entirety of human history is

placed in this category: “less than nothing.”

Yet, Israel stands out. She is different; she is unique; she is called a holy nation and her land, the Holy Land. But at the same time, she is also referred to as the most abominable. It is this Mystery Babylon which has attempted—and still does today—to create its own self-made god. The prophet Ezekiel exposes Jerusalem with these words: “As I live, saith the Lord God, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy” (Ezekiel 16:48-49).

It is sad for us to realize that Jesus said to the Jews in the land of Israel: “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive” (John 5:43). However, after judgment comes salvation.

Reading Hosea chapter 2, one notices that the words “I will” appear 23 times. The first 13 verses expose Israel’s horrible sin of idolatry. But then, beginning in verse 14, the “I will” is directed to His people Israel in the spirit of compassion, as evident in the last verse: “And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God” (verse 23).

Israel Today

It has been over 11 years since this writer visited Israel. Thus, the yearning to return to the land was fulfilled during the month of October last year. From our small group of staff and board members, there were several who had never been to the Holy Land. We carefully instructed them on how to answer the immigration and security authorities when entering the land. From the multiple times we have traveled to Israel, we have gathered much experience, which we could

authoritatively pass on to those members of our group who were traveling to the Promised Land for the first time.

Before we entered the area of passport control, we noticed a number of kiosks where travelers would scan their passport. Not knowing the procedure, we continued but were stopped at a gate, where an officer asked to see our visa. Thus, we returned to these machines and dutifully scanned our passport, after which the machine issued a visa the size of a driver's license.

That was all; with our passport and visa in hand, we quickly went through passport control without a hitch. Quite naturally, the scanning apparatus not only scanned and recorded the passport details, but also took our picture; thus, documenting that the person entering Israel is exactly the same as the one described in the passport. Doubtless, every traveler's details were also automatically checked against Israeli and international databases, and flagged if there was anything suspicious. Welcome to the technological age of computers!

One must mention that on the return trip from Israel to Charlotte, North Carolina, we waited no less than one hour and 33 minutes for the American immigration officers to compare our passport picture with the traveler.

Ebenezer Senior Citizens' Home

After having read so much about the Ebenezer Home, it was a joy to see the excellent work being done in favor of the aged believers in Jesus, some of them Holocaust survivors. They are being taken care of in a spirit of love, compassion, and quite often with extended patience. The atmosphere, filled with the Spirit of Christ, was almost tangible.

Bethesda Assembly

On the Sabbath, we were invited to attend services at the local Bethesda Messianic Assembly. The entire service was impressive and spiritually uplifting. While all held in Hebrew, we were able to join in on some of the old hymns in English. The message was extraordinary,

with excellent headset translation. What was most notable was the volume of young people, which cannot be said of many of our churches in North America. Dual event youth groups have to meet at the Beth Shalom facilities not too far away. Indeed, we were abundantly blessed by being guests at the Bethesda Assembly.

Ebenezer/Action for Israel

Some have asked about the allocation of funds. For Ebenezer, 100% of funds received through Midnight

Call Ministries is transferred to the Ebenezer Senior Citizens' Home.

Action for Israel is administered by Fredi and Beate Winkler, who are the directors of Beth Shalom. They in turn prayerfully allocate funds where needed most in Haifa and the rest of Israel.

Thank you for praying and for your support of Israel, especially now for His Church in His land—particularly for the ever-growing number of young Israelis finding the fulfillment, “Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.” ^(NFI)



“I will bless them that bless thee...”
(Genesis 12:3).

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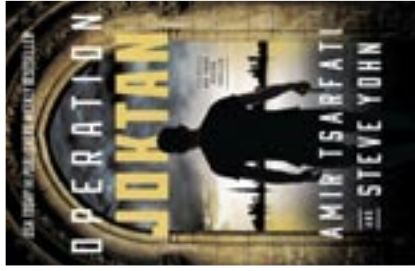
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