

NEWS FROM ISRAEL

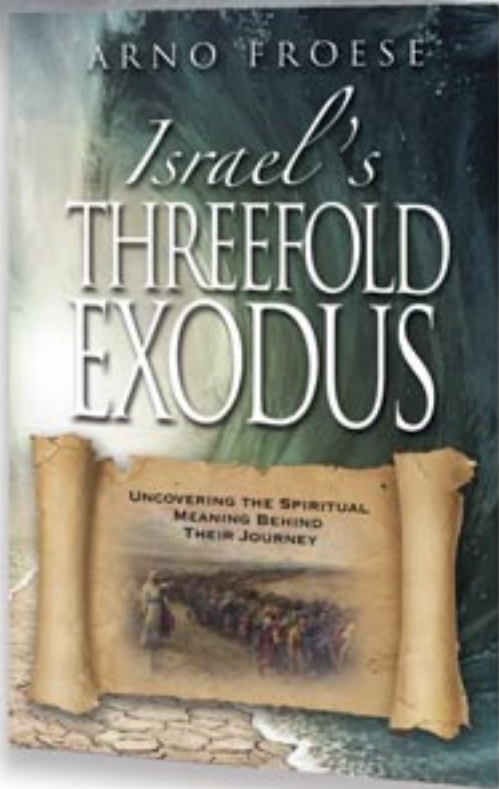
July 2023

\$2.25



The Burning Bush: A Model of Israel's Future Salvation – Part 2

TAKE AN AMAZING JOURNEY



The first Exodus revealed God the Father, the second Exodus revealed God the Son, and the third Exodus will reveal God the Holy Spirit, as the prophet Zechariah proclaims: “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn” (Zechariah 12:10).

**WITH GOD’S CHOSEN PEOPLE, INTO THE PAST,
THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.**

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Dear Friends of Israel,

BY FREDI WINKLER

The book of Revelation begins with the statement that what had been told to John must happen soon, or shortly. Reading it that way has led some to the conclusion that all of what is described in Revelation had already been fulfilled when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in 70 AD.

In the basic Greek text, the word *tachei* stands for “soon” or “shortly.” From this word we derive the familiar term “tachometer”; that is, “speedometer.” The speedometer, however, does not measure how soon something will happen, but how quickly or speedily it will happen. Thus, a better translation would be: “What will happen speedily [quickly].” This same description will again be given in chapter 22, verses 7, 12 and 20.

In Revelation 1:10, John writes that he was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day. What is meant by that? In many interpretations, it is explained that this Day of the Lord means Sunday. However, that cannot be true. Sunday was not called the Lord’s Day until much later in history, not yet in Biblical times. Here is meant the end-time Day of the Lord, about which almost all Old Testament prophets talked; as, for instance, Joel in chapter 2, verses 1-11.

Revelation, therefore, lets us understand that once the end-time events begin, everything will happen speedily. The central message of Revelation is the Day of the Lord. But this is not a day of 24 hours. Rather, it is a period of seven years or, more precisely, twice three and a half years.



In Luke 4:16-21, we find that Jesus reads from Isaiah 61:1-2 in the synagogue of Nazareth, and then adds: “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” Among other things, it is written here that He was sent to proclaim the “pleasant year” of the Lord. Once again, that doesn’t mean a year of 365 days, but the Age of Grace, which will soon have lasted 2000 years.

However, Isaiah 61:2 does not end with the announcement of the “favorable year” of the Lord, but continues with the addition: “and the day of vengeance of our God.” Here again is not meant a day of 24 hours, but the last seven years of the Day of the Lord. So, the question arises: Did Jesus also announce the Day of Vengeance? Most people answer with “no.” Yet the Lord did speak about this Day, but not until the week before His death on the Cross, during His speech on the Mount of Olives (Matthew 24). Everything that is written about Him had to be fulfilled.

It is quite possible that we today are close to the last “seven years.” A major security conference was re-

cently held in Israel. A senior military officer warned Israel’s enemies that a coming war would have different dimensions. Hassan Nasrallah, head of Hezbollah in Lebanon, responded immediately to the Israeli threat and said: “We also are talking about a major war. That war will involve hundreds of thousands of soldiers. We have a great superiority in human numbers compared to our enemy Israel. If Israel wants a big war, then we will open the floodgates and not hold back as before.”

In light of these words, it is good to remember that Nasrallah does not tend to bluff, but usually carries out what he announces. The Israeli army leadership therefore has warned the population to be prepared for such an eventuality.

However, we have confidence and comfort that the Lord Himself, as told in many Scripture verses, will intervene to glorify His great name.

Trusting Him, who intends to glorify His holy name, I greet you warmly with Shalom,

Trevor Winkler



The Burning Bush: A Model of Israel's Future Salvation – Part 2

BY PHILIPP OTTENBURG

As we contemplate this bush, could there be a more fitting image in the wilderness than the one God chose?

The bush is a type of Israel. A small and despised people, they never presented any noble fruit to their God, only thorns. The other peoples simply regarded Israel as a meaningless bush in the desert. If you come too close, you'll only get pricked.

But God prepared salvation for this people, and chose a bush in the desert to begin this plan. How would we go about it? We as humans are inclined to splendor and excess, in a big display of power. But God chose the things that are despised and worthless to the world (1 Cor 1:27-28).

Do you sometimes feel unworthy? Do you perceive yourself as incapable? Do you feel akin to this useless bush? At the very moment we see we are actually worthless and despised, we turn out to be the perfect tool for God. He wants to use us! God spoke from the insignificant and

trifling bush. That is exactly how He wants to speak through you.

Through this bush, God showed His choice of Israel—a blind, deaf, and stiff-necked people—as a witness among the nations, as the bearer of all of God's revelation to mankind. Someone once said, "Culture comes from the Gentiles; Salvation comes from the Jews."

God revealed Himself then, is revealing Himself today, and will continue to do so in the future, in the "bush"—in Israel. And yes, this bush will not burn. Such a fitting image of the greatest miracle of world history: the preservation of the small nation of Israel. It's like the burning bush in the desert, in the land of the nations. It was and is persecuted, oppressed, driven out, scattered ... but this people has never burned. Israel must not perish. God has His plan!

Not even an alliance of all nations against the people of God will be able to harm Israel. Israel survives. God has always preserved it. It will even survive Armageddon.



Its language, Hebrew, has survived, even though this patch of land in the Middle East was not in possession of a Jewish state for a long time. Even though the people are without a temple, without actual religious life. Not even an alliance of all nations against the people of God will be able to harm Israel. Israel survives. God has always preserved it. It will even survive Armageddon.

Shortly after the founding of the state in 1948, when Ben-Gurion proclaimed Israel's inde-

pendence, there was a massive headwind. Israel didn't even have an intact army. And yet the state did not burn. In this context, the Six-Day War is worthy of special mention.

In 1967, the situation was escalating with regard to attacks from Sinai and Gaza, and shipping and trade routes in the Straits of Tiran. Almost everyone was against Israel, particularly Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq. The Egyptian Air Force looked very strong at the time. Israel began necessary preemptive

air strikes against them, as this simmering conflict became increasingly dramatic. What's impressive is that Israel had been planning for this scenario for the previous 16 years! Information from intelligence and years of reconnaissance made it possible. The plan's smallest details were repeatedly tweaked and improved (for example, variables such as morning fog or the time difference in Egypt). It was also a logistical *tour de force* of such magnitude that Israel achieved aerial victory within 170 minutes. Israel managed to keep planes in the air non-stop. In his resignation speech, the Egyptian president ultimately stated that the Israelis had roughly tripled the size of their air force. What a miracle! Not burned!

The Jewish people are so oppressed, yet consider their vitality, their zeal, and their success, even today. Another example from the field of agriculture: A palm tree in Israel yields an average of 182 kg (400 lbs.) of fruit, whereas the average for the Mid-

dle East is 70 kg (150 lbs.). The milk yield from Israel's cows is the highest in the world, and double the European average.

Out of the bush—Israel—the living God reveals Himself. Who perceives it? Who's looking? Who still realizes the miracle that is Israel's very existence?

God's appearance in the burning bush was so clear that Moses went forth. God is actually clearly working through Israel, but no one is looking! There is no better key to discerning God's hidden ways with mankind than Israel.

Is everything in your life also ablaze? Is there suffering, illness, pressure? Israel is an encouragement to us. In the same way God is accomplishing His purpose with Israel, He will for each of us who is sealed with the Holy Spirit.

Speaking from the bush to Moses, God said:

"I HAVE COME DOWN..."

God saw the Israelites' suffering under the Egyptians (Exod 3:7). He heard their cries. He knew

their pain. And God said, “I have come down to deliver them!” (v. 8). His coming down is the necessary means of fulfilling His plans for His people. God must intervene Himself. People can’t.

Here we are introduced again to God’s thoughts of His kingdom with Israel for the blessing of other nations. God sees everyone. And in that regard is, of course, the culmination of Scripture: Jesus coming to earth. The Old Testament people of God, Israel, are described to us as a people who are waiting for the One to come. At the first coming the Lord was rejected, as Moses was then. There was no change. That’s why Israel is still waiting. At the second coming, Christ appears in order to remain and bring heaven to earth: the messianic kingdom in and with Israel.

We as the body of Christ also await His coming. But are we aware that, alongside Israel and the Church, all mankind and creation are also waiting? Everything is waiting! Yes, this tired and torn

world of nations is waiting. The peoples don’t know for whom they’re waiting, but they’re waiting.

And Christ Himself is waiting to return: Christ “sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet” (Heb 10:12-13). He’s waiting for the heavens to be rolled back like a scroll (Rev 6:14), when He will finally return. And we the Church, as the body of Christ, await His coming at the Rapture. We will be caught up in the air and united with Him, the body to the head. Paul tells us so in his letters to the Thessalonians. Those of us in the current redemptive age are His body, made up of Jews and Gentiles. God is advancing His plan of salvation along various tracks, which will converge at the end (cf. Eph 1:23).

Only Jesus Christ brings change. That’s also true in the life of every individual. Everything will be restored when He comes. He will rescue His people out of

God is advancing His plan of salvation along various tracks, which will converge at the end.

their distress, which will be worse than the situation under Pharaoh. Israel will once again enter into a relationship with the Lord. The Lord will actually establish a “new world order” with Israel; namely, one that is pleasing to God. As long as the devil is the prince of this world, nothing will change, despite the efforts of unions and political parties. But Jesus Christ will unseat Satan as the prince of this world. Then the Prince of Peace will take the wheel. The royal robe will be upon His shoulders. The Wonderful Counselor, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, will reign. In a word, the kingdom of Israel. The return of Jesus is the key. Then Israel will be able to become a blessing to all peoples, and present noble fruit.

Back to the bush. God continues, telling Moses:

“NOW THEREFORE GO”

According to the whole context of Scripture, Moses must be sent

again after his rejection, since Moses represents Christ. And so God says, “Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt” (Exod 3:10). Here in Moses we see on a small scale, the forthcoming return of Jesus.

From the burning bush comes the voice of God, which both promises Israel’s salvation and initiates it. And what does Moses do? He was obedient like Christ. He then encountered Aaron, his brother. God had fetched Aaron from Egypt and called him. He reached Moses at Mount Horeb and kissed him (Exod 4:27). They were to lead Israel out of Egypt together.

Let’s examine this assignment figuratively. With regard to Jesus’ second coming, prophetically speaking, we can say that Aaron had a divine calling, having previously been led out of Egypt and to Moses. In other words, Aaron was brought out of the world before the coming Mes-

siah. And so it is with the Church, Christ's body. We will be caught up from the world to be together with Him in the clouds. This is the Rapture. After that, we return with Christ as His body, to save God's people from their distress. Aaron then is a reflection of the Church as the body of Christ. According to the New Testament, she is also called to take part in God's great concept of the kingdom through judgment and governance.

When Moses and Aaron returned to Egypt, this signified judgment for anti-Semitic, idolatrous Egypt: Ten bowls were poured out (cf. Revelation 16), the ten plagues. The tenth was the extermination of all firstborn, and the Israelites had only one hope: the blood of a spotless lamb painted on the doorposts. The angel of judgment spared these houses as it passed by. This time, Israel believed the words of God, trusting in the blood (Exod 12:27-28). And it will be the same with Israel's future redemption. The blood of Jesus that flowed onto the wood is the bottom line.

The Jewish people, who still boast in the Exodus from Egypt, will one day see the parallels between then and now. And when Israel comes to faith, they will see that everything that happened back in Egypt was a small foreshadowing of the much greater Messiah.

“You will say in that day: ‘I will give thanks to you, O LORD, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.’ With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: ‘Give thanks to the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel’” (Isa 12:1-6).

(NAI0222/1309)

A close-up photograph of a crown of thorns in the foreground, with a silver crown blurred in the background. The scene is lit from the side, creating a dramatic effect.

Qeren in Salvation and the Hope of the Messiah - Part 7

When we consider the contexts where the word *qeren* is found in the Bible, we can see it's a prophetic expression of the Messiah's life and work.

Gabriele Monacis

We encounter *qeren* in the context of sacrifice (for example, at the altars in the sanctuary, where the blood from the sacrifices was poured). We also see it in the stories of Israel's kings, when men like David and Solomon

were anointed from a horn of oil. And finally, we find it in a context of victory: When Israel began to conquer the Promised Land, horns were blown. The walls of Jericho collapsed, and Israel won a great victory over its enemies.

Everyone who believes in the power of Jesus' sacrifice receives salvation from their sins, strength in place of weakness, life in place of death.

We could say that the word *qeren* is like a coin with an image of the king on it. On one side of the coin, we see the suffering Messiah-King, giving His life as a sacrifice to redeem His people. On the other side of the coin, He (along with His people) has victory over His enemies. Both sides of the coin belong to the life and work of Jesus Christ, King of kings, our Savior.

Everyone who believes in the power of Jesus' sacrifice receives salvation from their sins, strength in place of weakness, life in place of death. Not only that, but believers in Jesus Christ can be certain that the day is coming when His victory over sin and death will be their victory too—on the great day of Resurrection, when those who stand on the side of the Victor, Jesus Christ, will be

changed forever, while God's enemies will remain under judgment and death.

At the beginning of 1 Kings, we read another story concerning judgment of the anointed one's enemies. When Adonijah, one of King David's sons, realized that his father had become weak and was dying, he declared himself to be the next king. But David wanted Solomon as his successor, so he sent Zadok to anoint him as king. When Adonijah heard about it, he became frightened. What if he was declared an enemy of the king and eradicated? "And Adonijah feared Solomon. So he arose and went and took hold of the horns of the altar" (1 Kgs 1:50). There was only one safe place for Adonijah, out of reach of the king's judgment: the horns of the altar of burnt offering. Joab later did the same thing in 1 Kings 2:28.

In both instances, the Hebrew word for those horns is *qeren*.

Adonijah and Joab typify God's enemies—those who won't bow down before the anointed one God has chosen to be king over His people on this earth. In 1 Kings, that king was Solomon; today, God's Anointed One is the Lord Jesus Christ. And, as with Adonijah and Joab, there is only one sure place where those who haven't yet bowed before God can find salvation and life instead of judgment and death: the horns of the altar, the place where the Messiah Jesus sacrificed His life for those who are under God's judgment of death due to their sinful lives, and yet desire redemption.

To conclude this article, let's look at one more Scripture that relates to *qeren*. This one strengthens our hope that the people of Israel will one day trust in Jesus as the Messiah promised by God in the Old Testament.

We read in Exodus 34 of how Moses' face was shining as he descended from Mount Sinai, where God had spoken

to him. The Hebrew word for "radiant" or "shining," *qaran* (קָרַן), has the same root as the word *qeren* ("horn"). The Bible records that from then on, when Moses was among the people, he would cover his face with a veil so its radiance wouldn't frighten the people. But whenever he went into the sanctuary to talk with God, he removed it.

In 2 Corinthians 3:7-16, Paul compares Israel's unbelief in his day to the condition of their forefathers at Mount Sinai. He writes: "But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed" (vv. 14-16).

When we ask God to fulfill everything that He's promised, let's trust Him with all our hearts. He is faithful and keeps His Word. (NAI1022/1292)



On the Horizon

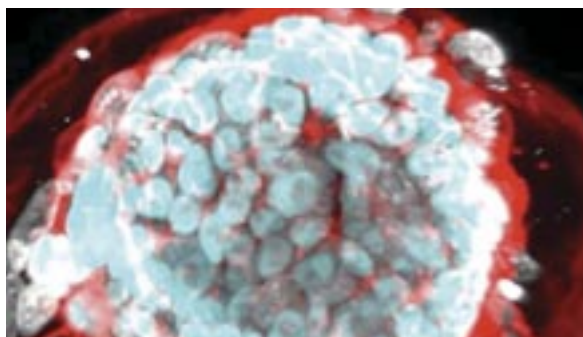
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BRIEF



ISRAEL

Human Embryos from Stem Cells

After a decade of work, researchers at the Weizmann Institute of Science say they have managed to create stem cell-derived human embryo models outside the uterus.



Digital imagery of stem cell-derived embryos created by scientists at the Weizmann Institute of Science
(Screen capture/Weizmann Institute of Science)



The advance could help scientists better understand healthy and unhealthy embryonic development. It also has implications for studying the genetics of various organs, the possible growing of organs for transplantation, and the investigation of the effects of pharmaceuticals on embryos.

The stem cell-derived embryo (SEM), which undergoes no genetic manipulation, is equivalent to a 14-day-old embryo. It has an embryo proper, a yolk sac, an amniotic cavity, a placenta and cells of the chorion, or the outermost fetal membrane.

“It does not have a beating heart or a brain but it has a

SKIN CANCER BREAKTHROUGH

A new study conducted at Tel Aviv University (TAU) and the Sheba Medical Center at Tel Hashomer reveals how melanoma cancer cells affect their close environment to support their needs by forming new lymph vessels in the dermis (inner layer of the skin) to go deeper and spread through the body.

The researchers, who call it a “breakthrough,” believe that their discovery could contribute to the development of a vaccine against the deadly cancer.

“Melanoma that remains on the skin is not dangerous,” Prof. Shoshana Greenberger from Sheba concluded, “so the most promising direction for fighting melanoma is immunotherapy—developing a vaccine that will arouse the immune system to combat the melanosomes and specifically to attack the lymphatic endothelial cells already invaded by the melanosomes. If we can stop the mechanisms that generate metastases in lymph nodes, we can also stop the disease from spreading.”

-jpost.com
14 June 2023



NEWS IN BRIEF



very complex organization and is already starting to show early differentiation of tissues. All the elements of the architecture are there and they are in the proper relation and orientation to each other," said Prof. Jacob Hanna.

"We generally cannot mimic the very complex processes that happen during embryo development. To do this, we need to learn what are the genes and the proteins that are turned on or off during this development process. Once we uncover them, we can add them or reduce them. So that is why we need to mimic the embryo," Hanna said.

-*www.timesofisrael.com*, 15 June 2023

Commentary: We often mention how Israel is at the forefront of scientific research. However, in this case, it's not necessarily in a positive direction. The use of human stem cells to create an artificial embryo is treading on dangerous territory.

In another part of the article, Professor Hanna states: "But we don't know the human embryo. It makes all of its organs between day seven and day 28 of pregnancy. After that, it's just about growth for the next eight months. So you have this rapid, critical three weeks in the beginning when you have all this drama happening, but it's a black box," he explained.

Some things are better left as a "black box"; namely, to the Creator. As Isaiah states, "The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name ... the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant" (Isaiah 49:1b, 5a).

8024

-By K. Farmer

(See *Quick Answers to Tough Questions*, Item #2329, \$12.99.)



MICRO ROBOT TO TARGET CELLS

Israeli scientists have developed a hybrid micro robot that can distinguish among different types of biological cells and extract damaged cells for examination.

Tel Aviv University researchers say the robot, the size of a single cell, can be controlled and navigated in a biological sample, where it can seize and transport the desired cells for further study without the need of an external medical tool.

The scientists are hoping the development will advance the "single cell analysis" research field, as well as make its way into areas of medical diagnosis, drug screening, surgery and environmental protection.

-*jpost.com*
29 May 2023



SLOVENIA

Israelis Sweep International Math Competition

In a historic first, an all-female team of young Israeli mathematics students took home every medal possible at the European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad (EGMO) in Slovenia. These young Israeli math enthusiasts won the gold, silver, and bronze medals after competing against 214 contestants from 54 countries worldwide.



Not only was this an extraordinary achievement for these young students, but one student, in particular, stood out from the crowd. Participant Noga Friedman not only took home the gold medal for her achievements but ranked 1st competition wide with a “perfect score.”

The competition consisted of multiple exam days, requiring contestants to take a four-and-a-half-hour exam. The exam consisted of 3 extremely difficult questions in the fields of elementary mathematics: Algebra, combinatorics, geometry and number theory.

Chairman of the Center for Future Scientists, Yarom Ariav, also responded to the major success accomplished by these three young women. “The achievements of Israeli students in the European Math-

ematics Olympiad for girls inspire respect, appreciation and admiration and are a source of pride and a golden opportunity to rise to the national level. The talented Israeli students competed against the best from all over the world and displayed extraordinary abilities, and for that they deserve great appreciation.”

-www.jpost.com, 24 April 2023

Commentary: This event took place in Slovenia. Is Israel part of Europe? The answer is yes and no. According to a Google search, we notice, for example, that Israel was allowed to participate in the Asian Games in 1952, and continued from 1954-1974. Thereafter, Israel was excluded. Most African countries followed by excluding Israel as well. On the other hand, Israel has been competing in the Eurovision Song Contest since 1973.

Relations between African countries and Israel suffered primarily due to Israel's wars in 1967 and 1973. But isolation has always put Israel a step ahead.

From a Biblical perspective, Jerusalem – that is, Israel – is the center of the world. We read in



NEWS IN BRIEF



Israel's female winning team at their competition in Slovenia
(photo credit: FUTURE SCIENTISTS CENTER AND MINISTRY OF EDUCATION)

\$1.4 BILLION TO HOLOCAUST VICTIMS

Stuart Eizenstat entered annual negotiations with the German government over reparations for the estimated 240,000 remaining Holocaust survivors around the world.

The compensation package Eizenstat helped secure for the Claims Conference—more than \$1.4 billion—was the largest monetary figure agreed to for a single year since German reparations began more than seven decades ago. The figure reflected a recognition that, even as the number of Holocaust survivors dwindles with each passing year, the needs of the remaining survivors are increasing as they age.

Some of the \$1.4 billion that Germany agreed to spend will be paid directly to survivors; the bulk will fund social welfare services such as home care and food packages, administered through about 300 agencies across 83 countries. Germany also agreed to boost funding for Holocaust education programs.

-jta.org

14 June 2023

Ezekiel 5:5: "Thus saith the Lord GOD; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her." That is why Israel and Jerusalem are the reason for so much controversy the world over.

We may think that the present conflict between the Arab Palestinians and the Jews does not concern the world, but we would be greatly mistaken. Why? We read in 2 Chronicles 7:16: "For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually." While to

the unregenerate, there is no evidence of God's presence in the visible world, what God has spoken or caused to be written down—even over 3,000 years ago—is an unchangeable reality. 8019

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





ISRAEL

\$12.5 Billion in Defense Exports

The Defense Ministry announced a record \$12.556 billion in defense exports during 2022, with Israel getting a boost from new Abraham Accords' countries.



Defense Ministry Director-General

Eyal Zamir stated, "Global instability

increases the demand for Israeli air defense systems, drones, UAVs, and missiles, and we continually work to preserve our capabilities and strengthen them."

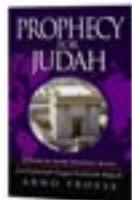
The report said that 2022 saw a 50% increase compared to the previous three years and that the volume of sales had doubled compared to the prior decade.

Regarding regions, the Asia and Pacific regions made up 30% of sales, while Europe made up 29% and North America made up 11%.

-www.jpost.com, 14 June 2023

Commentary: With Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the world is on edge, frantically looking for the most effective defense systems the world has offer. Quite naturally, Israel is number one in supplying this. Here we are reminded of Joel's prophecy: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty

men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords and your



pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong" (Joel 3:9-10). 8023

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



ISRAEL

Anti-Hypersonic Combat Missile

Rafael Advanced Defense Systems announced that it is mid-stream in working on developing a system to shoot down hypersonic missiles, dubbing its new project the "Sky Sonic" system.



Many countries have expressed concern that no existing air defense, including Israel's multi-tier defenses, could contend with such a threat.

Russia, China, and Iran have all made various claims about possessing or working on developing such advanced missiles.

Further, the Rafael chairman said the new defense system "is already in development for a solution. If someone thought we are going downward in defense, we are deep into this."

These hypersonic missiles may fly above the key 20-kilometer height for exist-



ing systems to hit them during almost the entire trajectory even though they fly in more of a line-drive fashion, and with a smaller arch.

Rafael also discussed progress regarding its Iron Beam laser anti-missile system and its existing Iron Dome and David's Sling anti-missile systems, noting that there would be many common features between the new Sky Sonic system and David's Sling.

-www.jpost.com, 14 June 2023

Commentary: Because Israel is threatened by its neighboring countries, the development of more sophisticated weaponry is essential. While to the south (Egypt) and to the east (Jordan), Israel has peace agreements, that is not the case in the north and the northeast, where Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Iran are located.

With Russia's war against Ukraine, Europe is developing into an eager customer for defensive weapons. This is primarily due to the fact that in recent times, the defense of European countries was practiced only on a theoretical basis, with no real-world experience. Will Rafeal's "Sky Sonic" be the answer to a secure airspace? Only time will tell.

Of course, Israel is different, because they have a different history and a unique situation today. But for the future, we read: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 54:17).

8018

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

NEWS IN BRIEF



EUROPEANS WANT ISRAELI TANK

Israel is in talks to sell its Merkava tank to two countries, one of them in Europe, in what would be the first export of the flagship fighting vehicle, a Defense Ministry official said.

Introduced after Israel's armored corps suffered heavy losses against Egypt and Syria in a 1973 war, and with a view to reducing reliance on foreign arms supplies, the Merkava—biblical Hebrew for "chariot"—is now in its fourth generation.

Yair Kulas, head of the Defense Ministry export coordination department SIBAT, said record demand for Israeli products was due in part to countries wanting to replenish their arsenals after providing Ukraine with weapons for its war with Russia.

-jpost.com
15 June 2023

“Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh” (Matthew 24:32).

BY ARNO FROESE

Contemplating about what to write in this column, I was opening the office around 7:00 am and was struck by the gorgeous, large leaves of our fig tree that grows on the west side of the building. Thus, the above Scripture.

The fig tree is a symbol of Israel in Scripture. The prophet Micah wrote about Israel's future over 2,700 years ago: “But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it” (Micah 4:4). One must realize that this prophecy does not depend on Israel's behavior, but on the resolute will of the Lord Himself. The chapter ends with this sentence: “...and I will con-

secrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth” (verse 13b). Of course, we know that the fulfillment will be implemented in the Millennium. Israel will experience God's unfathomable grace, just like any one of us who has been pardoned by the Lord ... washed in the blood of the Lamb ... redeemed for all eternity.

In our introductory verse, Jesus points to the fig tree as a sign of the end stages of the end times. We note that in Matthew 24, the word “shall” is repeated 59 times. Jesus' detailed answer was in response to the disciples' question, “Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (verse 3b).

This leads to verse 32, “the fig tree ... putteth forth leaves.” He is not speaking of the fruit of the fig tree, but rather its leaves. That reminds us of Genesis 3:7: “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.” The issue here is Adam and Eve covering their sins. From that point on, mankind kept hiding his sins ... covering them up.

After about 2,000 years, which we may call a dispensation without the law, came another 2,000 years of dispensation under the law, as God gave His commandments to Moses for the people of Israel. Some 2,000 years later, Jesus appeared. He did not come to cover sins but to take them away. Hebrews 10:4 states: “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”

During Jesus’ ministry, we read of another remarkable event: “And seeing a fig tree afar

off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it” (Mark 11:13-14). Prophetically, the fig tree represents Israel under the law. But the law did not make man perfect and did not bear fruit.

Interestingly, we read, “for the time of figs was not yet.” It seemed unreasonable for the Lord to expect fruit when it was not the time for fruit to be developed, only leaves. With this statement, the Lord Jesus clearly demonstrates the surprise element. The fig tree—the law—was not God’s final answer to mankind, for the Bible says: “the law made nothing perfect” (Hebrews 7:19a).

There is no doubt most Bible scholars recognize the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel as the great end-time sign.

When we occupy ourselves with recent history relating to Israel, we notice it was not religiously motivated Jews but the opposite: communists—that means atheists. Often called the father of modern Zionism, Theodor Herzl was an atheist. *Yom Ha'atzmaut*, which literally means “stands by itself,” is generally translated in English as “Day of Independence.” This is not applicable to the founding of Israel, because Zionism was the independence of Jews. It really means “by themselves.”

Britannica writes: “Zionism, Jewish nationalist movement that has had as its goal the creation and support of a Jewish national state in Palestine, the ancient homeland of the Jews (Hebrew: *Eretz Yisra'el*, ‘the Land of Israel’).” Thus, Independence Day is a rather weak translation and definition of *Yom Ha'atzmaut*.

Another issue is “Founding Fathers.” Again, not applicable to Israel. Two women signed:

Rachel Cohen-Kagan and Golda Myerson. They were members of the *Moetzet HaAm*, which means “The People’s Council.” The overwhelming majority of the 37 signatories were born and educated within the Soviet Union. Interestingly, 9 representatives came from Ukraine, where today a war is raging.

One contemporary report describes the 208 delegates who had gathered in Basel, Switzerland on 29 August 1887 for the first Zionist Congress: “Rabbis and University professors, medical men and engineers, lawyers and littérateurs. Mathematicians, chemists, bankers, merchants, tradesmen, University students, agriculturists, book-keepers, clerks—all professions and occupations. Orthodox Jews, moderate Conservatives, Chassidim, reformers, freethinkers, Ashkenazim, Sephardim, Galician Straimlech, and Parisian top-hats, German preachers, Lithuanian Rectors of Yeshiboth, Capitalists and Socialists, philanthropists

and *Bettelstudenten*, from Polish plains and Swiss mountains, from Lithuanian *Ghetti* and Vienna ‘Rings,’ speaking Russian, Polish, German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Hungarian, Arabic, Dutch, Bulgarian, Serbian, Danish, Yiddish and Hebrew, all had come there united by one will, unfurling one banner.”

They all had one aim: the founding of the Jewish State in the land of Israel. Actually, Theodor Herzl declared on 3 September 1897: “At Basel I founded the Jewish State. If I said this out loud today, I would be greeted by universal laughter. In five years perhaps, and certainly in fifty years, everyone will perceive it.” Precisely 50 years later, on 29 November 1947, the United Nations presented Resolution 181, which called for the partitioning of *Eretz Yisrael*, to divide the British Mandate territory into two states: one Jewish, and one Arab. The Arabs rejected the resolution, but the Jews greeted it with great jubilation.

The Message

Again, the fig tree is putting forth leaves. Spiritually speaking, there is no fruit. Yet from reliable sources, we hear that true believers in the Messiah are greatly multiplying in the land of Israel. It is on the basis of Scripture and not the news media, that God will fulfill His plan in His time and His ways. This, incidentally, is a message for the Church of Jesus Christ—His body, the spiritual temple on earth. At any given moment, we will be taken out of this world, from multiple nations into the presence of Jesus, who has bought us with His own blood.

Israel being a vibrant and strong nation shows that we are in the end stages of the end times. We, the Church of Jesus Christ, are not waiting for better times or certain political developments; we are waiting for our Lord. Just as those Jews in Basel, although diverse, had one goal: the establishment of the Jewish State in the land of *Eretz Yisrael*. (NFI)



A Testimony from an Ebenezer Resident: Part 2

By Esther Meyer



Hans was born on Carmel in Israel. He told me the story of how he and his two siblings rode together on a donkey's back to school. At the time I came, we made the same journey on foot to attend church meetings, go on shopping trips, and so on.

They had already welcomed me into their family, and as the Lord had planned through my marriage

to Hans, I would really get to be a part of them.

On the 17th of November 1965, we got engaged, and on the 27th of February 1966, we celebrated our wedding, together with the opening of the new center. That was the time my parents also arrived in Israel, to begin their service at the Beth Shalom House.

Through my marriage, I got a temporary permit to stay for a year, and after that, a permanent visa. Because my parents were only on a tourist visa, they had to leave after some months.

After Hans and I had worked together for three years at Beth Shalom, the Lord led us on a different path.



Hans' older brother, who lived in Switzerland, made it possible for their parents to enter a Christian retirement home in Switzerland, which made our own situation easier.

First, Hans worked for a short time as a self-employed electrician. In 1970, he worked partly for the Beit Eliahu Church and partly for the magazine of the Bible Society, led by Pastor Solheim's wife (founders of the Ebenezer Home).

During the years 1966-1972, the Lord gifted us with four children: one son and three daughters.

From 1978-1980, they built the new conference center Beth Yedidia on the Meyers' property, which would serve believers in Yeshua. They asked Hans to do the electrical work, and he started working full-time. The Bible Society had moved to Jerusalem, thus freeing Hans up to do the work.

We continued living in the old house (which would need to be demolished to complete the building of Beit Yedidia) until our new apartment at the center was fin-

ished. The two of us were now working for Beit Yedidia: Hans as manager of the house and garden, and me managing and overseeing the cleaning, laundry, and cooking, as well as the shopping during conferences. For six years, we served there together, until Hans retired at 65. He and his brother received the funds for the property they built the conference center on.

This made it possible for us to purchase and move into our own apartment. From there, Hans could still serve the Lord with several tasks. The Lord gave us 25 years together in that apartment.

During some days of rest at Beth Shalom, Hans had a heart attack and was hospitalized for a week. I knew I couldn't take Hans back to the 83 stairs that we needed to climb in order to reach our apartment.

After some inquiries, we were able to rent two rooms in the Ebenezer Home. This was at the end of January 2011. We joyfully accepted and moved. As we could also take our meals at Ebenezer,



I was free to care for Hans. Thanks to the Lord, he recovered well, and at the end of April, we celebrated his 90th birthday. We felt at ease in the Home, and one day Hans said to me: “We are going to stay here!” As Hans had made his desire clear, I felt encouraged to speak to the manager, to see if there was a possibility for us to enter the Ebenezer Home as residents. We got the approval, and so in 2012, we changed our status from renters to residents—only on paper, as we already lived there.

We made a change, though. Hans now spent his nights on the first floor, where he could be cared for. During the day, he stayed with me on the third floor. The Lord gave us almost three more years together, until he took Hans home to His heavenly glory. We parted in peace because Hans was ready to meet his Savior. I had put him into the Lord’s hands some weeks before. Hans asked me not to cry on the day of his parting to be with the Lord. Because I knew he was in a much better place now, the

Lord gave me the strength to be happy for him. Of course, there was a void in my heart, but the joy that he had reached his destination was greater.

Until now, the Lord has given me nine more years which I could spend here at the Ebenezer Home, where He still uses me. For example, together with a sister in Christ in the Home, we meet daily in my room to bring all the important things in prayer before the Lord. Together, we listen to sermons on the internet and receive new strength.

With our Lord, there is no retirement. He can use us even though we are advanced in age. We just need to give ourselves to Him and be willing to serve. This brings new joy to each day.

On the one hand, we are ready to meet Him; but on the other hand, we give ourselves over to Him daily, to be used until He comes back!

“He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”

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