

NEWS FROM ISRAEL

December 2023

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Lamentations Part 2

Antisemitism Has Exploded P. 19 • Pro-Hamas Sentiment Shocks European Jews P. 21

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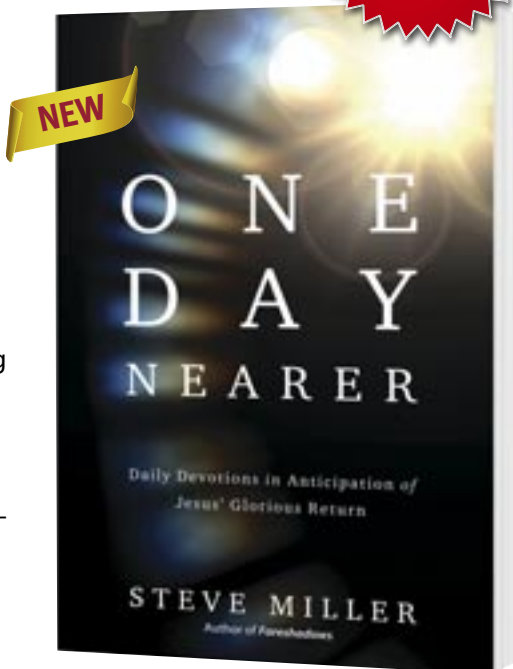
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By Thomas Lieth

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Dear Friends of Israel,

BY FREDI WINKLER

One can truly say that the world has changed since October 7, 2023. The atrocities committed by Hamas in the Jewish villages bordering Gaza are so outrageous, so horrific, that the footage filmed by the perpetrators themselves is almost unbearable to view. But it must be shown worldwide so everyone understands what Hamas really is, and no one will be able to justify having sympathies for them. Hamas must be destroyed as the Nazi Regime was destroyed, and any sign of sympathy for them must be made punishable.

The fact that the US has moved so quickly with aircraft carriers and warships dispatched to the Middle East, shows that much more is at stake than just Hamas. Also involved is the fanatically religious, Shiite Iran, which supports Hamas and has built it up

with several billion dollars. Israel fears the opening of a second serious front by Hezbollah in Lebanon. Only massive threats from Israel and the presence of American forces, have evidently kept Hezbollah from entering the war on a large scale for the time being.

To fully comprehend the events in the Middle East, we must understand Iran's policies and strategies, which are motivated by Shia Islam. Iran is convinced that Islam will rule the world. The war between Iran and Iraq under Saddam Hussein, lasted eight years. Since then, Iran has no longer been directly involved in wars, but has been building up so-called proxies that wage wars for them.

The Houthis, a proxy of Iran in Yemen, also fired rockets at Israel toward Eilat. Fortunately, they were not successful. The



Houthis have also waged war against Saudi Arabia, causing great damage to the oil industry there. Since Israel views Iran as the greatest threat to world peace, as the Saudis do at this time, that is the main reason why the Saudis are interested in an alliance with Israel.

There is the danger that the Houthis will close the Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb, thus stopping any shipping through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal. It seems that the US is aware of this danger, for it was quickly on the scene to prevent such a world conflagration.

Morocco is the only Arab country that has a defense alliance with Israel, though it is not that long since the two countries established relations. And why did that come about? Morocco is also home to an important strait, the Strait of Gibraltar. Iran is supporting the rebellious Polisario in the Western Sahara, who want to gain independence from Morocco. Iran is thus secretly setting up a proxy on this strait—one of the most important shipping routes—which will

then be ready to conquer and close the strait at “zero hour.”

All of this looks very bleak, but there are points of light as well. There are Muslim Arabs in the Israeli Army: Druze, Bedouins, and others, some of whom hold high positions. Some of them have lost their lives fighting against Hamas. And their families expressed pride that they were able to contribute to the fight against this outrageous barbarianism. Further, they said: “We stand behind this fight until the victory is won!” Repeatedly, one hears this statement in the media here in Israel: “This is a war of light against darkness, and the light will win!”

We are actually seeing signs that the end time wars of which the Bible speaks, are drawing closer. May God give His people Israel—and all of us who are on the side of the Lord God—strength and steadfastness to stand up for Him and His cause.

With this prayer in my heart, I greet you warmly,

Travis Winkler



Lamentations

Part 2

BY THOMAS LIETH

“Your prophets have seen for you false and deceptive visions; they have not exposed your iniquity to restore your fortunes, but have seen for you oracles that are false and misleading” (Lam 2:14).

The nation’s spiritual leaders had preached the wrong message to the people. They had prophesied and taught things that tickled the ears of

kings and people, instead of warning, pointing out blame, and calling for repentance. And with all due respect, is it any different today? Isn’t a false gospel being

proclaimed in various places throughout our churches and in our gatherings? Instead of waking up humanity and pointing out our great guilt, things that should make our hair stand on end and that are an affront to God, are not only tolerated but even blessed. Who still has the courage to say that abortion is murder, or that homosexuality is an abomination to God? Jeremiah likened these false prophets to deceitful doctors, and the Lord Jesus called them vipers and wolves in sheep's clothing. So, this second chapter ends with the devastating words that also tear at Jeremiah's heart:

“Look, O LORD, and see! With whom have you dealt thus? Should women eat the fruit of their womb, the children of their tender care? Should priest and prophet be killed in the sanctuary of the Lord? In the dust of the streets lie the young and the old; my young women and my young men have fallen by the sword; you have killed them in the day of your anger, slaughtering without pity” (vv. 20-21).

I don't know how you're doing or what you're feeling as you read this—especially since it isn't a horror story, but the real fate of a people who had turned their backs on the God of their fathers. Jerusalem was besieged for about 18 months, and the famine grew to such an extent that mothers ate their own children. What had become of Jerusalem and its inhabitants? Jerusalem was once called “the perfection of beauty,” but now it all lay in ruins. And not just the city, not just the sanctuary, but also the people—young and old, men and women—had been trampled on, demoralized, and downright slaughtered. I don't think we can begin to imagine what happened to those who survived. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb 10:31) while unredeemed. Most of us would probably prefer to just stop reading here and cry out, “O God, have mercy; O God, put an end to all of this. O God, where is your grace, your love, your mercy? O God, isn't there

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem ... How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!”



any way out of this hopeless situation? O God!”

And this brings us to the third song.

CHAPTER 3: JEREMIAH’S LAMENT— HIS SUFFERING AND HIS COMFORT

The first three verses teach us the extent of Jeremiah’s suffering and lamenting. First, he’s suffering because of the people’s godlessness. But he’s also suffering due to the misery and destruction inflicted

by the Babylonians. As Jeremiah 8:21 records, “For the wound of the daughter of my people is my heart wounded; I mourn, and dismay has taken hold on me.”

For decades, Jeremiah had been talking until he was blue in the face. He repeatedly pointed out that God will not be mocked, and He will accomplish what He had already commanded through Moses. Consider Deuteronomy 28. One of its warnings is that if

the people backslide and disobey the voice of the Lord, they will be cursed in the city and in the field. The chapter also says, “Cursed shall be the fruit of your womb.” Didn’t we just read of how mothers ate their own young?

When we compare Deuteronomy 28 with what Jeremiah writes in Lamentations, the parallels are striking. The people had no excuse. They should have known what it meant to spit in the face of the God of their fathers. And even if the words of Moses had passed from memory, prophets like Jeremiah reminded the people and called on them to turn back. But they were unwilling. How devastating that must have been for Jeremiah. Doesn’t it wound us when we pray earnestly for our children, and they just laugh and carry on with their own godless lives, lives without any knowledge of sin or fear of God?

Then in verse 8, Jeremiah speaks of the fact that his prayers have apparently gone unanswered: “Though I call and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer.” This is

very reminiscent of Job, who also lamented and doubted whether God would hear his cry, let alone answer (Job 19:7; cf. 30:20). In verse 18, Jeremiah shares his hopelessness when he laments, “My endurance has perished; so has my hope from the LORD.”

Would this be the end of Israel? The Northern Kingdom was practically nonexistent, since the people had long since been scattered among the nations by the Assyrians. The Southern Kingdom was facing the same fate, but this time it would be the Babylonians who would wear down the people, carry them off, and cause them to sink into obscurity. Jerusalem was destroyed, and the temple was just a heap of rubble. The Final Solution, thousands of years before the Nazis, seemed a settled matter and crowned with great success. Deep darkness lay over the land, and no light could be seen. In all directions, there was nothing but hell on earth. But, beginning in verse 19, Jeremiah isn’t just looking at the circumstances; he’s looking for a light.

If there's a holiday that should be celebrated from the heart, it is the Day of Repentance and Prayer (celebrated in Europe just prior to Advent). But people would rather celebrate "Pride," and even pastors take part ... What can you do but weep?

He looks forward to God's grace and sees a glimmer of hope. "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him'" (Lam 3:21-24).

Jeremiah seeks the Comforter in his greatest need. He seeks the light in the midst of darkness. And he knows there is no valley, no matter how dark, which God cannot lead out of. "For the Lord will not cast off forever, but, though he cause grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; for he does not afflict from his heart or grieve the children of men" (vv. 31-33).

God takes no pleasure in a sinner's death. He doesn't punish

because it pleases Him, but to persuade His people to repent. No one believed the words, so action had to follow. Jeremiah knew, "Why should a living man complain, a man, about the punishment of his sins? ... We have transgressed and rebelled, and you have not forgiven" (vv. 39, 42).

God was punishing Judah for their continual persistence in sin, but He didn't reject His people. God is still continuing with His people—especially with the remnant—because He is faithful. And Jeremiah was relying on this very fact. In all his suffering, tears, and sorrow, he looked to what God had promised. Yes, God had announced the curse (Deut 28), but He had also promised His mercy and the restoration of His covenant people. Yet until then, it was a painful and nightmarish journey, over which Jeremiah

Jeremiah seeks the Comforter in his greatest need. He seeks the light in the midst of darkness. And he knows there is no valley, no matter how dark, which God cannot lead out of.



could only weep bitterly, “My eyes will flow without ceasing, without respite, until the LORD from heaven looks down and sees; my eyes cause me grief at the fate of all the daughters of my city” (vv. 49-51).

The thought is inevitable that centuries later, the Lord Jesus would weep and lament in the same way over the sins of Jerusalem and its leaders. “O

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!” (Matt 23:37).

Please forgive the expression, but tears are flowing in heaven even today because of the godlessness that is happening on earth. If there’s a holiday that should be celebrated from the heart, it is the Day of Repentance and Prayer (celebrated in Europe just prior to Advent). But people would rather celebrate “Pride,” and even pastors take part ... What can you do but weep?

CHAPTER 4: JEREMIAH’S LAMENT OVER THE PEOPLE

The fourth song continues from the first two, and begins with another reflection of dismay. First, Jeremiah expresses that Judah’s

sins are what prompted God to this merciless judgment. God's judgment is the response to Israel's sins: "For the chastisement of the daughter of my people has been greater than the punishment of Sodom [...] This was for the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests, who shed in the midst of her the blood of the righteous" (Lam 4:6, 13).

This chapter describes the terrible time of the siege, the accompanying famine, and the subsequent destruction of the unholy city. Jeremiah reports infants dying of thirst because their mothers were unable to (or did not want to) nurse them (Lam 4:3, 10). Instead of the parents feeding their babies, as even scavengers do, the babies became food for their parents. This isn't symbolism, metaphor, or a parable. No, it was bitter reality (Lam 2:20). This state of affairs had already been announced in Deuteronomy 28: "And you shall eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and in the

distress with which your enemies shall distress you" (v. 53; cf. Lev 26:29; Jer 19:9).

The famine was so severe that Jeremiah writes, "Happier were the victims of the sword than the victims of hunger, who wasted away, pierced by lack of the fruits of the field" (Lam 4:9).

The one who died by the sword was fortunate because his death was quick. But starving to death is something else entirely, and turns people into cannibals. Yes, Israel's guilt, Jerusalem's guilt, was greater than Sodom's. Why? Because Israel had seen the glory of God, the *shekinah*, and God dwelt in the temple among His people. Because God had communicated Himself through His prophets, and the people had access to God through the priests, sacrifices, and worship.

Israel had many privileges, but these were accompanied by tremendous responsibilities. Failure to meet them ultimately resulted in Jerusalem not only being defeated, but also the city and its inhabitants languishing

The famine was so severe that Jeremiah writes, “Happier were the victims of the sword than the victims of hunger, who wasted away, pierced by lack of the fruits of the field” (Lam 4:9).



and dying in agony. How great God’s wrath must have been to not only hand His people over to death, banishment, and captivity, but also give them away like defenseless sheep to be ravaged by wolves. “The LORD gave full vent to his wrath; he poured out his hot anger, and he kindled a fire in Zion that consumed its foundations” (Lam 4:11).

Who would have thought it possible that God Himself would feed His people, city, and temple to the enemy? “The kings of the

earth did not believe, nor any of the inhabitants of the world, that foe or enemy could enter the gates of Jerusalem” (Lam 4:12). But this judgment was God’s righteous and holy method of dealing with a thoroughly corrupt people. God had continually warned His people, and now the time for mercy had passed. “The LORD himself has scattered them; he will regard them no more; no honor was shown to the priests, no favor to the elders” (v. 16).

This brings us to the fifth and final song:

CHAPTER 5: JEREMIAH'S PRAYER FOR HIS PEOPLE

In the final song of lament, Jeremiah prays that God will not completely turn away, but instead consider His people's great misery: "Remember, O LORD, what has befallen us; look, and see our disgrace!" (v. 1).

Jeremiah knows that when God isn't thinking of us, all we can say is, "Woe to us, and woe to the people living without God." Jeremiah is appealing to God, even begging Him with the heart-breaking question, "Why do you forget us forever, why do you forsake us for so many days?" (Lam 5:20).

Shortly before Jerusalem's destruction, Jeremiah had written in his prophecy, "Thus says the LORD: 'If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the LORD'" (Jer 31:37). Is this Word invalid? Does God say something and not follow through? Jeremiah

is relying on his God, trusting in Him; he knows his God. Convinced that God stands by His Word, Jeremiah makes a second request of the only true and holy Creator God. He asks for restoration, for a happy ending: "Restore us to yourself, O LORD, that we may be restored! Renew our days as of old" (Lam 5:21).

This plea is practically the heart of Jeremiah's lament: "Renew our days as of old!" In other words, "Be reconciled with us." Jeremiah still had God's Word in his ear, which promised, even in the midst of a message of judgment, "But even in those days, declares the LORD, I will not make a full end of you" (Jer 5:18). Jeremiah knew that God would continue with a remnant of His people! But to forget the misery ... to erase the memory of their guilt ... to cancel the debt ... to pay the wages of sin once and for all ... to pass from death to life ... and to appear justified before God—how would that be accomplished?

Jeremiah may have been longing for the good old days, but

God has always kept His Word. God has always kept His promises ... and He will until the end of the age.

there was no going back. What had happened couldn't be undone. Instead, a new beginning was needed, "The old has passed away; behold, the new has come" (2 Cor 5:17).

This new beginning is only possible with a restored relationship ... only possible through forgiveness ... only possible through repentance ... only possible through grace ... only possible through God Himself. As it is written, "Restore us to yourself!" It is only possible through a new covenant. So, it's not surprising that in the book of the prophet Jeremiah (the author of Lamentations) this new covenant is referenced. It is a covenant of grace, based on Jesus Christ (cf. Jer 31). It is the Lord Jesus, the promised Redeemer, who reconciles God's people and in whom the grace of God became man. Finally, Jeremiah ends Lamentations with a touch of doubt, wondering, "unless you have utterly rejected

us, and you remain exceedingly angry with us" (Lam 5:22).

Jeremiah knew that Israel's guilt was so great that it would be just and natural for God to cast out His people for good. And yet he believed it wouldn't happen (cf. Lam 3:31-32; Jer 46:28).

What mercy, grace, loyalty, and reconciliation! God has always kept His Word. God has always kept His promises ... and He will until the end of the age. That applies to Israel, but it also applies to you, His Church, me, and everyone who trusts in God. For the Lord's grace is new every day, and His faithfulness is great. "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal 6:7-8).

(NAI0822/1276)



On the Horizon

NEWS IN BRIEF



INDIAN JEWS FIGHT AGAINST HAMAS

More than 200 Indian Jews, members of the Bnei Menashe community, made Aliyah since the October 7 massacre and were called up for either reserve or active combat duty, the Shavei Israel nonprofit announced.

Seventy-five of the recent immigrants from India have enlisted in combat units, while 140 were called up for reserve service across Israel.

Shavei Israel Founder Michael Freund told *The Jerusalem Post* in May that "there are a total of about 5,000 Menashe people left in India who have been requesting to immigrate to Israel for many years."

99% of all men of military age who immigrated from India joined Israel's fight against the Hamas terrorist group, while 90% of women enrolled in National Service.

-jpost.com
6 November 2023



SAUDI ARABIA

Global Player in the EV Market?

With its own electric vehicle brand and the recent opening in Jeddah of a factory by US luxury EV maker Lucid Group, Saudi Arabia has revved up its diversification from oil and is steering its way to creating an EV manufacturing bloc.



A Lucid Air Dream Edition electric car at the Geneva International Motor Show in Doha, Qatar.

(Photo by Noushad Thekkayil/NurPhoto via Getty Images)



Faisal Sultan, the Lucid Group's vice president and Middle East managing director, said the new facility, added to

the company's existing factory in Arizona, "gives us the ability to efficiently fulfill the recently signed agreement with the government of Saudi Arabia to purchase up to 100,000 vehicles over a 10-year period, with an initial commitment to purchase 50,000 vehicles and an option to purchase up to an additional 50,000 vehicles over the same period."

The new plant proves the kingdom's "ability to attract investments and compete," Saudi Industry and Mineral Resources Minister Bandar Alkhorayef said at the factory's inauguration.

As well as Lucid and Ceer, Saudi Arabia is aiming to create an EV manufacturing bloc that includes South Korean company Hyundai and various Chinese firms.

"I think Saudi Arabia hasn't fully maximized the potential from all that it has, so there is still much to be done," he said.

"But the good news is that it is on track. Saudi Arabia has thought about energy transition in a very good way, in terms of how we can transition and use this alternative energy, which is the future, but also how can we generate potential economic opportunities by localizing the manufacturing and development of this industry."

-*themedialine.org*, 4 November 2023

Commentary: While the US has been the world's largest oil producer since 2018, with 16.2% of global share, Saudi Arabia follows at 13%, and Russia 12.1%. However, due to a smaller domestic market, Saudi Arabia is by far the largest oil exporter in the world. Saudi Arabia dominates when it comes to pricing power through OPEC, an organization founded in September 1960 in Iraq, and presently headquartered in Vienna, Austria. The members of OPEC represent over 80% of the world's oil production capacity.

Saudi Arabia's population is about 40 million people, and overwhelmingly Muslim. The *CIA Factbook* notes, "Non-Muslims are not allowed to have Saudi citizenship, and non-Muslim places of worship are not permitted" (2013). Yet, based on various credit rating agencies, the future of the nation looks bright.

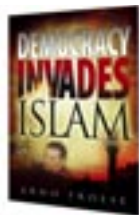
Saudi Arabia's leadership sees the decrease in oil being required to run the world's industries, and now — somewhat late — is jumping on the bandwagon of electric vehicles.

A Google search reveals, "What was Arabia called in Biblical Times? In Old Testament literature, Arabia was often referred to as 'Kedem,' the East (cf. Gen. 10:30; 25:6; 29:1, etc.). Paul naturally used 'the East' and 'Arabia' as interchangeable terms."

In 2 Chronicles 17, we read of King Jehoshaphat. Verse 3 testifies: "And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim." The surrounding nations became subject to Jehoshaphat. Verse 11 declares: "Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he goats."

We call attention to Abraham's six sons by his wife Keturah: "And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah" (Genesis 25:2). There is power in the Arab world! 8127

(See *Democracy Invades Islam*, Item #1072, \$12.95.)





NEWS IN BRIEF




ISRAEL

Birthright Invites Volunteers for Harvest

With the infrastructure to register masses of volunteers already in place, Birthright is recruiting alum for kibbutzim and moshavim in need of people to harvest crops and perform other labor. On the heels of the October 7 massacre of 1,400 Israelis by Hamas terrorists, many foreign workers based in the south decided to flee the country, leaving a shortage of labor during key harvest months.



Volunteers take a sunscreen break while picking pomegranates on a farm in Ashkelon, Israel. (Maya Alleruzzo/AP)

 "This initiative is a lot about mutual responsibility and solidarity of the Jewish people," said Noa Bauer, vice president of marketing for Birthright.

Participants have to cover their flights and travel insurance, and the program "fully covers" Tel Aviv-area accommodations, all of which have fortified rooms. Transportation will be provided to and from the airport and each day to and from volunteer sites in the country's center.

In addition to the human toll of the October 7 massacres on southern Israel, numerous fields and greenhouses throughout the region were abandoned. By sending volunteers to care for fields in the country's center, pressure will be alleviated in the south, where farms have been harvested by Israeli volunteers in recent days.

ISRAELIS CAUTIONED ON OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Citing rising antisemitism worldwide since Israel declared war on Hamas over the terror group's October 7 onslaught in southern Israel, the National Security Council urged Israelis to reconsider any travel abroad while calling on those flying overseas to avoid outward displays of their Jewish and Israeli identities.

Israeli embassies, airports that take in flights from Israel as well as Jewish communities and religious institutions abroad "are a major target of antisemitic protest events and attempted attacks," the announcement said.

The statement called on Israelis not to visit countries with travel warnings in place, "particularly Arab countries and the Middle East, the North Caucasus and countries that border Iran."

The National Security Council and Foreign Ministry have already raised the travel warnings for a number of countries and called on Israelis visiting them to leave as soon as possible, including Egypt, Jordan and Turkey.

-timesofisrael.com
4 November 2023

Based on alumni demand, Birthright expects volunteer spots to fill steadily in the days ahead.

"I have been gratified by the Birthright Israel alumni—ranging from those who came to Israel just a few months ago, all the way back to those who participated in our first year back in 1999—who have reached out since October 7th to ask how they can help," said Gidi Mark, Birthright Israel's chief executive officer.

-www.timesofisrael.com, 6 November 2023

Commentary: Wikipedia describes Birthright Israel as follows:

Taglit-Birthright Israel (Hebrew: תגלית) also known as Birthright Israel or simply Birthright, is a free ten-day heritage trip to Israel, Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights for young adults of Jewish heritage between the ages of 18 and 26. The program is sponsored by the Birthright Israel Foundation, whose donors subsidize participation.

Since the program's first trip in 1999, more than 800,000 young Jews from 68 countries in the Jewish diaspora have participated in Birthright Israel. It is the largest educational tourism organization in the world.

Sponsoring young Jews for a ten-day trip to Israel is now paying div-

idends. Whether these young people are qualified for the agricultural industry is not known to us, but one thing is clear: They are being reminded of who they are. The underlying aim is to familiarize these young people with the land of Israel, so they eventually "come home," fulfilling the words of Amos 9:15: "And I will plant them upon their land, and they



shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God." 8124

(See *Prophecy for Ten-Tribe Israel*, Item #1083, \$14.50.)



FRANCE

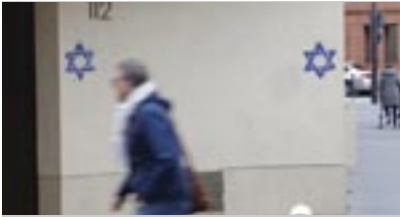
Antisemitism Has Exploded

France has recorded more than a thousand antisemitic acts since the massive October 7 assault by Hamas terrorists on Israel, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said.



"The number of antisemitic acts has exploded," he told France 2 television, adding that 486 people have been arrested for such offenses, including 102 foreigners.

There was no typical profile for those arrested, he added. They ranged from "young kids who say very serious things" to people involved in the pro-Palestinian cause who had gone too far.



A man walks next to a building the façade of which was covered with Stars of David painted during the night, in the Alesia district of Paris. (VAN DER HASSELT / AFP)



Protesters chant slogans as they march on Paris during a pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel demonstration (AP Photo/Aurelien Morissard)

Paris prosecutors are already investigating the daubing of dozens of Stars of David on buildings around the city and its suburbs, seen as threatening Jews. In another nearby town of Saint-Ouen, they were accompanied by inscriptions such as “Palestine will overcome.”

France’s Jewish population, estimated at over 500,000, is the largest in Europe and the third-biggest in the world, after Israel and the United States.

-www.timesofisrael.com, 5 November 2023

Commentary: The antisemitic events in France clearly demonstrate the power of the media. Politico reports:

France’s state-funded news channel France 24 has suspended four journalists working for its Arabic service over allegations of anti-Semitism.

“We also state forcefully that our coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is in no way partisan, that we abhor anti-Semitism and that the France 24 newsroom will not be associated with such accusations,” [a] statement read.

-www.politico.eu, 14 March 2023

Although France prides itself as being the country of liberty, equality, and fraternity, it is extremely doubtful that they will be able to suppress anti-semitism. Yet this not limited to France; we read a global prophecy in Jeremiah 29:14: “And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.” 8125



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

EUROPE

Pro-Hamas Sentiment Shocks European Jews

Bar-Ami, 37, had felt uncomfortable wearing his kippah publicly in some parts of Berlin even before the October 7 outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war, which started after terrorists from Gaza broke through the border fence in a shock onslaught, rampaged through southern Israel, and killed, tortured and mutilated some 1,400 people, mostly civilians.



People gather with placards and a large Palestinian flag to take part in a 'March For Palestine' in London

(Photo by Adrian DENNIS / AFP)

But with the onset of the war, which is unleashing a wave of antisemitism by Muslims in Europe, the rabbi has for the first time in his life switched to hiding his kippah under a hat regularly whenever he's outdoors in the German capital.

In Berlin, hundreds of people chanted in Arabic, "Our lives, our blood we'll sacrifice for you, Al Aqsa" in a series of rallies, most of them occurring despite police and municipal bans on such events due to authorities' concern over incitement and disorder. RIAS, a German antisemitism watchdog, has documented 202 incidents [in October 2023] alone, a 240% increase over [the] tally from October 2022.

In London, police documented a tenfold increase in anti-semitic hate crimes in October over last year. In Melilla, a

NEWS IN BRIEF



UNRWA STAFFERS PRAISE HAMAS

Some members of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees have expressed praise for the atrocities committed by the Hamas terror group on October 7, according to a report by the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-se) organization.

Among those UNRWA staff highlighted by the report were Ebrahim Al Azaiza, whose Facebook page says he works for UNRWA and lives in Gaza City.

On October 7, Al Azaiza posted a video showing cars burning following a rocket strike that hit an Israeli city, which he captioned with the words, "What a splendid sight!" along with happy emojis and fire emojis.

Ranoosh Salah—who says on her Facebook page that she lives in Rafah and works at UNRWA's Gaza Training Center, which provides vocational training to pupils in Gaza—published a post on October 7 praising the Hamas massacre as it was unfolding, writing "this is an unforgettable glorious morning."

-timesofisrael.com
6 November 2023



Spanish enclave in North Africa, protesters burned an Israeli flag outside a synagogue.

In Amsterdam, three Jewish schools were shuttered temporarily, one of them twice, over safety worries.

In Vienna, people who wanted to show their support of Israel were warned by authorities for the first time not to display Israeli signs on the street for fear of violence.

"In France, in Belgium and in many other places it's not safe to wear a kippah," said Raya Kalenova, executive vice president and CEO of the European Jewish Congress.

The hostility is forcing changes in the lives of European Jews who do not regularly wear a kippah, as well. "The mezuzah had to be moved, and I need to be more alert," said Chaim Benistant, a 36-year-old Dutch Jew from the Amsterdam area who is an entrepreneur and Dutch Air Force reservist.

Since 2012, many Europeans have learned that they are the targets of the same terrorists who also target Jews.

Terrorist attacks against Jews and Israelis in Europe have been occurring since the 1960s, initially by members of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the PLO.

But the current round is different because it began with a series of atrocities on a scale and barbarity that Jews had not experienced anywhere since the Holocaust.

Yael Hernandez, a French Jew from Marseille, says that she feels that the French state supports her. "But so what," she adds.

"The aggression comes from the population, the Muslim one. You feel the tension on the street. You feel the looks they give you. You feel how the attack filled their chests with pride. It's something you feel on the street, it's scary and the police can't help with that. And it's changing everything for us," she said.

-www.timesofisrael.com, 26 October 2023

Commentary: There are literally thousands of reports in the official media as well as on social media, in which one thing always seems rather strange: the unprovoked hatred of Jews. Some experts categorize this behavior with the word "mysterious."

What is the real reason? In Biblical terms, it is the god of this world who vehemently tries to hinder the fulfillment of Bible prophecy; namely, the return of the Jews to the land of their fathers, subsequently establishing Israel as the prime nation on planet earth. The prophet Zechariah puts it this way: "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you" (Zechariah 8:23). 8119

(See Israel on High Alert, Item #2343, \$15.99.)



A Surrendered Life: Faithfully Serving the Lord to the Very End –Part 2

In Memory of Annie, An Ebenezer
Home Resident

By David Phillips (*Ebenezer's CEO*)

Why Israel?

When asked what made her retire in Israel, Annie said, “When God called me to Israel in 1973, He spoke to me through Psalm 121:8.” Annie quoted the familiar passage by heart, “The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore.” “These words, like a compass, have guided my life in Israel, and I take them literally. Forevermore—this is a life commitment.” And it was. Annie passed away at the Ebenezer Home in July 2023.

Annie's Faithfulness

It was amazing to listen to so many who gave testimony of Annie's life. To hear of how she blessed and

served others was truly humbling. Annie never wanted to speak much about what she did: It was simply between her and the Lord. But, one by one, people stood up at her funeral and shared about her life. I couldn't help but marvel at this godly woman and the lives she touched. She truly lived out her faith in both the smallest and biggest of ways. For her, it wasn't just about being a midwife (which she loved!) and delivering all those families' children ... it was about eternity. She cared most about where they would spend eternity.

But her compassion and love didn't stop where most people's does. If Annie knew someone needed something and she could provide it, she did just that, even if



it meant she went without. She was always placing others' needs above her own.

At the Ebenezer Home, Annie continued to live a life of faithfulness. She was blind, but that didn't stop her. She almost never complained. Each day, she would gather with another resident and pray. Everyone knew that during certain hours, you just never bothered them. It was a sacred time.

As Minnie shared about the life lessons that Corrie ten Boom taught them, it was evident that Annie took these to heart. Like Corrie, Annie had compassion for those less fortunate than herself. During her younger years, she would often come home late. Some would wonder why, but they soon found out. Annie wouldn't just go home after her shifts at work; she would go visit others who were less fortunate or sick. Annie believed everyone was important, and wanted them to know that Someone greater than all loved them, regardless of the situation or who they were.

Continuing to Serve at Ebenezer

Once at the Ebenezer Home, Annie's ministry of visiting people

didn't stop. Each day, she would make her way down to the first floor (Ebenezer's medical floor) and sit with the residents. It didn't matter to her if they knew who she was, or if they'd even remember that she came to visit them. She would simply come and sit with them, encourage them, pray with them, and sing to them ... day after day. It wasn't until she herself had a heart attack (days before her death) and physically could no longer go, that she stopped. She missed those visits, and continued to pray where she was.

Taking These Lessons to Heart

We can learn a lot from the dedication of the Father's servants in different places. I am sure that each one of you has your own little secrets of serving ... moments between just you and the Master, serving and being poured out before Him like an offering. Paul reminds us of this in Philippians 2:17, "Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all." In this way, we too are consumed in His service wherever He places us.



We continually see the prayer warriors bowing before God's throne. Annie especially would stand in the gap and pray together with others at the Home. Yes, she prayed for all those who were maybe unknown to her by name, but who stand in the gap for the Ebenezer Home—and this is you, my dear brothers and sisters. Thank you for standing in the gap for the Home! Sending you greetings from all residents and the team.

war. We have been rushing to prepare all the last things. Yes, people are worried, but they are leaning on our Heavenly Father through this very difficult time. I also gather all the residents and team together each day, to spend time in Scripture, prayer, and updating everyone on the situation. Some of the Scriptures that have really encouraged us are Psalms 91 and 121, as well as Isaiah 41:10, which says: "Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." What a promise!

Ebenezer Update: War in Israel

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“O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord” (Micah 6:5).

BY ARNO FROESE

When reading the relatively short book of Micah, we realize that the largest part is related to the prophetic Word. Micah reminds Israel of the event recorded in Numbers, highlighting the King of Moab and the prophet Balaam.

In the previous verse, he goes back to Israel’s exodus from Egypt: “For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.” Here, all of Israel is meant: consisting of the twelve tribes, with no distinction between Judah and Israel, as they were later

identified. We know that the division between Judah (which included Benjamin and Levi) and Israel took place in approximately 975 BC. However, from God’s perspective, it’s always one nation, His chosen one. God commanded Moses to face Pharaoh with this message: “And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn” (Exodus 4:22).

How distinctly different Israel is from God’s perspective compared to the rest of the world, becomes evident when reading the event that transpired between the King of Moab, Balak, and the heathen prophet Balaam.

For us Christians, it is quite discouraging knowing that Bethlehem is a Muslim city, which no longer carries a Jewish identity.

Bible readers are familiar with Israel's continued rebellion, despite repeated acts of God's supernatural intervention. For example, dividing the Red Sea; the water from the rock in the desert; the visible manifestation of the pillar of fire at night, and the cloud during the day. There was absolutely no reason that Israel should not believe in the living God, the Creator of all things. He supplied innumerable physical proofs of His existence among His people, yet they believed not.

Balaam was requested to curse the people of Israel, but we read in Numbers 23:21: "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them." That is rather strange; the prophet sees no iniquity and no perverseness, and

unequivocally states: "the Lord his God is with him."

Here again, we learn of Israel's absolute uniqueness: They are not to be compared with any other nation on planet Earth.

Another prophecy made by Balaam reaches into our times: "...the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Numbers 23:9b).

The descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel were later known as Jews. The first time we read the word "Jew" is Esther 2:5: "Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite." From that point on, the terms Israel, Jew, and Hebrew are synonymous; they identify the twelve tribes of Israel.

Never must we allow it to enter our mind that nations, by whatever name, or leaders—be they prime ministers, presidents, chancellors, or dictators—can invalidate God’s irrevocable resolutions, which are guaranteed by the Creator Himself: the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

It is the prophet Micah who pinpoints the geographic location, the birthplace of the Messiah: “But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Micah 5:2). This small village, located some 10 kilometers (6 miles) from Jerusalem, is the birthplace of Jesus Christ the Lord, the Son of God, at whose birth the angelic host proclaimed: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” (Luke 2:14).

Bethlehem Today

Since December of 1955, Bethlehem has ceased to be part of Israel. The town is under the jurisdiction and administration of the Palestinian Authority. According to Wikipedia: “Bethlehem is a Palestinian town south of Jerusalem in the West Bank. The biblical birthplace of Jesus, it’s a major Christian pilgrimage destination.”

For us Christians, it is quite discouraging knowing that Bethlehem is a Muslim city, which no longer carries a Jewish identity.

Bethlehem was also King David’s birthplace. In Psalm 132:5, he cries out to the Lord:

“Until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.” He then identifies Bethlehem Ephratah: “Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood” (v. 6).

When we ask what the future of Bethlehem is, we must go back to the beginning—totally disregarding the geopolitical realities of our days, while totally dependent on the unconditional promise God made to Abraham: “In the same day the Lord made

a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates” (Genesis 15:18).

Never must we allow it to enter our mind that nations, by whatever name, or leaders—be they prime ministers, presidents, chancellors, or dictators—can invalidate God’s irrevocable resolutions, which are guaranteed by the Creator Himself: the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. (NF)

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