NEWS FROM ISRAEL

April 2024

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Israel's Disillusionment

A High-Stakes Battle for Every Christian

e live in a time when falsehoods assault us from every direction.

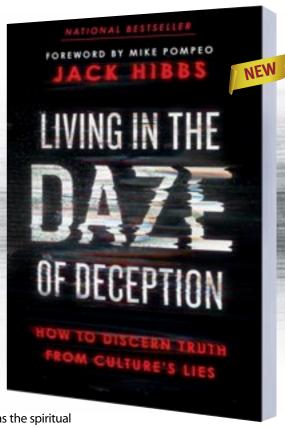
Packaged with just enough truth to make them appear trustworthy, these counterfeits have grown more and more difficult to detect and avoid.

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LIVING IN THE DAZE OF DECEPTION ITEM #2421

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By Ariel Winkler

It is the spirit of Satan that incites people to attempt to destroy the Jewish people.

The spirit from below contends with God and His plan to save the world. Yet we must look beyond the cruelty of Hamas' terrorists, beyond the arrogance of the people of Israel, and see the world through God's eyes when we regard this heinous attack.

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Dear Friends of Israel,

s was to be expected from the beginning, the hostages taken by Hamas into the Gaza Strip have become a great dilemma. Relatives of the hostages, as well as thousands of others with them, are demonstrating every week for their release. But the situation is not all that simple, because the conditions Hamas imposes on Israel are not acceptable. Hamas demands the unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli forces from the entire Gaza Strip. In addition, it also wants international guarantees for the reconstruction and continuation of its regime in Gaza. But elimination of the Hamas reign of terror is precisely Israel's most important goal in this war. And on this issue, the people of Israel are united. If Hamas is not completely destroyed, the

whole war will have been in vain. The only resolution to this conflict is the military annihilation of Hamas, so its leadership can at best, save their bare lives in exchange for the hostages.

In Israel and among Jews in general, the value of human life is held in high esteem. Israel once even released about a thousand terrorists (including Yahya Sinwar, the leader of Hamas in Gaza) for the return of one soldier. One can say that what happened on October 7 and thereafter was a consequence of that release. This fact has led to the conviction in Israel that something similar must never again happen.

Thus, the only option for Israel is to fight until the Hamas leadership is done for ... when they can no longer fight and are ready

to release the hostages. Of course, this goal comes at a high price for Israel. Young Israeli soldiers are constantly being killed, and many older reservists who are fathers of families are also losing their lives in the fighting. Each one of these losses is a great pain and tragedy for Israel, for families and loved ones.

However, it is astonishing and admirable how heroism and the undiminished will to fight remain. At the funerals of fallen soldiers, families testify again and again of how the young ones loved their country and its people ... that they fought for it so future generations could live in peace and quiet.

For us who know God's Word—including the New Testament—it is clear that God has His purpose in everything that happens to the land and the people of Israel. God's plan was not just to bring the people of Israel back again to their country. As we all know, the repatriation of the Jewish people and the establishment

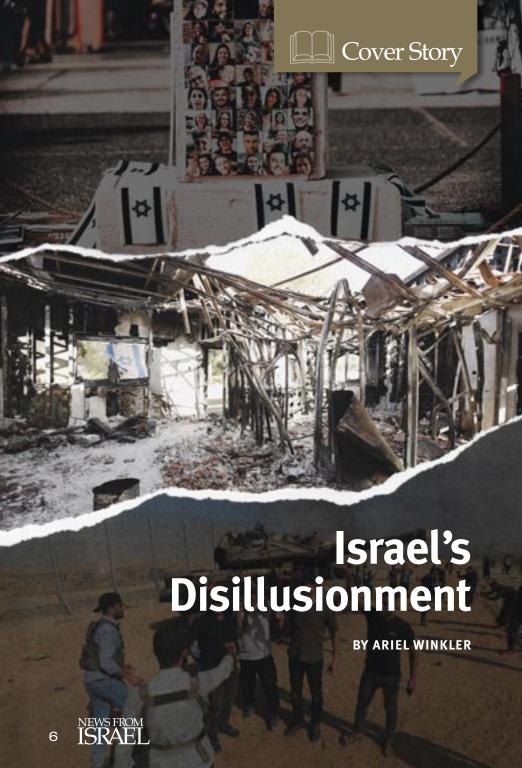
of the State of Israel, was a painful process that cost them dearly. But this was not yet the hardest part. The most difficult part of the process is still to come; namely, the return of the people of Israel into the heart of God's will ... when they will recognize and acknowledge their Messiah.

Sometimes before going into battle, the soldiers sing a song that says: "I believe in the coming of the Messiah, and though He may delay, I continue to believe." Regarding the situation in which Israel finds itself, it is only natural that they should remember the promises in God's Word and place their hope in Him.

We hope and pray for Israel that through all that its people have to endure, they will be drawn ever closer to the Lord and receive His grace ... so they may know their Messiah who is Jesus, the greatest Son of Israel.

In this hope I warmly greet you,

Trock Wille-



How hubris and the desire for peace made the Hamas terrorist attack possible.

he State of Israel changed on October 7, 2023. Hamas, which has ruled the Gaza Strip since 2005, launched a devastating war against the country. This event, which has already fundamentally changed the nation, will bring about even more changes. War doesn't just change the parties involved, but also everyone who hears about it.

In 1948, Israel was born in a difficult war: the War of Independence. Against the odds, Israel won. At that time, the West wasn't Israel's biggest helper or friend; most of their help came in the form of weapons smuggled in from eastern Europe. For example, the first airplanes came from what was then Czechoslovakia, rather than from the United States, as is the case today.

In its early years, France was Israel's military protector. Under Marcel Dessault's influence, France supplied Israel with Mirage jets and other military equipment. The supply continued to increase after Operation Kadesh and the Sinai Campaign. But from the very start, even while receiving this assistance, Israel nonetheless experienced pressure from both the West and East, as well as from the United Nations.

Over the years, Israel experienced several other wars: the Six-Day War, the War of Attrition, the Yom Kippur War, and the Lebanon Wars of 1982 and 2006. At the same time, Israel was fighting the first and second intifadas. In addition to all these wars, the State of Israel managed to transform from an underdeveloped and antiquated country, into a highly developed and advanced one that is now at the forefront of technology. A deeper relationship with the United States, and a sort of love/hate relationship with Europe and the rest of the West, came into being.

For now, Israel has set aside the differences between right and left to unite against a cruel enemy.

All these things left their mark on the State of Israel, and the scars are still visible today. The problem with Judea and Samaria arose from the Six-Day War. Peace with Egypt was followed by the evacuation of the entire Sinai Peninsula, Israel learned from the 1982 Lebanon War, that the lives of its soldiers are more valuable than territorial gains. Israel began to invest more and more in defense. It developed the Arrow missile defense system, later David's Sling, and eventually the Iron Dome system, when Hamas began to fire rockets from Gaza.

Israel has repeatedly been forced to use military intervention. This is especially true in the Gaza Strip, but also in Lebanon, Judea, and Samaria. As a result, Israel became somewhat addicted to a "false peace," becoming lenient in many things. Israel ultimately delayed the search for a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that arose from the Six-Day War.

Although many attempts were made, a solution was never reached, because neither side was truly willing to pay the price. Both sides must be willing to pay—that's the cost of peace.

On the eve of the current war. there was relative calm on the borders with Lebanon and Syria, as well as in Judea and Samaria, due to their economic dependence on Israel. Thanks to the Iron Dome, the number of victims in the conflict with Gaza was reduced. But this seeming calm exposed a number of other problems in Israel. A simmering dispute in Israeli society reached a climax: the polarization between religious and secular, between left and right; demonstrations supporting and opposing legal reforms, and so much more. That situation caused Israel to forget its surroundings, like a drunk person driving a car despite all the dangers and threats.

People in Israel have been talking for years about the risk that Israel awoke like a roaring lion surrounded by hyenas. It went to war to free the hostages and wipe Hamas from the face of the earth. With its actions, Hamas represented evil in the eyes of the Jewish people, an evil whose desire is to obliterate them.

Hamas will gain strength in Gaza, Judea, and Samaria, and of the danger that Iran will move closer to Israel's borders with Syria and Lebanon. Many warned that Israel's enemies would be happy to see the people divided, and there were also those who warned that the army was unprepared and lacking in equipment. But all these things were ignored, because Israel's desire for peace outweighed them.

Israel's disillusionment is painful and complex. Its price includes over 1,200 murdered and others kidnapped (not as prisoners of war) during the brutal attack by Hamas terrorists. Children were murdered in front of their parents, and unarmed, helpless people were slaughtered simply because they were Jews. The murderers proudly bragged about their actions to their families and to the people of Gaza, who in turn



cheered and praised these terrible deeds. There was no public Palestinian voice expressing horror at these atrocities; instead, there was only agreement or tacit recognition. To this day, it is difficult to find those among the Palestinians in Gaza who would condemn Hamas, or even in Judea and Samaria.

Israel awoke like a roaring lion surrounded by hyenas. It went to war to free the hostages and wipe Hamas from the face of the earth. New York, October 10, 2023. Jews show solidarity after the Hamas attack.



With its actions, Hamas represented evil in the eyes of the Jewish people, an evil whose desire is to obliterate them. This same evil was represented by the Nazis in World War II, and was depicted in the Bible by Amalek and the wicked Haman. It attacks the weak and defenseless, but its goal is the destruction of the Jewish people.

For now, Israel has set aside the differences between right and left to unite against a cruel enemy. The debate between religious and secular Jews disappeared when they were called up into reserve service together. Legal and constitutional reform stopped, and the demonstrations fell silent. All the funds that had been invested in internal disputes were used to strengthen the military. All sorts of organizations that had formed to support sides of various debates, now joined together to support the war effort.

All the warning signs had gone unheeded over the years—because



Israel's disillusionment should serve as a wake-up call for us too. We must see reality as it is. We need to examine ourselves and our relationship with Israel.

Israel was blind in its desire for peace—now suddenly became war fronts. The first and clearest is against Hamas in the south. The second is against the strengthening of terrorist organizations in Judea and Samaria. The third is directed against Hezbollah in the north. The fourth is against Iran and its proxies in Syria and Iraq. And lastly, against the Houthis from Yemen.

Another point of disillusionment is related to Israel's pride: its achievements, success, and its stable economy (compared to its neighbors in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt). This has made Israelis feel invincible. They viewed Arab society, and Israel's neighbors in particular, with a sense of superiority. It's a similar sentiment to the one that existed prior to the Yom Kippur War in 1973, but this time the disillusionment

proved particularly painful. The attack didn't come from a nation with an army and the resources necessary to arm it, but from a local terrorist organization. Great pride came before a great fall.

Israel's disillusionment should serve as a wake-up call for us too. We must see reality as it is. We need to examine ourselves and our relationship with Israel. We need to take a closer look at Israel. We must consider all of this in light of God's Word.

First, it's important to remember that the people of Israel are the chosen people. God elected them by sovereign choice—not because they are better than others, but because they are not: "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the

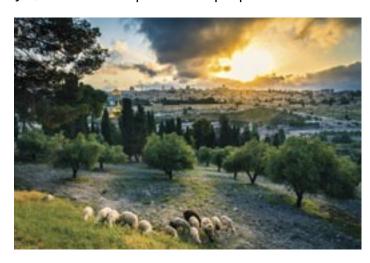
Just as Satan attacked Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, or Job, or Jesus when He walked the earth, so he's also attacking Israel.

face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt" (Num 7:6-8). God used Israel to demonstrate His will and plan for the world through the narrative of the Old Testament, and through the prophets and promises. And God's fulfillment of His promises to Israel demonstrates that He will also fulfill His promises to the Church. God promised His people, "I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse" (Gen 12:3). That is why we stand with Israel.

Because Israel is God's chosen people, we must consider their situation in light of that fact. Attacks on Israel and calls for its destruction are Satan's attacks on God's people: "For thus said the Lord of hosts, after his glory sent me to the nations who plundered you, for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye" (Zech 2:8). Just as Satan attacked Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, or Job, or Jesus when He walked the earth, so he's also attacking Israel. Its destruction would be a victory for Satan, because it would mean that God hadn't kept His promise to Israel. Therefore, any attack on Israel with the intent of destroying her, is also an attack on God by Satan.

In the same way, anti-Semitic attacks on Jews around the world reflect this spirit. It is the spirit of Satan that incites people to attempt to destroy the Jewish people. The spirit from below contends with God and His plan to save the world.

They are the chosen people who have rejected their Savior. And yet, God still has a plan for this people.



Sunset view of Old City Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock, the Golden/Mercy Gate, with sheep grazing between olive trees on the Mount of Olives

We see this spiritual war playing out before our eyes. We must look beyond the cruelty of Hamas' terrorists, beyond the arrogance of the people of Israel, and see the world through God's eyes when we regard this heinous attack.

We must also regard Israel through Jesus' eyes. He loves Israel so much that He gave His life for His people: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the

Jew first and also to the Greek" (Rom 1:16). He descended from heaven and lived among them. He was rejected by them: "He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him" (John 1:11). They are the chosen people who have rejected their Savior. And yet, God still has a plan for this people. We must therefore love the way He does: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:11).

(NAI0124/1366)

On the orizon





AI USED FOR TERRORIST AGENDA

espite attempts to prevent misuse, Al programs can he abused for terrorist purposes, a new Israeli study found.

The study, titled "Terror: The Risks of Generative Al Exploitation," found that terrorists could use AI to spread propaganda, recruit followers. raise funds, and even launch cyberattacks more efficiently. Cyberterrorism expert Gabriel Weimann of the University of Haifa, who published the study, described it as "one of the most alarming" pieces of research of his career.

The researchers used different methods to bypass the Al programs' counterterrorism measures. In the end, they successfully got around the safety measures about half the time.

In one concerning example. the researchers asked an Al platform for help in fundraising for the Islamic State group. The platform provided detailed instructions on how to conduct the campaign, including what to say on social media.

> -themedialine.org 8 February 2024



ISRAEL

Two-State Solution?

The war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza has brought two conflicting ideas regarding Palestinian statehood. On the one hand, countries in the international community, including the US, believe the issue should be promoted at this tumultuous time.



Activists, including Israelis and Palestinians, take part in a demonstration in support of peace near Jericho (photo credit: REUTERS)

On the other, there are elements in the Israeli government and public who reject the notion of a Palestinian state bordering Israel while calling for the dissolution of the Palestinian Authority (PA), which governs the Palestinians in parts of the West Bank.

According to United Nations data, there were almost 200,000 Palestinians employed in Israel and in the territories it has occupied since the 1967 Mideast war.

This also demonstrates Israel's dependence on Palestinian workers. According to Kav LaOved, an Israeli nonprofit organization that promotes labor rights, the majority of Palestinians in Israel work in the construction sector, others in agriculture, industry, and service sectors. The money they earn acts as a major engine

On the Horizon

for the Palestinian economy, injecting it with millions of dollars annually.

When the war erupted between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip in October 2023, one of Israel's first responses was to deny the entry of Palestinian laborers from the West Bank into Israel.

However, according to the International Labor Organization, this has resulted in the loss of 32% of employment in the West Bank. In Gaza, which has been controlled by Hamas since 2007, the situation is worse, with an estimated loss of 60% of employment.

Israel's current government is the most right-wing ever to govern the country. Led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, it adopted a hard-line position toward the PA even before the war broke out.

At the basis of any change to the structure of the Palestinian economy and the change the Israeli economy would also undergo as a result lies the political will, or lack thereof, of both sides.

-themedialine.org, 20 February 2024

Commentary: Excerpts from the article in TheMediaLine.org, authored by Keren Setton, reveal the virtual impossibility of cooperation with, much less statehood of Arab-Palestine in the heart of Israel. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, 2.1 million Arab Palestinians have been granted Israeli citizenship—paving the way

to what looks like a One-State Solution.

Historically speaking, this would be the answer for the Arab Palestinians. Here's an example: Germany attacked the Soviet Union in the Second World War, which in turn destroyed 83% of Germany's military force. Large chunks of German territory, such as East Prussia, were simply taken over by Poland, Lithuania, Russia, and others. What happened to the inhabitants of those territories? They were obligated to either pledge allegiance to the Soviet Union, or get out.

This writer, who visited his homeland in East Prussia, found that the German presence has been obliterated. A cemetery in Rastenburg (now Ketrzyn, Poland) replaced or destroyed all grave markers indicating German nationals.

Upon driving to the small village of Windenburg (now Ventė, Lithuania), there were no remaining signs with old German names; everything was replaced with Lithuanian names.

How different Israel is! It clearly shows names, places, and words in both Hebrew and Arabic. When traveling to Palestinian-dominated areas and villages, the signs are exclusively in Arabic.



NEWS IN BRIEF



MARKET OPTIMISM DESPITE WAR

he shekel, which saw a remarkable comeback, hit a nine-month-high against the dollar in early March and is trading at stronger levels than on the eve of the Hamas-led onslaught on October 7.

"Markets tend to look forward—the local market is somewhat overly optimistic that the war will not escalate on the northern front with Hezbollah. while there are talks of a [temporary] ceasefire in Gaza, including a hostage deal. supporting expectations that things will gradually return to some kind of relative normalcy." Jonathan Katz, chief economist at Leader Capital Markets, told The Times of Israel. "Global stock markets have been moving higher, which is also pushing the shekel and the local stock market up."

Despite the ongoing war. Israel's leading stock indices the TA-35 stock index of bluechip companies and the TA-90, which tracks the shares with the highest capitalization not included in the TA-35 indexincreased by about 6% each in February, similar to the trend in leading stock exchanges around the world

> -timesofisrael.com 12 March 2024

Doubtless, the confusion is great, but when we consult the Word of God, it is made plain: "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of



Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses" (Joshua 1:2-3).

8202

(See The Red-Haired Archaeologist Digs Israel, Item #2384, \$15,99.)



LEBANON

War Against Israel Devastates Economy

Tourism and agriculture are some of Lebanon's most affected sectors, primarily in the southern regions that depend on them.

No one walks on Tyre's beaches anymore. No foreign languages complement its clean water. For the past five months, tourists can be counted in dribs and drabs in this Mediterranean city in the south of Lebanon, 25 kilometers from Israel's border. The empty hotels and restaurants reflect a Lebanon at war. abandoned to its own fate. In the main southern city in the south of the country, the strange silence and quietness reflect another added layer of suffering for the Lebanese people who, before October 7, were already going through the worst economic crisis in the world since 1850, according to the World Bank.

Since the start of the war in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli Army and the Lebanese militia Hizbullah have clashed along the border shared by both countries.

Over the past four years, the country has seen its national currency plummet, inflation figures break records, and fragile public services crumble. Since 2019, its GDP has fallen by 50

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percent, and 80 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

According to Lebanon's union of restaurants, nightclubs, and cafes, the restaurant sector has seen a drop in business of up to 80% since October 7.

"The population of the border villages depends on the cultivation of tobacco and olives. That is all they have," [a] humanitarian worker said. "In three months, they used to collect enough to sustain them financially for the whole year, but now they don't even have that," she told The Media Line.

-themedialine.org, 7 March 2024

Commentary: It seems illogical if not outright foolish for Lebanon to attack Israel. Worse yet, Hezbollah insists on sending rockets across the border for as long as Israel's war in Gaza lasts.

In past decades, Lebanon was often viewed as the Switzerland of the Middle East. Not so much today.

Of interest is the reason for Hezbollah's hatred of Israel—actually, there is none. Good relations with the State of Israel would guarantee peace, prosperity, and security, but apparently hate is stronger than common sense.

The population of Lebanon stands at 5.3 million, with 67.8% Muslim and 32.4% Christian. The last estimate of per capita GDP was \$13,000 in 2021, which is over \$4,000 less than it was

in 2019.

Again, why? Unbridled hate. Here we must point to a statement in the New Testament: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). While this is directed at the Church, the god of this world is also the enemy of Israel. Why? Because he does not endorse fulfillment of Bible prophecy, rather the hindrance thereof.

Incidentally, this also explains why so much hatred is being discharged against Israel from countries around the world that have little to no relationship to the Jewish State.

The foolish actions of Lebanon mirrors the error Christians make by getting involved in fighting "against flesh and blood." While it may be difficult for some to swallow, flesh and blood means people. No matter who they are, all come under the promising umbrella: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

8201

(See 101 Answers to Questions About Satan, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare, Item #2289, \$15.99.)



BRIEF



RARE COIN FOUND IN JUDEAN DESERT

A rare 1,891-year-old coin has been discovered in the Judean Desert which dates back to the first year of the Bar Kokhba Revolt in 132 CE.

The coin's face is engraved with a date palm and the inscription "Eleazar the Priest" in ancient Hebrew script. On the back, a bunch of grapes is encircled by the text "Year One of the Redemption of Israel."

The coin, found in proximity to three others adorned with the name "Simeon," paints a picture of the individuals and events surrounding the Bar Kokhba Revolt, a major Jewish rebellion against Roman rule in Judea during the second century CE.

Scholars are currently exploring various possibilities regarding the identity of "Eleazar the Priest," with one theory suggesting Rabbi Eleazar Hamod'ai, a Tannaic Rabbi during the time of Rabbi Akiva. It is believed that he played a significant religious role in the Bar Kokhba Revolt and resided in Beitar, the headquarters of the rebellion, where he likely met his demise.

-israel21c.org 7 March 2024

YEMEN

Houthis Destroy Underwater Cables

Four underwater communications cables between Saudi Arabia and Djibouti have been struck out of commission in recent months, presumably as a result of attacks by Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi rebels, according to an exclusive report in the Israeli news site Globes.



Workers operate on an (unrelated) lead line connected to fiber optic cable at Arrietara beach, near Bilbao, northern Spain, as Facebook Inc. and Microsoft Corp. join forces to build an underwater fiber optic cable across the Atlantic Ocean, linking Europe and the USA. (photo credit: REUTERS/VINCENT WEST)

The successful targeting of the four cables, which are believed to belong to the AAE-1, Seacom, EIG, and TGN systems, marks a serious disruption of communications between Europe and Asia.

Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi movement, which is not the internationally recognized government of the Arab country but which controls its most populous segments, has been attacking international trade for months, proclaiming solidarity with Palestinians as Israel wages war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

-www.jpost.com, 26 February 2024

Commentary: Communication is the lifeblood of the

On the Horizon

global economy. Without information, the world would literally come to a standstill. In this case, the outage is mostly limited to the Gulf States, and somewhat by extension to Europe, eastern Africa, India, even South Africa.

In the meantime, the US and UK have made offensive strikes against the Houthis. But how those attacks can stop or even deter the terrorist actions of the Houthis remains to be seen.

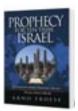
An example is the present Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. Despite heavy artillery from land, air strikes, and bombardment from the sea, we read that Hamas is continuously firing missiles from Gaza into Israel.

A similar situation is taking place in the north of Israel, as Hezbollah continues to send rockets into Israeli territory.

While Israel's actions are justified, one realizes that the conflict will not be solved by weapons of war, which can only limit the enemies of Israel in carrying out their murderous intentions against the Jewish people.

Thus, the question: Will there be peace? We believe so, albeit temporary. However, real peace will only be established when Micah 4:3 is fulfilled: "And he shall judge among

many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword



against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

8190

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



FRANCE

Russian FSB Behind Antisemitic Graffiti

French prosecutors reported in November that 60 [Star of David graffiti] had been found in the capital and surrounding suburbs weeks into the war between Israel and Hamas, with the graffiti being interpreted as a threat to Jews.

France's international security service DGSI believes the operation was run by the FSB's fifth division that undertakes international operations, the source said, quoting from a secret internal note that was first revealed by the *Le Monde* newspaper. The FSB is the main successor agency to the Soviet Union's KGB.

In the suburb of Saint-Ouen, the stars were accompanied by inscriptions such as "Palestine will overcome."

Le Monde said the alleged FSB operation was part of a wider disinformation campaign



that also targeted Poland, Spain, Germany, Romania and Austria.

-www.france24.com, 23 February 2024

Commentary: This is a really strange story involving France, Russia, Moldova, Ukraine, Israel — probably even the Middle Eastern and North African countries from which many immigrants in France originate. This graffiti could be considered agitprop (agitation propaganda) aimed to incense France's significant Muslim immigrant population.

While we believe Gog and Magog of the Bible points to Russia, it is interesting that the final "Gog and Magog" will deceive the nations: "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as



the sand of the sea" (Revelation 20:7-8).

-By J. Froese 8194

(See 101 Answers to Questions About the Book of Revelation, Item #2295.\$15.99.)



ISRAEL

Judea and Samaria Proper Name for West Bank

The president and CEO of the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB), Troy Miller, has endorsed a resolution opposing using the term "West Bank" and adopting Judea and Samaria instead.

"NRB opposes the use of the erroneous term 'West Bank' to describe the biblical heartland of Israel and calls on its members to refer to the region by its historic name of Judea and Samaria," reads the resolution, which was endorsed at the annual NRB convention.

The page-long resolution contains an explanatory preamble, highlighting that "Judea and Samaria are the biblical heartland of Israel, which includes sites such as Hebron, Bethel, Shiloh and Shechem, along with many other places with rich biblical heritage" and that "Scripture foretells both the exile and return of the Jewish people to Judea and Samaria."

-www.jpost.com, 22 February 2024

Commentary: Excerpts from the article published by *The Jerusalem Post* correctly identify the territory as "Judea and Samaria."

But there is more: When it comes to "Occupied Territory"—which apparently is the cause of the Middle East conflict—it is actually in the

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reverse direction; namely, Arab-occupied Israeli territory. That is applicable to Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.

An article by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA.org) asks the question, "Is Gaza part of the land of Israel?" and answers, "It all depends on whom you ask." One thing has become abundantly clear: Permitting the Palestinian Arabs to rule the Gaza Strip was a mistake. The Arab-Palestinian mentality is made apparent by the majority being in support of the 7 October 2023 massacre of Jews.

From civilized human perspectives, how can this be? One simple word: propaganda. Literature distributed throughout Gaza, Judea, and Samaria fans the flames of hatred against Jews, instead of promoting art, technology, science, etc.

Scripture says, "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it" (Psalm 34:14).

8192

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



ISRAEL

Second Temple Stone Box Discovered

A rare and mysterious, multi-compartment stone container dating back to the days of the Second Temple, that serves as evidence of the destruction of Jerusalem two millennia ago, has been put on display for the first time at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.



Researchers assume that the box was used for commercial purposes, such as displaying premeasured goods.

"During excavations of the Pilgrimage Road where the box was discovered, many objects have been found as a testament to the flourishing commercial activity that took place alongside the road during the Second Temple period," IAA excavation directors Dr. Yuval Baruch and Ari Levy said in a statement.

NEWS IN BRIEF



TECHNION LEADS IN APPROVED PATENTS

Whith 48 patents approved in the United States during 2023, the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa has secured the annual top spot in US patent approvals, both in Israel and throughout Europe.

Home of four Nobel laureates, the Technion now ranks 65th globally according to the latest rankings from the National Academy of Inventors, based on data from the United States Patent and Trademark Office. This marks a climb of three places from its 2022 position of 68th.

The Technion's patent portfolio currently includes 1,815 registered patents and patent applications, with the Technion Technology Transfer Office (T3) facilitating the commercialization process. T3 promotes the establishment of approximately 15 new startups each year.

T3 General Manager Rona Samler noted the Technion's consistent dominance in Israel and Europe, and its place among the top 20 universities worldwide for patents granted per faculty member.

> -israel21c.org 3 March 2024

BRIEF



FOLDABLE ELECTRIC CAR

srael-based startup City Transformer's foldable electric vehicle will be released to the public in July, as the company hopes to revolutionize the urban commute, the company announced.

City Transformer, founded in 2014 and based in the central Israel moshay of Kfar Netter. sought to ease traffic jams by creating a car with a patentregistered folding mechanism that can contract the wheelbase down to just one meter (39 inches) wide for easy parking or maneuvering through traffic. Inside, there is room for a driver and another adult, sitting in tandem. Alternatively, the passenger seat can take two children. The cabin does not shrink or change shape as the wheelbase narrows.

Its second version, the CT-2, can hit a top speed of 40 kilometers per hour (24 miles per hour) in the smallest mode and can expand to 1.4 meters (4.6 feet), in which it can reach 90 km/h (55 mph), making it suitable for traversing tightly packed cities, but less applicable to long-haul travel.

-timesofisrael.com 27 February 2024



The box on display at the Israel Museum archaeology gallery. (photo credit: Zohar Shemesh)

"Daily life and trade in Second Temple Jerusalem must have been conducted with strict adherence to Jewish purity laws," they said. "Evidence of this can be seen by several distinct archaeological finds, such as thousands of limestone vessel fragments discovered in excavations throughout the ancient city and its surroundings."

-www.jpost.com, 21 February 2024

Commentary: Whenever archaeological items dating back to the Second Temple are discovered, it attracts attention within religious circles. What becomes abundantly clear is that Jerusalem has Jewish roots, Jerusalem is Jewish, and Jerusalem is the capital city of Israel. Yet the world remains divided. Most nations insist on the so-called Two-State Solution, with West Jerusalem as the Jewish capital and East Jerusalem as the Arab-Palestinian capital.

What is Jerusalem's future? Zechariah 8:3 answers: "Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain."

8193

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



Pesach: The Power of the Blood of Yeshua Never Ends



By David Phillips (Ebenezer's CEO)

et me take you back to the first time the children of Israel celebrated Pesach (Passover). Roughly 3,460 years ago, the night of this first Pesach was one of the most significant turning points for the people of Israel, a symbol for generations to come. They had entered the land of Egypt 430 years before as the sons of Jacob, and were subject to great oppression by the Egyptians. Yes, the children of Israel were slaves—a term that is difficult to understand today—

and had to work very hard to obtain just the necessities in order to survive. To make matters worse, they were severely mistreated and used by the Egyptians, who even tried to eliminate them by killing their males.

This was about to change. One night—the eve of Pesach—Moses gave them instructions he received from God JEHOVAH. He knew what was about to happen, and told the people of Israel to prepare and be ready to move.

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God was about to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians.

They had to prepare the Pesach meal in haste, with no time to make a nice dinner. They had to roast the meat, and even their bread had no time to rise. Everything was made in a hurry, as they were to be ready to move at a moment's notice!

The command of God given to Moses was to take the blood of the lamb and apply it to the doorposts (both the top and the sides) so it covered the door. The point was, it had to be physically seen by the death angel. If the blood was seen, he would not enter the house but would "pass over" (Heb. - Pesach) it. Now, when we accept Yeshua and His death on the cross (which also took place on the eve of Passover), His blood is applied to us and protects us. The enemy can see His blood—which covers and protects us—and can't ignore it. Thus, he cannot enter our hearts and take possession of our soul. He cannot do anything to those who have the blood of Christ applied to their lives. He must pass on!

There is no being saved without blood; we clearly see this in Scripture. The first time Passover was celebrated by the Israelites, they had to apply the blood. If they didn't, the firstborn would die. It didn't matter if he had been born the day before, or was 80 years of age or older: If the blood was not applied to the door, the firstborn among the people and the animals of that household would die ... period.

When I look back to this first Pesach night, it was the first time that such an event occurred; namely, that blood was applied to protect the people of God. God had a plan. He wanted to

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prepare the hearts of the people of Israel, so they would learn that this would be required for them to be saved. Our prayer is that they would understand that it didn't stop with the first Passover lamb: We all need the blood of Yeshua to be eternally saved!

The Israelites continued to celebrate Passover for hundreds of years, until Yeshua celebrated Pesach with His disciples. Listen to what Yeshua told them: "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (Luke 22:15).

Each year, I have the same desire to celebrate with friends and family, and those here with us at the Ebenezer Home. One day, we will all meet in heaven to celebrate—we look forward to seeing you!

This feast is very symbolic and true. Pesach encourages us with the reminder that it is even more

than breaking bread and taking part in communion: This entire event is about us being saved and protected by the blood of Yeshua. It was an act of love and grace, and a picture of what Yeshua would go through to protect us and give us life through His blood

Why do we celebrate Pesach today? To remember that it was on this feast that Yeshua protected the children of Israel via the lamb's blood, and how He, the Lamb of God, shed His blood so that you and I can be saved.

Maybe you don't celebrate in the traditional way Jewish families do, but that doesn't matter. May I encourage you this year to sit down-whether alone, together with family, or with your congregation—and take time to ponder this feast. Join us as we celebrate and remember what took place that first Passover night: the fore-

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telling of what Yeshua would one day do for us by the shedding of His own blood. Psalm 22 is a perfect picture of what Yeshua went through about one thousand years after the Psalm was written. It was written, and it was true. Brothers and sisters, it happened just as God foretold!

In a practical way, it will always be hard to understand why the people of Israel had to apply the blood upon the doorposts, and how it actually worked. But if God the Father said it would work, it would, and it did! The same is true today. If Yeshua tells us to believe, we can trust Him that, just as it worked back then, it still works today. He does not change. The power of the blood of Yeshua is never ending. It will always be the same. It saves, it protects, and it gives us eternal life.

Chag Sameach!

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"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Psalm 18:2).

BY ARNO FROESE

ntroducing Psalm 18, the Tanakh reads: "For the leader. Of David, the servant of the LORD, who addressed the words of this song to the LORD after the LORD had saved him from the hands of all his enemies and from the clutches of Saul." When reading the history of David, we see that he foreshadows the Messiah of Israel. He was severely persecuted by King Saul; his life was threatened, yet he was innocent of any wrongdoing relating to Saul. He cried out to God: "Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart" (Psalm 26:2). King Saul had to confess: "And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou

hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil" (1 Samuel 24:17).

Later, when Saul was again pursuing David mercilessly, David had the opportunity to take judgment into his own hands while Saul and his trusted soldiers were sleeping. David took the spear and a cruse of water from Saul, and during the daytime, proclaimed what he had done. Again, Saul praises David: "Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail. So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place" (1 Samuel 26:25).

David was tested to the limits of his physical existence on



earth, all for a specific purpose: to foreshadow the suffering of the Messiah, as recorded in Psalm 22:16-18: "For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."

Gaza War

Hamas' murderous attack, its cold-blooded killing of civilians on 7 October 2023, cannot be compared to any other event in Jewish history but the Holocaust. They were killed because they were Jews. Yet, when one does a little research, we find that they have collectively contributed to the wellbeing of humanity more than any other people on earth.

According to JewishVirtual-Libary.org, the global Jewish population stood at 16.2 million in 1939. Yet in 1945, estimates of the Jewish population range to

under 11 million. Today, only 0.2% of the world's population is Jewish, yet they comprise 22% of all Nobel Prizes that have ever been bestowed.

Did the Hamas massacre affect belief in God? *The Jerusalem Post* reports:

According to a comprehensive survey conducted by Lazar Research for *The Jerusalem Post*, 33% of Israelis have reported a strengthened faith in God since the October 7 massacre by Hamas and the subsequent war.

The study, spearheaded by Dr. Menachem Lazar of Lazar Research in collaboration with Panel4All.co.il, an internet respondent panel, aimed to gauge the religious sentiments among Israelis in these turbulent times.

The practical expressions of the respondents' strengthened religious faith were primarily prayers (63%), conversations with God (59%), and the recitation of Psalms (45%). The increase in prayers was especially characteristic of respondents aged 60+ (73%); conversations with God

were reported at relatively high rates by secular respondents (64%), Sephardic respondents (65%), and respondents aged 45-60 (60%).

An absolute majority of respondents (75%) said that since October 7, they feel a greater connection to the State of Israel (69%) and the diverse Israeli society (68%). About half of the Israelis surveyed feel more connected to the Jewish people in the Diaspora (53%) and to Jewish tradition (49%).

-www.jpost.com, 9 February 2024

What is not recorded is the increase of Jews believing in Jesus, the Messiah of Israel.

One thing we know for sure: the truth of the prophetic word uttered by Zacharias over 2,000 years ago: "That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham" (Luke 1:71-73).

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