

ISRAEL MY GLORY

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FROM THE EDITOR

Last summer my husband, Tom, and I went to Las Vegas, Nevada, for the funeral of a dear friend. To say Las Vegas is hot in July is an understatement. While we were there, the temperature registered 111 degrees! We stayed with Friends of Israel (FOI) colleagues Jon and Linda Craft, who warned us to drink plenty of water or we would dehydrate without realizing it and to refrain from touching anything outdoors made of metal.

When we borrowed the Crafts' car, Tom had to wait for the air conditioner to kick in before he could touch the steering wheel. Yet beautiful flowers burst through the dry and rocky desert soil at the Warsaw Ghetto Remembrance Garden that Jon maintains for Temple Beth Shalom as a memorial to victims of the Holocaust. "How did you get anything to grow here?" I asked him.

"I bought the Israeli drip-irrigation system," he said. Linda told us many of the gorgeous flowers thriving in Las Vegas are watered by Israeli-invented drip irrigation.

Instant-messaging technology, popular apps like Waze and WhatsApp, and medical advancements too numerous to mention all came to us through Israel. Israel has made a difference in the lives of people around the world, even though most don't realize it.

And Israel makes all the difference when it comes to God, theology, salvation, and the Bible. Without the Jewish people we would have no knowledge of God because we would have no Bible, and we would have no hope of heaven or means of redemption because we would have no Savior. Eventually, redemptive history will be completed through Israel, which will play a key role in the future of the world.

In 1942, while Adolf Hitler was helping Satan by trying to annihilate European Jewry, the idea of a Jewish state was barely a dream. Yet FOI's founders decided to publish a magazine and call it *Israel My Glory* from Isaiah 46:13 because they knew God would keep His promise to reestablish His people in their own land.

It is with deep humility and gratitude to the Lord that we celebrate 80 years of *Israel My Glory* with a special section beginning on page 14. We also asked former FOI Executive Director Elwood McQuaid to write an article about touring the Jewish state (page 16).

Sprinkled throughout are comments from people who have been on our tours. Hopefully, they'll encourage you to join us. Once you've been there, you'll see how Israel can make a difference in your life too.

Waiting for His Appearing,
Lorna Simcox
Editor-in-Chief



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I

I hate to think what this world would be like without Israel.

Have you noticed that ads to help feed children in Africa, common in the 1980s and 1990s, are seldom seen today? That's partly because Israel is making a difference in Africa. Israel took its drip irrigation and solar technology to villages across the continent, and people there now pump water from the ground and use it efficiently to grow food.

In fact, in science, medicine, communications, agriculture, and computing, Israel leads the world in innovations that save lives and improve living standards. Were it not for Israel, we would not enjoy many of the technologies we take for granted today. Israel makes a difference!

In the realm of redemption, Israel makes all the difference. Without the Jewish people, you and I would have no salvation. Though that fact seems obvious, there is a decline in the number of Christians who understand Israel's importance—past, present, and future.

This development is alarming, given the fact that the nation's role appears prominently on the pages of God's Word and is eternally defined in everlasting covenant promises that God made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and his descendants: Israel.

According to a recent survey conducted by Infinity Concepts and Grey Matter Research, only 51 percent of evangelical Christians polled believe the Jewish people are God's Chosen People. That's a mere one out of every two evangelicals. The percentage declines noticeably with younger people. At age 70 and older, 59 percent believe the Jews are God's Chosen People, while only 44 percent under age 40 believe this way.¹

Why are so many Bible-believers ignorant of the difference Israel makes in our redemption, and why is there such a steady decline in this understanding among young people? Robert Nicholson, president and executive director of The Philos Project, points to the negative views about America that younger evangelicals are taught.² It seems the anti-Americanism bombarding our children makes an impact.

But there's more. As I travel and speak, people commonly tell me they never hear preaching about Israel.

Nor are they taught Israel's critical role in prophecy. This failure is at the root of declining support for Israel. If believers understand the difference Israel makes in our redemption and the role God has defined for the nation, they will believe the Jewish people are God's Chosen People.

To remove Israel from God's covenant promises renders our redemption worthless. The church cannot replace Israel in the covenants without sacrificing its salvation. Jesus Himself said, "Salvation is of the Jews" (Jn. 4:22).

The Abrahamic Covenant is more than a promise of redemption for Israel. God also promised that through Abraham's Seed, He would bless the entire world (Gen. 12:3; 22:18). The apostle Paul taught in Galatians 3 that because of this promise, the salvation God brought to the Jewish people through Christ is shared with the world.

Does Israel make a difference? Absolutely! Without Israel, we would have no access to God's unparalleled gift of grace through His Son, Jesus Christ. What the church needs today is a well-rounded understanding about Israel. Its ignorance, more than any other factor, is leading to the decline in evangelical support for Israel.

The good news is that when God's Word is taught, it is "sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12) and more than capable of cutting through all the nefarious influences of our culture and times. The Friends of Israel is committed to proclaiming biblical truth about Israel and the Messiah. We will give our last breath upholding this calling from God.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Infinity Concepts and Grey Matter Research, *The Jewish Connection: Evangelicals and Israel*, December 2021, 7.
- 2 Robert Nicholson, "No Zeal for Zion," *World* magazine, January 5, 2022 <tinyurl.com/ZealZion>.



by **Jim Showers**,
executive director of The Friends
of Israel Gospel Ministry

MANAGING MISINFORMATION

The blaze has subsided since Whoopi Goldberg insisted the Holocaust “isn’t about race,” but the embers are still burning.

Goldberg’s comment started a firestorm during a January filming of her television show *The View* on ABC. The comedian-turned-daytime-television-host then doubled down on her remark and called the Holocaust an example of white-on-white violence.

Although ABC suspended Goldberg for two weeks and she issued an apology, the incident demonstrates how few people today comprehend the true nature of the Holocaust and how the American conversation about racism clouded Goldberg’s understanding. She admitted later on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* that she can’t visualize racism apart from skin color.

Anti-Defamation League CEO Jonathan Greenblatt tried to help her out, commenting on social media, “No, Whoopi Goldberg, the Holocaust was about the Nazis’ systematic annihilation of the Jewish people—who they deemed to be an inferior race. They dehumanized them and used this racist propaganda to justify slaughtering 6 million Jews. Holocaust distortion is dangerous.”

The U.S. Holocaust Museum added, “Racism was central to Nazi ideology. Jews were not defined by religion, but by race. Nazi racist beliefs fueled genocide and mass murder.”

But the best rebuttal came from Colette A. M. Phillips, writing in *The Boston Globe*:

When I heard Goldberg’s comments, and the backlash that followed, it resonated strongly with me. As a Black woman who has been close to the Jewish community for over 30 years, I can’t help but notice that while people often conflate racism and antisemitism, they rarely see the parallels. Why? In part that’s because in America racism is largely seen through the lens of black and white: a structural and systemic construct to deliberately and intentionally oppress a group of people.

But that’s exactly what the Nazis did in 1930s Germany. Adolf Hitler believed that Jews were inferior because they were not Aryan, or “pure white.” His ideology regarded Jews as a race of people, irrespective of their level of participation in religious practice. He focused solely on Judaism as a bloodline, and his Nuremberg laws codified Jews as people with Jewish

grandparents. Hitler did not see Jews as being part of the same race as he was.

Although the word *misinformation* has become a term the news media throw around when a topic irritates them even though the data associated with it is not demonstrably false, Goldberg’s comment qualifies as genuine *misinformation*: incorrect and misleading. The Holocaust is established history. It’s a textbook example of racism against the Jewish people, which is often called antisemitism.

It is disturbing that a 2020 survey of adults under 40 revealed 1 in 10 never heard the word *Holocaust*. Almost two-thirds of American young adults were unaware that 6 million Jews were systematically murdered during World War II. And the greatest shocker of all was that more than 1 in 10 believe the Jewish people caused the Holocaust.

Whoopi Goldberg (real name Caryn Elaine Johnson) may not realize the misinformation she spouted on national television dangerously fills a void created by a lack of true Holocaust education.

Jewish people comprise a mere 2 percent of the American population. Yet they are the target of 54.9 percent of the hate crimes in the United States, according to a 2020 FBI report. Holocaust ignorance runs deep, and real misinformation is dangerous.

Many have called for Whoopi Goldberg to be canceled. But Lucy Lipiner, an 88-year-old Holocaust survivor, has the right idea: Whoopi should be counseled. She messaged Goldberg on social media: “My family was killed for not being white. Hitler & Nazis NEEDED to exterminate Jews because we weren’t ‘white enough’ for them. I’m happy to meet and educate you about what really happened in the Holocaust.”

Later Lipiner told NewsNationNow.com, “I felt that I could probably help her learn a few things about Jewish people and [the] Jewish race.”

Managing misinformation with education won’t solve the problem of antisemitism. Jesus Christ will do that when He returns to Earth. But it may go a long way toward removing some of the ignorance surrounding one of the worst genocides in the history of the world.

by Chris Katulka

A WIN FOR TURKEY AND RUSSIA AT ISRAEL'S EXPENSE

The Biden administration recently withdrew its support for the Eastern Mediterranean (EastMed) pipeline designed to transfer natural gas from Israel to Europe. The decision deals a blow to Israel's hopes of becoming a strategically important supplier of natural gas to Europe.

The 6-billion-euro (\$6.8 billion) project envisaged construction of a 1,900-kilometer (1,180-mile) undersea pipeline that would carry up to 20 billion cubic meters of gas annually from Israeli and Cypriot waters to Crete and the Greek mainland. From there, gas would go to Italy and southeastern Europe.

The EastMed pipeline has been in the planning stages for more than a decade. The Israeli-Greek-Cypriot project—joined by Bulgaria, Hungary, North Macedonia, Romania, and Serbia—has long been seen as a way to diversify natural gas supplies to Europe and reduce overdependence on supplies from Russia.

In January 2020, Israel, Greece, and Cyprus—with strong support from the Trump administration—signed the EastMed intergovernmental agreement, which aimed at reaching a final investment decision by 2022 and completing the pipeline by 2025. The EastMed project could eventually have supplied up to 10 percent of Europe's natural gas.

The Biden administration called EastMed antithetical to its "climate goals" and wants "clean energy" instead. It also questioned the pipeline's economic and commercial viability.

Biden's decision represents a major geopolitical victory for Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who opposes the underwater pipeline because it would

bypass Turkey. The Turkish government insists Israeli gas can only be sold to Europe through Turkey. In 2016, Turkey and Israel tried to sign a deal to deliver gas via Turkey, but Ankara's demand that Israel lift its blockade on the Hamas-run Gaza Strip made it impossible.

Since then, Turkey has challenged the EastMed project by attempting to expand its claims over gas-rich areas of the Mediterranean Sea. The Turkish navy repeatedly harasses ships exploring for gas in Greek and Cypriot waters, which Turkey now claims it owns. The Biden administration claims EastMed is a "primary source of tension" that is "destabilizing" the region.

Some analysts have warned that Biden's decision—reportedly coordinated with Turkey but not with Israel, Greece, or Cyprus—rewards Turkish aggression and undercuts three of America's strongest allies in the region. Indeed, Erdoğan hailed Biden's U-turn as a victory.

Richard Goldberg, a member of the U.S. National Security Council during the Trump administration, called Biden's decision a strategic mistake that "smells of a political decision, not an economic one."

Endy Zemenides, executive director of the Hellenic American Leadership Council, said the assertion that EastMed is not commercially viable is not for the White House to say. "It's not their decision," he said. "If somebody steps up and pays for it, that makes it commercially viable. Nobody was asking the U.S. State Department or the USA." Zemenides added that the United States should stop trying to appease Turkey. "Turkey is not



looking to participate in Eastern Mediterranean initiatives; it wants to dominate them. Ankara's goal is not one of cooperation but of regional primacy if not hegemony."

In a letter to U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, U.S. Reps. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) and Nicole Malliotakis (R-NY) said Biden's reversal smacks of hypocrisy because he supports Nord Stream 2, a pipeline that would double Russian supplies of natural gas to Europe. "We hope you and President Biden recognize the significant national security implications the United States and our European allies are facing because of European reliance on Russian gas," they wrote. "The EastMed pipeline must be a priority. . . . We strongly urge you to reconsider your opposition . . . and support energy independence for our allies in the Eastern Mediterranean and Europe."

Veteran energy analyst Ariel Cohen agreed. "This is a disastrous decision that imperils European security and opens the door for further Russian energy hegemony in European gas markets," he said. "It should be reversed."



by Soeren Kern,
a senior fellow at the Gatestone Institute, a nonpartisan foreign-policy think tank based in New York City

CHRISTIAN APOLOGIST BEATEN UNCONSCIOUS

Islamic extremists stopped an evangelist in Uganda on his way to participate in a debate about Christianity and Islam and beat him unconscious, reported Morning Star News.

Charles Kamya, 43, said two men stopped his car; and six other Muslims in Islamic attire appeared from the bush. One told him, “Today Allah has called you, and you are going to meet him.” A blow to the head with an iron bar left Kamya unconscious. A passerby found him in a pool of blood and called police.

He was brought to several hospitals for care, but his father asked he be discharged because the assailants were monitoring his movements and could attack him there.

In January, accompanied by a Muslim convert to Christianity, Kamya debated Muslims in Jinja. “I used the Qur’an to show Muslims that from the beginning of the earth to date, God wants all people to be saved, including Muslims,” Kamya said. “I also discussed Surah 72 about the powers of evil jinn, and that they can be defeated by Issa [Jesus], and many Muslims converted to Christ. One sheikh wanted to grab the Qur’an from me, but I refused and left immediately.”



*
Charles Kamya

YOUNG CHRISTIAN FAMILY PERSECUTED IN NEPAL

A young father knows the intensity of Hindu opposition to Christianity in his native Nepal, much of it coming from his own parents. They took his newborn son from him and expelled him and his wife from their home for refusing to eat food offered to Hindu gods.

Pawan, 26, told Morning Star News, “My parents would insult us, asking, ‘What good has following Christ done for you? Your baby keeps falling sick. What is your Jesus doing? Why is He not protecting your baby?’”

But Pawan remained true to his faith. Tensions grew after his younger brother also trusted Christ. “Both my mother and father falsely accused me of sorcery to draw my brother into my faith,” Pawan said. “I only shared the gospel with him; I never forced him and did not speak

any alluring words to make him a Christian. It was his own decision.”

Eventually, the Christian couple recovered their son. Pawan’s wife, Srijana, secretly became a Christian as a teenager. Her parents tried to marry her off to a relative twice her age and send her abroad, Pawan said. “Her parents would humiliate her in extremely vulgar language and at times also beat her up to silence her,” he told Morning Star News. “This went on for days, and the prospective groom was in a rush to make the marriage happen.”

Pawan was working in the United Arab Emirates at the time. He and Srijana had joined the same Christian group on Facebook when he received her desperate plea for help. “I flew down to Nepal immediately, went to Srijana’s house, and fled to India with her,” he said. “I had no other option. They would have even killed her and also me.” The two married and went into hiding.

“We had to remain in hiding for a year,” Pawan said. “There was nobody around during our child’s birth. We went through many struggles, and God brought joy in our lives through our child.”

Moving in with his parents seemed like a good idea—until they were evicted for their faith. Meanwhile, the young family scrapes by as he works odd jobs; and church members help them care for their little one. Pawan plans to search for work abroad. “We are still living in fear,” he said. “If my in-laws get to know about our whereabouts, they might attack us at any time.”



*
Bhairavnath Temple, Nepal

*To read these reports and many more in full,
go to morningstarnews.org.*

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Timothy's Growing YouTube Ministry

Nobody has enjoyed COVID-19 lockdowns. But even when the government makes leaving home impossible, God can still take our ministry around the world. One example is a recent initiative started by one of our field representatives in Poland, Timothy Rabinek.

While people were stuck at home treading water, Timothy was swimming upstream. He used his lockdown time to learn the complex computer software necessary to build 3-D video models of biblical and ancient geographical sites.

From a detailed representation of Herod's Temple in Jesus' day to a time-lapse video of the initial building and rebuilding of Jerusalem according to Old Testament history, Timothy's videos offer a wealth of information. Anyone interested in biblical history, archaeology, or geography will find excellent material in his video library.

But Timothy didn't stop there. He took the videos and started a channel on YouTube called Israel MyChannel. He now has more than 75 different teaching videos on his channel, capturing the attention of thousands of people around the world. Two videos have been seen more than 700,000 times, and others also have hundreds of thousands of views.

It is wonderful to see how God guided Timothy to build this platform to share biblical truth about Israel and the Messiah. His channel has enabled him to minister in places he never would have been able to reach prior to the lockdowns.

The pandemic has reinforced our faith that God

can use the most difficult of circumstances to accomplish His will in greater ways than we ever would have imagined. Here in the International Department, we praise Him continually for the grace and creativity He gives our staff as they seek to share the Good News of the gospel of Jesus around the world.

If you would like to view Timothy's videos, log on to YouTube and search for "Israel MyChannel." If you share the videos on social media and elsewhere, you will help us reach even more people for the Savior.



* Timothy's 3-D model of the Temple

If you would like to support Timothy Rabinek's work and other FOI ministries around the world, visit foi.org/INToutreach. You can also call our toll-free ministry-support line at 800-257-7843. Thank you for your prayers and financial support.

Working on Campus

American colleges and universities today are hotbeds of anti-Israel, antisemitic activity. Impressionable students are fed misinformation at all levels, and Students for Justice in Palestine and similar anti-Israel organizations propagate lies about the Jewish state. Last year an Anti-Defamation League survey found 32 percent of Jewish students have personally experienced antisemitism on campus.

Robert Johnessee has dedicated the past 13 years of his ministry with The Friends of Israel to raising up a generation of students who support Israel and love the Jewish people. For Robert, our Ohio-based Church Ministries representative, it's biblical to help them develop a heart for Zionism and Jewish outreach.

Students for Israel is an official organization on the campus of Cedarville University. Its mission is to support God's Chosen People and their need for the true Messiah, Jesus Christ. As the off-campus advisor, Robert comes alongside the students, facilitating meetings that include Holocaust remembrance events and teaching the dangers of antisemitism. Holocaust survivors are invited to share their personal stories of enduring one of history's darkest moments.

Students also learn about Jewish culture and customs, celebrating the feasts of Israel. Robert even did a Passover demonstration for 3,000 people at Cedarville.

Students for Israel President Claire Salsberg and Vice President Victoria Siefert are seniors at the Christian university and graduates of The Friends of Israel's Bridges internship program in Jewish ministry. They felt called to help rebuild the student organization after the COVID-19 pandemic ended in-person meetings.

When asked what motivated her to take up the leadership mantle, Claire said, "I love helping other students get excited about what God is excited about," referring to God's heart for Israel and the Jewish people. Victoria added, "I really want to increase awareness on campus about Judaism and Jewish missions. The Jewish people need to be reached. We need to have a heart for them."



*
Students for Israel, from left: Marielle, Claire, Victoria, Deborah, Nina

During the fall Feast of Tabernacles, Claire, Victoria, and other students built a *sukkah* (booth) where the young adults experienced aspects of the biblical feast. Robert shared a message and explained the prophetic hope we have as believers.

Students for Israel also gathered during the winter for a Hanukkah party, where they ate jelly donuts, spun the *dreidel*, and heard from a Cedarville professor of engineering who is a Jewish believer. He shared his journey to trusting in Christ.

Robert is encouraged by Claire, Victoria, and other students who have a heart for God's Chosen People. Pray God will continue to use The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry to teach young Christians to love the Jewish people and support the nation of Israel.

If you would like to support Robert Johnessee and others like him serving in North American outreach with The Friends of Israel, visit foi.org/NAMoutreach. You can also call our toll-free ministry-support line at 800-257-7843. Thank you for your prayers and financial support.

MY SEVEN CHAPTERS

If you had to choose **seven chapters** from Scripture to tell the story of your personal walk with God, could you do it?

BY STEVE HERZIG

Last summer I spoke at a family Bible conference. As I began preparing the messages for the ministry there, I decided to try something unusual and highly personal: telling how I came to faith in Christ from Orthodox Judaism using seven chapters of Scripture.

Although theologians believe the number seven symbolizes perfection, I confess that my reason for choosing seven was not spiritual: I needed seven messages for the conference.

No matter, I found the exercise both formidable and frustrating, yet enjoyable and enlightening. I'd like to share a brief summary with you here.

1. GENESIS 3

GOD ANSWERS THE QUESTION, "WHY IS THERE EVIL?"

During my Hebrew school days, we spent much time translating the Torah (Five Books of Moses); and Genesis 3 had a powerful impact on me.

I began to understand the implications of sin entering the world. I saw sin's origin (Satan) and its allure to Eve, Adam, and mankind. I also could see its devastating consequences on me. Unlike most of my classmates who considered the story of Adam and Eve fiction, I believed it was true. Their sin brought physical and spiritual death and tangibly changed the world: The serpent would crawl on his belly, Eve would bear children in pain, Adam would toil by the sweat of his brow, and the earth would produce thorns and weeds.

Genesis 3 answered all my *Why* questions: Why sickness? Why greed? Why hate? Why violence? It's a depressing chapter. But in it lies a word of hope. Verse 15 promises a unique,

special person—the "Seed" of the woman—who will crush the serpent's head while Himself sustaining a bruised heel. Genesis 3:15 is God's promise of hope in the midst of sin and judgment—the glorious promise of a Redeemer.

At the time, I didn't know who this person was, but I believed he was Israel's Messiah. It was years before God removed my blinders, enabling me to understand that Jesus was that Seed.

2. GENESIS 12

GOD PROMISES A LAND, A SEED, AND BLESSING

While Genesis 1 through 11 covers the first 2,000 years of general history, chapters 12 through 50 cover 450 years of the history of a particular family—that of the Redeemer.

Chapter 12 explains that God chose a pagan man, Abraham, and commanded him to leave his country and family and go to a land God would show him. By faith, Abraham obeyed, resulting in personal blessing for him and his descendants.

Contained in this unconditional covenant God made with Abraham is God's promise of a land, a seed, and blessing. Its importance cannot be overstated. It is the fountain from which flow all of God's redemptive purposes, not only for Israel, but for all mankind. (Later, God changed Abraham's grandson Jacob's name to Israel and applied the covenant to all of Jacob's descendants; 35:10.) God was creating the Jewish people.

Genesis 12 is also the chapter cherished by so many Christians who love Israel and the Jewish people: "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (v. 3). I am

the beneficiary of this promise; and as a believer in Messiah Jesus, I am twice blessed.

3. 2 SAMUEL 7

GOD PROMISES AN EVERLASTING KING AND KINGDOM

Genesis 12 identified the Redeemer as Jewish. Second Samuel 7 promises He will be the greater Son of King David and will reign and rule forever.

God promised David, “Your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever” (v. 16). The Redeemer was even born in Bethlehem, where David was born.

4. ISAIAH 53

THE HUMBLE SERVANT

In Acts 8, an Ethiopian eunuch read “Isaiah the prophet” (v. 28) and asked Philip, an early disciple of Christ, “Of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?” (v. 34). That is the ultimate question.

Seven hundred years before Jesus’ birth, Isaiah prophesied, “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed” (Isa. 53:5). This passage was key to my coming to Christ. It is an integral part of my testimony, as it is for many Jewish believers.

This “root out of dry ground” (v. 2)—the One who bore “our griefs and carried our sorrows” (v. 4), the One who “opened not His mouth” (v. 7)—is the Seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15), the Jewish son of David (2 Sam. 7:12–16). Yet He also is the humble, sin-bearing sacrifice for my sin. He is the One, my Redeemer and my Lord.

5. JOHN 1

GOD THE CREATOR IS ALSO GOD THE LAMB

The apostle John wrote, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (Jn. 1:1).

The “Word” in Greek is *Logos*. In Aramaic, it is *Memra*. In John’s day, Greek philosophy viewed the *Logos* as an agent connecting the transcendent divine with humanity. Rabbinic theology taught it was the *Memra* who was the agent who explains God’s creating, appearing, punishing, speaking to humans, and saving.

Thus, when John began his Gospel account, the *Logos/Memra* who became flesh spoke decisively and amazingly to both Gentiles and Jews and still speaks today. John the Baptist identified the *Logos/Memra* as “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (v. 29). Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, is the *Logos* of God and Word incarnate, a truth difficult to comprehend, yet glorious once believed.

6. REVELATION 19

THE VICTORIOUS KING RECLAIMS THE EARTH

How thrilling it will be to hear heaven’s voices saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!” (v. 1). In Revelation 19, the Jewish Messiah makes His glorious and victorious appearance on Earth, with His saints behind Him.

He will enter on a white horse (v. 11)—exactly the way I was taught in my synagogue—and “His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns” (v. 12). His name? “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (v. 16).

The promised Seed of the woman (Gen. 3)—the Jewish (Gen. 12) Son of King David (2 Sam. 7) and humble sacrifice for humanity’s sin (Isa. 53)—is the Word incarnate (Jn. 1) who is returning to Earth to judge, conquer, and reign.

7. REVELATION 21

GOD MAKES ALL THINGS NEW

After Jesus returns physically, He will dwell with His people—exactly as He promised: “I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God’” (v. 3).

He will wipe away all tears. No longer will people die. No longer will there be sorrow or crying. In this chapter He says, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts” (v. 6). To which we all can say, “Hallelujah!”

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

After my first message at the conference, a woman said to me, “I don’t like your seven.”

“That’s fine,” I replied. “Choose your seven. I’m sure you’ll like them.” During the week, others shared their seven chapters and told me the exercise was a wonderful challenge. A college-aged woman told me she took all week to work through her seven chapters and was grateful for the things she learned about herself and God.

What about you? Will you take the challenge and choose seven chapters that explain your testimony or walk with God? If you do, I would love to hear from you. Feel free to email your chapters to me at 7chapters@foi.org. It’s likely that when you finish figuring out your seven, you’ll be closer to the Lord than when you began. ★



Steve Herzig

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This year we celebrate the 80th anniversary of this award-winning magazine.

It was launched at a time when all the world was at war and Adolf Hitler was trying to exterminate every Jewish man, woman, and child in Europe. No one but God knew how World War II would end.

We can't help but look back with awe at how He moved in the hearts of Christian businessmen in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who loved the Jewish people. They had already established The Friends of Israel Refugee Relief Committee and in 1942 founded *Israel My Glory* magazine. Here is a brief excerpt from the article that introduced *Israel My Glory* to the world during one of the darkest periods in Jewish history. It was written by Dr. Joseph Taylor Britan, a well-known Presbyterian minister and secretary of the 4-year-old organization that would later be renamed The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

'WE ARE NAMING THE PERIODICAL *ISRAEL MY GLORY*'


The Friends of Israel Refugee Relief Committee, Inc., greets you with this first issue of a pamphlet or magazine, which we are naming *Israel My Glory*. We have found that by printing a pamphlet issued quarterly, we can reach our membership and friends more economically than in any other way. Letters to individuals are more direct and more personal but more expensive also, and your committee desires to reduce operating expenses. We ask our friends, to whom this quarterly comes, to accept it as a personal message from your committee.

We are naming the periodical *Israel My Glory* to call attention to the fact that God is not through with the Jewish people. He has promised that one day He will endow Israel with spiritual power and zeal and use this nation as powerful preachers when Christ comes to Earth to establish His Kingdom.

For 1,900 years the Jews have, as a nation, rejected Christ as their Messiah. One day they will accept Him. It is difficult, therefore, for us remembering their past history, to believe that God should ever call them His "glory." But this He has done, and in naming our quarterly *Israel My Glory*, we desire to remind ourselves of God's irrevocable promises to Israel and of His benevolent purpose in choosing them to be the human channel through which Christ should come and the channel also of future blessing to the world.

—Dr. Joseph Taylor Britan, secretary, Vol. 1, No. 1, December 1942





Editor's Note: It was December 1942. The Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor the previous year, and the United States of America officially entered World War II. The first issue of Israel My Glory came off the presses carrying this message of hope, originally titled "A Glimpse Into the Future."

STANDING ON THE LORD'S SIDE

Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me? (Jer. 32:26-27).

It was a dark time in the history of God's ancient people, the Jews. Nebuchadnezzar, the mighty king of the Babylonian Empire, invaded the Holy Land, laid in ruin its cities, and decimated its population. Jerusalem was besieged, about to be captured and desecrated. Hope had died in the hearts of the stricken people.

Amid such gloom the Word of God came to Jeremiah, commanding him to buy the field from his cousin Hanameel, in token that God would yet restore the country to peace and freedom and rebuild the devastated cities. But in the meantime, this looked impossible. Even Jeremiah himself doubted the wisdom of buying land at a time when the very foundations seemed to be giving way. However, the Word of God came to Jeremiah for the second time, saying, "Behold I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" (Jer. 32:27).

What a timely word from our Lord for us who are in the midst of an upheaval the likes of which the world has not seen before. And yet, in spite of it all, God bids us look ahead in faith and prepare the ground for the task of rebuilding and healing, which must start as soon as the day dawns after the darkness of the present night has passed.

It would perhaps be presumptuous on our part if we should count on our own strength, to speak at the present time of what we will do when the war is over; but our confidence is in "the God of all flesh" for whom nothing is too hard.

We know that in this struggle against the demonic forces of evil, we are on the Lord's side, and therefore victory is only a question of time if we but continue in the line of His holy will. With this faith in our hearts, we dedicate ourselves today in the midst of this terrible conflict to the task of restoration as soon as the battle is over.

We are thinking in the first instance of Europe,

the continent upon which such disaster has come to stagger the imagination and numb our feelings. What a field of Christian reconstruction Europe will be after this war! What the wrath of man has destroyed, the love of Christ, working through His own, will have to rebuild.

Our thoughts and prayers, particularly at this time, are with God's Chosen People, the Jews. Each day brings us a new message of the unspeakable horrors that have become their terrible lot. Hitler is trying hard to destroy them altogether. Is there any device for the purpose of murder that has not been used on this unfortunate people? As we hear continually of the mass slaughter of the Jews in Europe, we sometimes wonder, *Will there be any Jews left there?* But we believe that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will not permit this agent of Satan to achieve his purpose. The zealous God of Israel is watching over His people: "For thus saith the LORD of hosts, . . . he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye" (Zech. 2:8).

But what misery, what unspeakable suffering shall we have to face once this war is over! There will be starvation, epidemics, distress of such magnitude and intensity the likes of which man has never known before. It will take all the faith and all the self-sacrificing love that Christians can muster to heal the wounds, to feed the hungry, and to bring the light of Christ into the darkness of their sorrowful lives. There will be scars left upon the souls of men, burned in by the wickedness of their oppressors, which no power on Earth will be able to erase from the memories of the victims. Nothing, except the power of Christ! What a field Europe will be for the preaching of the gospel to the Jews and Gentiles, but especially to the Jews first (Rom. 1:16)! This is the will of our heavenly Father, that they who were the first to suffer from the concentrated attacks of the Devil should also be the first to experience the healing power unto salvation through their own Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

(All Scripture quoted in this article uses the KJV.)



ISRAEL

TRIP OF A LIFETIME

FROM DAN TO BEER SHEVA, ISRAEL SPEAKS TO ITS VISITORS, BECKONING THEM TO LOVE GOD MORE.

BY ELWOOD MCQUAID





* The Western Wall



* A Bar Mitzvah celebration in the Old City

“THE BIBLE NOW COMES ALIVE FOR ME. ISRAEL IS NO LONGER JUST A PLACE ON A MAP. IT IS GOD’S LAND, AND HE WILL BRING EVERYTHING TOGETHER JUST AS HE SAYS. IT WAS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME EXPERIENCE.”

—ARLEIGH, FROM CANADA

Pick up a tour brochure touting journeys to places far or near and you’ll likely see the claim, “The trip of a lifetime!” A promise that may or may not live up to the publicity—unless you’re talking about going to Israel.

I went for the first time in 1970 when I was a pastor. I always found the Bible’s wonderful word pictures of the land and etchings of prophetic landscapes appealing topics for exposition. But something was missing. I had never seen with my own eyes what I was preaching about. *What would that be like?* I wondered.

What I experienced on that first trip—and in some 50 returns to the Promised Land that followed—was deeply transforming. Every journey had something more to say. In God’s land, believers touch the eternal desire to love the Lord more and serve Him better, a desire beautifully expressed in the book of Jeremiah.

‘ARISE, AND LET US GO UP TO ZION’

The spirit of the words *Arise, and let us go up to Zion* in Jeremiah 31:6 reflect an enduring attachment to the land that is not reserved for Jewish people alone. For Christians, going up to Zion elaborates on what is inscribed in our Bibles. Words from the Holy Book become actual scenes, enhancing what our faith instilled in us. Every site tells a story. As a result, a personal testament emerges along the way, one that begins with Jerusalem.

The view from the Mount Scopus overlook just off the road to the Mount of Olives unveils a panorama of the city aptly described by 19th-century, Jewish-born British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli: “The view of Jerusalem is the history of the world; it is more, it is the history of earth and of heaven.”

Disraeli’s view reflected the spirit of the celebrated Bunting Clover Leaf Map that in the 16th century depicted Europe, Asia, and Africa as leaves encircling a ring at the center labeled “Jerusalem,” God’s chosen city. After all, God said, “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel [and the world], I will put My name forever” (2 Chr. 33:7).

**"I LEARNED TO UNDERSTAND THE
ISRAELIS AND THE DECISIONS
THEY MAKE. I SEE THE BIBLICAL
NARRATIVE IN A WHOLE NEW WAY."**

—ABIGAIL, FROM IDAHO

To be there, surveying a scene like no other, creates a surge of anticipation for what the days to come will bring. And, to say the least, observers will not be disappointed.

Intriguingly, all roads in Israel lead from Jerusalem. Someday, they will lead the world back to Jerusalem for the grand climax of everything God has promised.

DAN TO BEER SHEVA

From majestic Mount Hermon in the north to the resort town of Eilat on the Red Sea, emotional encounters with God's land await. From Dan to Beer Sheva (1 Chr. 21:2), Israel is magnificent.

Touring the land comes with fascinating and pleasant offerings too: superb Israeli breakfasts, bargaining in Old City shops, trying a falafel-stuffed pita on Jerusalem's Ben Yehuda Street, chatting with friends on quiet nights while sitting on the grass by the Sea of Galilee, floating weightlessly on the Dead Sea, meeting the people of the land, and making new

friends and memories that will last a lifetime. The trip makes Israel more than a place on a map or a headline in the news. It makes Israel personal.

Seeing the Promised Land for yourself precipitates a deeper understanding of why Israel and Jerusalem are central to history and why events transpiring in the here and now shape our faith for the future.

Three sites in particular dramatically convey what Israel represents.

MEGIDDO

This landscape, viewed from the overlook of the sprawling Jezreel Valley, generates a sense of awe difficult to describe. Everything is here, like pages from our Bibles sprung to life before us. In the distance to the left is Nazareth. Mount Tabor



*** Strolling along the Mediterranean in Tel Aviv**



*** Dead Sea**



*
Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem

also comes into view. Meandering far below is the little river Kishon. All these places speak of momentous events from the past.

The future, however, comes alive at Megiddo. It is the site of the future Battle of Armageddon, where multitudes of military forces will gather for the final conflict. This place has been written about since time immemorial. But for Bible-believing Christians, Megiddo represents more: It is living proof that God's Word is truth.

Israel is back in its land, and we are witnesses to that phenomenon. Prophetic teaching—far from belonging in the dustbin of history—is indispensable to understanding events taking place today. Clearly, the church has not replaced Israel; nor has the Lord forsaken His people. Genesis 12:3 (“I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you”) is not fiction or wishful thinking. It is absolute, divine truth.

We cannot make light of the fact that we are privileged as perhaps no generation has been in the past. For millennia, the Bible has revealed what the future holds in the end-times. Today we can see how the nations will line up and what conditions will prevail. They are coming into view. From Megiddo we can see what is and visualize what will be.

MASADA

More than 100 miles south of Megiddo stands the foreboding desert fortress Masada, overlooking the vast wilderness and Dead Sea. It was fortified by the notorious King Herod as a refuge from his enemies.

But Masada is famous for what happened there long after Herod was gone, when the Roman Empire sought to exterminate the last remnant of besieged Jews huddled with their families in a vain hope of survival.

“ISRAELIS FREQUENTLY ASKED ME, ‘WHY ARE YOU HERE? EVERYONE HATES JEWS.’ I TOLD THEM, ‘NO. GOD LOVES ISRAEL. I LOVE GOD. THEREFORE, I LOVE ISRAEL.’ I ENJOYED THE OPPORTUNITY TO VOLUNTEER AND SEE PLACES TOURISTS ORDINARILY DON’T SEE.”

—PAUL, FROM FLORIDA



*
Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem

In AD 70, the Roman legions ravished Jerusalem and slaughtered the Jewish people there. Almost 1,000 Jews, including women and children, tried to flee the genocide by taking refuge at Masada. When they realized their defeat was imminent, they all committed suicide, rather than being captured by the Romans.

If you let it, Masada can awaken you to a life-changing understanding of antisemitism. At Masada, you stand where the Jewish dispersion began, where a vicious Jew-hatred was unleashed that later led to the pogroms and gruesome years of the Holocaust.

World history changed with Masada, spawning campaigns to defame Jewish people and vilify them. These campaigns led to hate crimes against Jews in the streets of America and Europe where today we see the satanic resolve never to tolerate Jewish people or let Israel endure.

Seeing Masada equips us to answer the haters. Antisemitism is not a correctable malady. God will put an end to it Himself someday. Our obligation is to remain committed to God's people, Israel, as God's Word dictates. That is the takeaway when observers step into the cable car to descend the mountain.

GALILEE AND JERUSALEM

Projected in every stop rimming the Galilee is Jesus—

His words and His works. Echoing from Bethlehem's cradle to an empty tomb in Jerusalem is the story of Jesus, how He came and what He came to do for us.

Tourists to the Holy Land often say, "I walked today where Jesus walked." That is, of course, true. However, in all the glorious and spectacular wonderment attached to being in the very places our Savior frequented, there is something else—something inexpressibly personal: a deep sense of intimacy with Christ. Yes, He died for us. But walking where He walked instills the reality of His dying for me.

Often people returning from a tour to Israel are asked, "What did you bring back?" More than anything else, they usually come home with a reaffirmation of personal commitment to Christ, a love of His people and their land, an understanding of what the future holds, expectation of the Blessed Hope, and a desire to return.

All in all, I would say that qualifies as the trip of a lifetime. ★



Elwood McQuaid

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"IN ISRAEL, I WAS HIT WITH THE REALITY THAT THIS NATION IS A MIRACLE AND ITS PEOPLE TRULY ARE THE APPLE OF GOD'S EYE! GOD'S HOLY WORD CAME ALIVE! I UNDERSTAND THE JEWISHNESS OF THE BIBLE. THE PEACE OF GOD OVERWHELMED ME THERE. VISITING ISRAEL CHANGED THE TRAJECTORY OF MY LIFE AND DEEPENED MY LOVE FOR JESUS AND HIS BRETHREN."

—BEN, FROM GEORGIA



★
Tel Aviv



★
Masada

3 REASONS WHY I SUPPORT ISRAEL

BY CHRIS KATULKA



When I was a freshman in college, I learned a valuable lesson. My professor, Dr. Herb Hirt, told us never to read the New Testament back into the Old Testament. Instead, he said, read God's progressive revelation from Genesis to Revelation.

Herb is with the Lord now, and he probably would be pleased to know I have followed his instructions for the past 20 years and will continue to do so. But I'm going to abandon his rule temporarily for a reason I'm confident he would appreciate.

I want to explain biblically why I, a Gentile believer in Jesus Christ, support Israel and the Jewish people; and I want to use the small but significant New Testament text of Romans 11:28–29. This passage was penned for the church, which means it applies to Christians today and conveys to us God's feelings for His Chosen People.

The apostle Paul, who wrote the epistle to the Gentile church in Rome, imparted God's tender heart for Israel, despite the nation's spiritual disobedience and "partial hardening" (Rom. 11:25, ESV).

Unfortunately, some theologians claim Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension invalidate God's covenantal relationship with Israel. Renowned theologian N. T. Wright argues that Israel's covenant with God was fulfilled in Christ, whom he calls Israel's representative, thus concluding Israel's divine purpose. If this theory were true, there would be no biblical reason to support Israel's rebirth as a nation in its ancient homeland today.

But this concept never entered Paul's mind. Paul taught that Israel not only matters to God, but that the nation has

a bright prophetic future. Romans 9–11, three chapters dedicated to God's faithfulness to Israel, are capsulized in Romans 11:28–29:

Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

This passage doesn't mince words. Paul identified his Jewish brethren as "enemies" of the gospel because they rejected their Messiah and turned down the kingdom offered to them. But simultaneously, in juxtaposition to "enemies," he called them "beloved" of God. Tucked into these two verses are three biblical reasons to support Israel.

REASON #1 ISRAEL STILL MATTERS TO GOD.

Concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers (v. 28).

Israel's election remains valid because it is grounded in the oath God swore to the "fathers," Israel's patriarchs. In other words, Israel's election has nothing to do with the Jewish people and everything to do with God. The language in verse 28 resembles that of Moses speaking to the Israelites about their divine election:

The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers (Dt. 7:7–8).

Neither Moses nor Paul thought God chose Israel because of its merit. God elected it solely on the basis of His grace—as He does with us today. When Paul called the nation “beloved for the sake of the fathers,” he was reaching back approximately 2,000 years to the promise God made to Abraham. Paul pulled the promise forward so the church could gain a deeper appreciation and love for Israel and the Jewish people. God told Abraham,

Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed (Gen. 12:1–3).

Based on that promise, God cut a covenant with Abraham (15:12–21) and made it eternal by pledging the oath to Himself to ensure its fulfillment. This is why the writer of Hebrews said, “For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself” (Heb. 6:13).

Paul’s conviction that God will never abandon Israel or the covenant relationship He established with Abraham and his progeny through Jacob puts the onus on Christians to value every aspect of that promise (land, descendants, blessing)—not merely the aspects that suit them.

REASON #2 ISRAEL'S GIFTS ARE IRREVOCABLE.

The gifts . . . of God are irrevocable (Rom. 11:29).

God bestowed unique gifts on Israel designed to set Israel apart. Each gift bears witness to the nation’s divine election. Paul listed these privileges in Romans 9:4–5. To the Israelites, he said,

pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God.

Earlier, Paul said, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek” (1:16). The phrase *for the Jew first* could be interpreted “for the Jew especially” because the Jews are the ones to whom God gave these gifts. If anyone should understand the coming of the Messiah and the power of God to salvation, it is the Jewish people. Israel in the past maintained a unique place in God’s economy; and, Paul argued, it still does.

Israel and the Jewish people remain a testimony to God’s

faithfulness. Considering the horrendous persecution and genocide they have suffered over the centuries, they should have vanished from Earth, like most people groups from the biblical era. Yet God preserved them through everything. As Paul said, Israel remains to this day the bearer of God’s gifts—and nobody can take that from them.

To them were given the covenants; promises; law; patriarchs; worship; and Messiah Jesus, who would become the Savior of the world. These gifts are bound to them by a promise that cannot be broken.

REASON #3 ISRAEL'S CALLING IS IRREVOCABLE.

The calling of God [is] irrevocable (11:29).

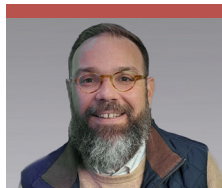
Israel’s calling also is irrevocable. It cannot be changed, altered, or reversed. Some see Israel’s calling and election as synonymous, but I believe God’s calling refers to the task He gave Israel to fulfill as His elect people. He described that task in Genesis 12:3 when He told Abraham, “In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

God called Israel to be a blessing to all humankind by being the conduit through which He would reveal Himself and bring the Messiah, through whom salvation would be effected. Later, at Mount Sinai, God’s calling became even clearer to His elect when He called Israel a “kingdom of priests” (Ex. 19:6). One day Israel will be brought into full obedience and will fulfill this calling in the Millennial Kingdom.

Jesus told a Samaritan woman how these gifts work when He proclaimed, “Salvation is of the Jews” (Jn. 4:22). Christians of all backgrounds cannot escape the reality that our faith is grounded in the calling and promises given to Israel. The salvation that comes to us through the Jewish people cannot be proclaimed apart from them.

The Greek word for “irrevocable” (Rom. 11:29) is used in a legal sense and means God will never regret the promise He made to Israel through Abraham. This word alone cancels any notion that God is finished with Israel. It also implies there is no place in the church for antisemitism or anti-Zionism. If God has not abandoned His Chosen People, even in their disobedience, neither should the church.

Romans 11:28–29 assures Christians God’s promise to Israel and the Jewish people remains firmly intact, and it gives us a solid biblical foundation for supporting Israel. ★



Chris Katulka

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FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA

**WHY IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO
SEPARATE THE JEWISH PEOPLE
FROM THE LAND OF ISRAEL**

BY TOM SIMCOX

Throughout history, hatred of the Jewish people has surged and subsided but never disappeared. In the late 1800s, Theodor Herzl saw it surge again in Europe. Deciding his people needed a country of their own, he began the movement called Zionism to reestablish them in the land of their forefathers—what is today the State of Israel.

What many people don't know is that in 1903, in a measure to protect them from antisemitic violence, Herzl proposed using British East Africa as a temporary safe haven until the dream of returning to the Jewish homeland could be fulfilled.¹ That plan, however, was destined to fail. Why? Because British East Africa (today, Kenya) wasn't the land God gave His Chosen People, and it isn't the land to which He vowed they will return.

GOD'S PROMISE

After God called Abraham to leave Ur of the Chaldeans and go to Canaan, He declared, "To your descendants I will give this land" (Gen. 12:7). Then the Lord built on His declaration regarding Abraham's real estate holdings:

Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you (13:14–15, 17).

Along with the land, He promised Abraham descendants and blessing (12:1–3). This promise went from Abraham to Isaac (17:19–21) to Jacob and Jacob's progeny—the Jewish people (28:13–14). Later, God turned the promise into a covenant dependent on Himself alone. It was completely unconditional, and neither Abraham nor his descendants could maintain it or void it.

God certainly has such power. As owner and Creator of everything, He does as He wishes; and no one can stop Him (Isa. 43:13). Unfortunately, people often fail to understand the Abrahamic Covenant was a package deal. God promised land, descendants, and blessing. You cannot sever the land from the bundle and claim it belongs to someone else.

Today many, including Christians, acknowledge God made good on part of the promise by creating the Jewish people (descendants) and giving us Jesus the Savior through them (blessing). But what about the land? That, they say, belongs to someone else, like the Palestinians. Not so. A package deal is a package deal.

BOUNDARIES AND BLESSING

The Lord was extremely specific concerning His bequest. He even provided physical boundaries, promising Abraham, “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates” (Gen. 15:18).

Later, He became more specific (Ezek. 47:15–20). The Jewish homeland appears to extend from the Mediterranean Sea through Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, much of Iraq and Syria, and possibly even touches as far north as southern Turkey. Israel will possess all this territory when Jesus returns, reestablishes the Davidic Kingdom, and rules the earth for 1,000 years.

God only gives good gifts, which is why He gave the Israelites “a good and large land . . . a land flowing with milk and honey” (Ex. 3:8):

For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing. . . . When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you (Dt. 8:7–10).

Due to their disobedience and idolatry, the Lord scattered the Jewish people from their land (Jer. 13:24; 18:17; 30:11) and made the land desolate—just as He promised (18:16; Ezek. 5:14; 33:28–29). Yet He also promises over and over again to bring them back (Jer. 31:10; Ezek. 34:13–15, 27).

Many theologians today heartily accept the scattering but refuse to accept God’s promises of restoration despite the multitude of Scriptures that speak of it. But a package deal is a package deal. In God’s eyes, the land and the nation go together because they are part of the same covenant.

BLOOMING LIKE A ROSE

Interestingly, this highly contested piece of Middle Eastern real estate only yields its goodness when the Jewish people work it.

The country became hideously barren under the Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, Ottomans, and countless others who exploited and mismanaged it for centuries. They denuded it of vegetation and allowed it to

degenerate into putrid, malaria-infested swamps.

In 1901, the Jewish National Fund was established to make a way for Jewish people around the world to buy back their land piecemeal from the Ottoman Empire. And this they did, slowly and at exorbitant prices. As they toiled to make it habitable, God blessed their blood, sweat, and tears and allowed the land to blossom again.

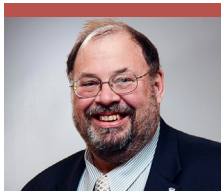
Israel yields its fruit best for the descendants of Jacob, to whom He gave it and who have a deep love for it. As the prophet Isaiah declared, “The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose” (Isa. 35:1).

The reality is that you cannot separate the Jewish people from their land. Countless plans, measures, edicts, and even a Holocaust have tried. Kings, presidents, ambassadors, and the many nations of the earth have passed resolutions, condemned the Jewish people, and tried to rewrite history to deny Israel’s ownership of its ancient homeland. But their works will never stand. God has declared, “I will . . . bring you into the land of Israel. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land” (Ezek. 37:12, 14).

Theodor Herzl must have understood this reality. There never will be a Jewish homeland in Africa, Poland, Germany, or even the United States. God already has given the children of Jacob a home in the Middle East, and it is a country called Israel. ★

ENDNOTE

1. Alona Ferber, “This Day in Jewish History: 1903: Herzl Proposes Kenya (Not Uganda) as a Safe Haven for the Jews,” Haaretz.com, April 10, 2018 <tinyurl.com/Herzl-Uganda>.



Tom Simcox

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“GOING TO ISRAEL GAVE ME A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE’S LONGING TO RETURN TO THEIR ANCESTRAL HOMELAND AND TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS. I NOW READ THE BIBLE THROUGH THE LENS OF ALL THE WONDERFUL THINGS I EXPERIENCED AND THE PEOPLE WE WORKED WITH. IT’S THE PEOPLE I LOVED THE MOST.”

—LEE, FROM TENNESSEE



5 FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ISRAEL

BY
RENALD E.
SHOWERS

Editor's Note: In light of the growing acceptance of Replacement Theology within the evangelical church, the dramatic rise in antisemitism, and the world's increased efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel, we are running this newly edited and abridged version of Dr. Renald E. Showers' important pamphlet by the same name. The original version, *Five Facts You Should Know About Israel*, can be purchased using the enclosed order form, by calling The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, or by logging on to store.foi.org.

Have you ever wondered why the Jewish people have been scattered throughout the world more than any other people? Why antisemitism persists? Why the Nazis specifically targeted the Jews for genocide during World War II? Why the Jewish people still exist despite all the attempts to exterminate them? Why they tenaciously hold on to that small slice of real estate in the Middle East? Why the modern State of Israel, despite its miniscule size, is repeatedly the focus of the world's attention?

The answers to these questions are found in certain basic facts about the nation of Israel. Knowing these facts is essential if you want to understand not only the issues in the news today, but also God's plan and purpose for history.

FACT ONE

ISRAEL HAS A UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Early in Israel's history, God placed the nation into a special relationship with Himself that no other nation has enjoyed:

For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. Also today the LORD has proclaimed you to be His special people. . . . He will set you high above all nations which He has made, in praise, in name, and in honor, and that you may be a holy people to the LORD your God, just as He has spoken (Dt. 7:6; 26:18–19).

With this relationship came special privileges:

- Israel was adopted as God's firstborn son (Ex. 4:22–23; Rom. 9:4).
- Israel was permitted to hear God's voice at Mount Sinai (Dt. 4:10, 12, 32–33).
- Israel saw and enjoyed a unique association with the Shekinah Glory (Ex. 24:16–17; 40:34–38; Dt. 4:36; 1 Ki. 8:10–11; Rom. 9:4).
- Israel was given divine covenants never established with any other people (9:4).
- Israel received the Mosaic Law (Dt. 4:5–6, 8, 13; Ps. 147:19–20; Rom. 9:4).
- Israel was given the Tabernacle and Temple, where God dwelt in a unique sense, and a divinely ordained priesthood and sacrificial system (Ex. 25:8–9; 29:43–46; 1 Ki. 6:11–14, 17; Rom. 9:4; Heb. 9:1–10).
- Israel received promises God made to no other nation (Dt. 1:11; 6:3; 12:20; 15:6; 19:8; 26:18; 28:1–68; Rom. 9:4).
- Israel had intimate access to God (Dt. 4:7).
- Israel saw God work in an unparalleled, supernatural way to deliver the nation from slavery in Egypt (4:32, 34).
- Israel received permanent ownership of the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:7; 13:14–15; 15:18–21; 17:8).

In addition, God made Israel's land and capital city (Jerusalem) holy, or unique, because He dwelt there in a unique sense (Neh. 11:1; Zech. 2:10–12).

It is critical to understand that this relationship is permanent. It will endure forever. King David declared,

And who is like Your people, like Israel, the one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make

for Himself a name—and to do for Yourself great and awesome deeds for Your land—before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and their gods? For You have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; and You, LORD, have become their God (2 Sam. 7:23–24).

FACT TWO

A UNIQUE REASON EXISTS FOR THIS RELATIONSHIP

God did not choose Israel to be His special people because the Israelites were bigger and better than other people. They were not. Like everyone else, they descended from Adam and Eve and were born with the same corrupt human natures and tendencies to rebel against God as the Gentiles. Moses told them, "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples" (Dt. 7:7).

Scripture says God chose them based on His own sovereign will. God chose to make Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel's ancestors) special objects of His love (4:37; 10:15). Then He chose to establish a special covenant (Abrahamic Covenant) with them (7:7–9) because He had a purpose for the nation.

FACT THREE

GOD HAS A UNIQUE PURPOSE FOR ISRAEL

God tells us He created Israel for His glory (Isa. 43:7). The word *glory* refers to what is impressive, demands recognition, or gives a person influence. God determined to use Israel to impress the world with Himself, obtain the world's recognition, and influence the lives of His human creatures.

God also vowed that all the families of Earth would be blessed through that nation (Gen. 12:3; 22:18; 28:14). So how does God intend to accomplish His purposes?

Through His Historic Dealings With Israel. Moses promised the Israelites that if they heeded God's Word and obeyed Him, He would elevate the nation "high above all nations of the earth. Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you" (Dt. 28:1, 10).

But if they rejected God's Word and disobeyed Him, they would be scattered throughout the world, serve their enemies, tremble for their lives, and "fear day and night, and have no assurance of life" (v. 66). They would become "an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword" among all the nations where the Lord drove them (v. 37).

God made Israel an object lesson to teach the world that He blesses those who obey His Word and judges those who reject it.

Through a Unique Book. The Bible is the only divinely inspired Book on Earth, and God gave the Bible to the world almost exclusively through the nation of Israel (4:5–6, 8; Ps. 147:19–20; Rom. 3:2). In the Bible, God reveals ultimate reality, the purposes of history and life, the origin and destiny of man, how sinful human beings can be made right with a holy and righteous God, and how people are to live.

Through the Messiah–Savior. When Adam yielded to Satan’s temptation to rebel against the Almighty (Gen. 1:26–28; 3:1–6), Satan temporarily usurped the rule of the world system from God and has dominated it ever since (Jn. 12:31; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 Jn. 5:19). That is why the world is filled with evil and confusion. In addition, mankind’s rebellion brought tragic consequences, such as spiritual death and eternal judgment (Jn. 3:18; Eph. 2:1–3).

But God had a plan. He would crush Satan and end his tyranny through a Redeemer, born of a woman (Gen. 3:15). The Old Testament prophets revealed the Redeemer would become the Savior of the world (Ps. 22:1–18; Isa. 52:13–53:12) who would crush Satan, reestablish God’s rule, and be God’s Messiah–King (Gen. 3:15; Ps. 2; Isa. 9:6–7; 11; Dan. 7:13–14; Zech. 14).

Through the Old Testament prophets, God also revealed that Israel was the nation through which the Messiah–Savior would come (Gen. 49:10; Isa. 9:6–7; 11; Mic. 5:2). Jesus did indeed come through Israel. He was born of Mary (Hebrew, Miriam), a young, righteous Jewess (Lk. 1:26–38; 2:1–7); and He became the final blood sacrifice (Lev. 17:11) for humanity’s sin, thereby providing salvation for all who place their faith in Him, rather than in themselves and their own good deeds (Mt. 1:18–21; Jn. 1:29).

At His Second Coming, Jesus will crush Satan (Rom. 16:20; 1 Jn. 3:8; Rev. 19:11–20:3); reestablish God’s rule over the world system; and rule as God’s Messiah–King over the earth (Mt. 19:28; Rev. 20:4–6), bringing great blessing to the entire world.

Through Repentance. Scripture indicates Jesus will not establish His Kingdom until Israel repents and reconciles with its Messiah (Dt. 30:1–10; Jer. 31:16–40; Ezek. 36:32–38; Zech. 12:10–13:1, 9; 14; Acts 3:12–21). That is why John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles preached the gospel of the Kingdom (“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”) to Israel only (Mt. 3:2; 4:17).

FACT FOUR

ISRAEL HAS A UNIQUE FUTURE

God intends for Israel to play a unique role in fulfilling history. But first comes anguish. Then comes blessing.

In ancient times, Satan attacked Israel repeatedly, trying to destroy it to prevent the Redeemer from being born. Now he is trying to annihilate Israel before it can repent and “look on [Him] whom they pierced” and mourn for Him (Zech. 12:10).

Unfortunately, Israel’s worst days lie ahead. During the last three and one-half years before the Messiah returns, Satan will pull out all the stops. This period will be so bad for the Jewish people that Scripture calls it “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7) and describes it as an unprecedented time of great tribulation (vv. 4–7; Dan. 12:1; Mt. 24:21). Two-thirds of the world Jewish population will perish (Zech. 13:8), along with much of the Gentile population.

But Israel’s future is secure. The nation will survive and will enjoy unequalled blessing. The survivors will recognize Jesus is their true Messiah when they see Him in His glorious Second Coming (12:10–14; 13:9; Rom. 11:25–26). God will forgive the nation’s sins (Zech. 13:1; Rom. 11:27), and Messiah will crush Satan (Rev. 19:1–20:3) and reestablish God’s rule for 1,000 years in what we call the Millennial, or Messianic, Kingdom (Dan. 7:13–14; Zech. 14:6–11, 16–21; Rev. 20:4–6).

Israel will be in a right relationship with God (Jer. 31:31–34; Ezek. 36:24–27) and will become the spiritual minister of the world, leading the Gentiles in worship (Isa. 61:6; Zech. 8:23).

A magnificent Temple will be built in Jerusalem (Ezek. 40–46); and all nations will come to Jerusalem to worship God, receive instruction, and have judicial matters settled (Isa. 2:1–4; 60:14; Zech. 8:20–23; 14:16–21). The Jewish people will be restored permanently to their homeland, and God will prosper them abundantly (Ezek. 34:11–14, 22–31; 36:24, 28–38; 37:21–28).

FACT FIVE

ISRAEL HAS BEEN GIVEN PERMANENT OWNERSHIP OF A UNIQUE LAND

In light of God’s unique purpose for the Jewish people, it was essential He place the nation in a location where it would have attention and influence vastly disproportionate to its size. So He gave them the land of Canaan, perhaps the most strategic location on Earth.

That tiny land in the Middle East is the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe; and for centuries the major trade and military routes of the ancient world passed through it. Because

GOD DETERMINED TO USE ISRAEL TO IMPRESS THE WORLD WITH HIMSELF.



of its location, the major world powers have had to deal with Israel.

Moses clearly taught that God gave Israel the land. It belongs to the Jewish people. He gave it, not because the nation deserved it, but because of His own sovereign purposes (Dt. 9:4–6). Therefore, Israel's ownership of the land does not depend on Israel's merit.

The fulfillment of Israel's unique, God-ordained future requires Israel to own the land forever, which is why the Abrahamic Covenant guarantees Israel's permanent ownership (Gen. 12:7; 13:14–15; 15:18–21; 17:8). Israel's future involves Israel's permanent restoration to its land, thus bringing glory to God. ★



Renald E. Showers was a world-renowned professor, theologian, and author who served with The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry for more than 30 years. He retired shortly before the Lord called him home on April 4, 2019.

“BEFORE THE TRIP, I MOSTLY READ THE NEW TESTAMENT. NOW I READ THE WHOLE BIBLE, LOVING GOD’S PROMISES AND COVENANTS. WE LOVED VISITING SITES WE HAD ONLY READ ABOUT IN THE BIBLE. THEY REINFORCED GOD’S HOLINESS, STRENGTHENING OUR BELIEFS THAT THE LAND IS MANDATED FOR THE JEWS.”

—MARGO, FROM DELAWARE

Q

WHAT IS THE INTERMEDIATE STATE?

The phrase *intermediate state* refers to the condition of people between death and the resurrection of their bodies. At death, the souls of the redeemed (born-again believers in Christ) go immediately to heaven (2 Cor. 5:8). The unredeemed go to hades (Lk. 16:22–31), where they will suffer until they receive their resurrected bodies and are cast into the Lake of Fire at the final judgment (Rev. 20:13).

Nowhere does the Bible mention purgatory or a second chance for salvation. There is only death, and after death there is judgment (Heb. 9:27). Nor does the Bible teach “soul sleep,” the belief that when people die, their bodies and souls sleep in the grave until they are physically resurrected.

Some people teach that when we die, we receive intermediate bodies suited for our new existence while we await our resurrected bodies. Their proof text is Luke 16:19–31, which tells of a rich man who died and was buried but remained conscious. He remembered his life on Earth while being tormented by flames in hades.

However, Scripture makes no mention of him having an intermediate body or a nonphysical, spiritual body. Remember, the Devil and fallen angels (demons) possess no physical or nonphysical, spiritual bodies; yet in the future, they will be tormented in the Lake of Fire forever (Rev. 20:10).

heaven being given white robes. They spoke and remembered the past, and they possessed self-awareness and knowledge of others. But John never reported seeing them clothed with temporary bodies. He only saw “the souls of those who had been slain” (Rev. 6:9, 11); their bodies had not been resurrected. Therefore, it appears people who die are souls without bodies until they receive resurrected bodies.

People often ask, “Can the soul and spirit of a person in the intermediate state function in a meaningful way without a body?” Yes! For example, God the Father (Jn. 4:24), Son (before His incarnation), and Holy Spirit (3:8), as well as angels (Heb. 1:14), all function in heaven without having bodies.

In 2 Corinthians 5:1–10, Paul revealed the state of all redeemed people immediately after death. First, their souls and spirits separate from their bodies and move instantly into a conscious state with Christ in heaven (vv. 1–2, 8). Second, their souls are temporarily “naked” or unclothed (vv. 3–4) because they lack resurrected bodies.

At the Rapture of the church (1 Th. 4:13–18), the souls and spirits of all believers will enter their resurrected bodies. Then our works will be judged “before the judgment seat of Christ” (2 Cor. 5:10). Thus, believers do not seem to possess bodies in the intermediate state.

The apostle John saw martyrs in

by David M. Levy



* David Ben-Gurion announces the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

COMING HOME

BY ELWOOD MCQUAID

Editor's Note: No book we've seen tells the biblical story about Israel from conception to consummation like *It Is No Dream*. This emotionally moving work by Elwood McQuaid stands in a class by itself. This issue of *Israel My Glory* would not be complete without a taste of *It Is No Dream*. Here is an excerpt from the chapter "Setting the Stage."

For millennia, the Jewish people have held a hope in their hearts, a dream embodied in the Israeli national anthem, “Hatikvah.” That dream is “to be a free nation in our land, the land of Zion and Jerusalem.”

The unshakable belief that one day the Jewish people will “possess their possessions” (Obad. 17) in the ancient land of their fathers is perfectly consistent with what the Scriptures have taught for thousands of years.

During the years of dispersion and wandering in inhospitable Gentile environments, the vision never waned. It was never far from the Jewish mind and heart. Equally true is the fact that buffeted and beleaguered Jewry has never been out of the heart of God.

The great wonder we have witnessed in this modern age is the merging of Jewish desire with divine design. The Jewish people are returning to their land. History is playing out before us; and prophecy, splashed across the pages of the biblical record—Old Testament and New—provides details yet to unfold. But what has unfolded sent shockwaves through the nations, as they witnessed an event the vast majority thought impossible.

HISTORY'S GREATEST STORY

When Theodor Herzl coined the phrase *If you will it, it is no dream*, he actually spoke of two worlds: the “will” God infused into Jewry, a quality that has persisted throughout the ages, and the “dream,” which the Jewish people have tenaciously held on to and struggled to make a reality. Thus we have before us a story told in the Holy Book and acknowledged by history; and it is history’s greatest story.

It could be said that the telling in itself—without theology or related disciplines—captivately reveals all to be cherished or loathed in humanity’s march through the ages. Above all, this narrative anticipates a spectacular consummation, the much-sought-after “happy ending” to the greatest drama on this planet.

The drama revolves around the record of a people deemed insignificant, written off as dispensable by the secularist powers that be. The truth is that the Jewish people and their Holy Land are unparalleled gifts from God to humanity. And yes, Jerusalem is the center of the earth and focus of the future. And lest we forget, Jesus the Christ—God’s supreme gift—came to us in Bethlehem of Judea, born of a Jewish woman. What can we then take away from history’s greatest story?

Foremost, we can accept it for what it is: life on the ground, not the stuff of myth or fable. It shows us real life, with all its bumps, bruises, tests, and triumphs. It shows us the hand of God, preserving what He promised.

It has been well said that if the Lord breaks one promise He has made to Abraham’s posterity, we have no shred of

assurance He’ll be faithful to us. But He has not breached or broken those promises, and He never will.

That’s good news. So it follows that we have much to learn and appreciate when we look at Israel’s history and the Jewish people. Of utmost importance is the transformative heart-and-soul desire for peace and commitment that we see within this nation chosen to provide a light in the storm that is darkening the world around us.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL HAS RISEN

After more than 2,500 years of Gentile domination, the nation of Israel was about to rise from the ashes. The event was planned in secrecy, but half the city of Tel Aviv waited in the streets as David Ben-Gurion’s car pulled up to 16 Rothschild Boulevard at 4 p.m. Wearing a dark suit and dark tie and carrying a portfolio under his arm, Ben-Gurion exited the back seat and ascended the steps of the Tel Aviv Museum of Art where a different crowd waited inside.

Seated at a long, skirted table with 12 other Jewish ministers of the National Council—a portrait of Zionism’s founder, Theodor Herzl, hanging directly above his head—Ben-Gurion rose to his feet. “On the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly,” he told the crowd in Hebrew, “we hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel.”

The room exploded into clapping, cheering, and crying. The man who would soon become Israel’s first prime minister read the country’s freshly minted Declaration of Independence. “Placing our trust in the Almighty, we affix our signatures to this proclamation at this session of the Provisional Council of State, on the soil of the homeland, in the city of Tel Aviv, on this Sabbath eve, the 5th day of Iyar, 5708 (14th May, 1948).”

It was appropriate that Herzl’s portrait seemed to survey the historic scene, for it was Jewish journalist Theodor Herzl who assessed the ominous clouds gathering over European Jewry in the late 1800s and concluded it was time to go home. To dissenters who thought a modern Jewish state in Ottoman-Turkish Palestine impossible, he uttered the now immortal words, *If you will it, it is no dream*.

Few people thought that dream would come true. After 2,000 years of surviving among nations often hostile to their presence, the Jewish people could return home. What occurred on the evening of May 14, 1948, was astonishing, a unique event in the annals of history. A nation long dead was being resurrected and restored to its original land. Surely nothing of that magnitude could transpire without God. He

had promised in His Word, “I will bring you back” (Jer. 15:19; 29:14; Zeph. 3:20). And He was doing just that.

In a sense, the event was an awakening to a new reality. The Jewish people were returning as a nation—a resounding affirmation to some, a bewildering prospect to others. Sorely disquieted by the phenomenon were theologians who held to Replacement Theology (RT), which sees no biblical future for Israel. RT scoffs at the idea that God will fulfill all of His promises to Israel literally. Theological revisionists postulate that somehow Old Testament Israel has morphed into the church, and the church has become the “New Israel,” replacing Jacob’s physical children.

However, the State of Israel’s existence today should send a stark warning that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He does not make promises He doesn’t keep. Jehovah is not a “force.” He is God Almighty. “Has he said, and will He not do? . . . Has He spoken, and will He not make it good?” (Num. 23:19).

God is no one to trifle with, and *replacement* is not a word encoded in any aspect of the divine program. In fact, the concept in any form flies in the face of biblically charted history and its culmination, as assured by our Maker.

WHEN DOES FOREVER NOT MEAN FOREVER?

If asked to define the word *forever*, we Christians have a ready answer—no quibbling or equivocation. *Forever* means “forever.” End of story. If asked about eternal life, we quote John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

How long is “everlasting”? The dictionary says *everlasting* means “enduring through all time: eternal.” In other words, it means “forever,” for a time without limit. Scripture says God is an “everlasting God” (Isa. 40:28) whose righteousness is “everlasting” (Ps. 119:142) and whose Kingdom is “an everlasting kingdom” (145:13). God, His righteousness, and His Kingdom will endure forever, for all time. They will never cease to exist.

Ironically, some people fail to apply the same standard of certainty to *forever* when the promises are given to Israel. God told Abraham,

And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God (Gen. 17:7–8).

Replacement theologians contend this promise does not mean what it says and is not to be taken literally. This new interpretation sprung up when some of the early church

fathers opted to plot a theological course not formerly traveled in order to make the church supreme. Yet in doing so, they deprived it of the whole story of Israel and the Hebrew people.

My intent here is not to parse semantics or grapple with divergent theological positions. Rather, I hope to tell the story of Israel and show why understanding the entire biblical portrait can enrich our lives and instill in us a clear vision of Israel’s future, as well as that of the church.

It is overwhelmingly important to come to grips with the knowledge that we do not worship a God who deals in half measures. What He promises He will deliver in full—always, and in His time. Nowhere is this biblical truth more compellingly executed than in His program for Israel. To cut off the story half told and unfulfilled is like teaching about Christ’s death without ever mentioning His resurrection. What a huge mistake that would be. We need the entire story of Israel to understand God and His wondrous program for humankind.

The saga of Israel’s journey to its ultimate destiny far surpasses any novel that could ever be written or any historical documentary that could ever be produced. It depicts the birth of a nation and contains romance, unrequited love, struggle, indescribable suffering, survival against all odds, national resurrection, fiery trials, a coming King, reconciliation, fulfillment, restoration of relationships, and delivery in full of every promise made by the God who never fails to keep His word.

Contrary to the often-dreary depictions of life in our time, usually accompanied by sullenly depressing endings, Israel’s epochal journey has a glorious consummation—a happy ending. One reflecting rich personal incentives for 21st-century believers—and one that assures us God will never stop loving us. ★



Elwood McQuaid

is a former executive director of The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry and retired editor-in-chief of *Israel My Glory* magazine. *It Is No Dream* can be purchased using the enclosed order form, by calling The Friends of Israel, or by logging on to store.foi.org.

“BEFORE VISITING ISRAEL, I COULD SEE ONLY WORDS ON MY BIBLE’S PAGES. NOW I SEE THE HOLY LAND. I SEE THE AWESOMENESS OF GOD’S LOVE FOR ME AND UNDERSTAND THAT I AM ADOPTED INTO AN INTERNATIONAL FAMILY.”

—REJOICE, FROM NEW YORK

HOW GOING TO ISRAEL STRENGTHENED MY FAITH

For many Christians, touring and studying in the land of Israel is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. For me, it became a calling that began with an invitation to study in the Jewish state in 2001. The invitation changed my life, my ministry, and my understanding of Scripture.

That first trip to Israel came after many years of formal theological training and time spent as a pastor, preacher, and teacher. I always knew Israel was important for biblical and historical reasons. But I didn't understand how visiting the land would strengthen my faith, deepen my confidence in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and transform the pages of the Bible from black and white to living color.

During the trip, I took a bus from Jerusalem to the desert oasis of En Gedi, where David hid from a crazed King Saul, cutting off the corner of Saul's robe and then regretting it, "seeing he is the anointed of the LORD" (1 Sam. 24:1-7).

As we made our way across the Judean desert, someone suddenly yelled, "Driver, stop the bus!" The driver pulled over and we all piled out. At first, I didn't realize why we had stopped. Then it hit me. The entire desert hillside was lushly carpeted with a variety of beautiful, fragrant wildflowers that covered the barren landscape like a magnificent, royal robe. With Bible in hand, our guide read aloud Isaiah 35:1: "The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

God had spoken, and what He said was coming to pass before my eyes. Truly, it was a moment of faith-building awe that God always keeps His promises.

After returning to Jerusalem, we made our way north of the Old City to Gordon's Calvary and the Garden Tomb. For many Christians, this site is the highlight of the tour. As we entered the Garden Tomb, a hushed quiet came over all of us. We could sense the sacredness associated with our Lord's crucifixion; and a reverent, calming peace filled us.

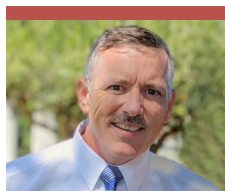
The guide reminded us that no one really knows the exact place where Jesus' body had lain lifeless for three days, but we do know this place represents the fact that the tomb where He was laid is empty. Jesus is not there. He has risen from the dead!



The moment I entered the empty tomb, the words of the apostle Paul washed over me: "I declare to you the gospel

which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, . . . that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1, 4). At that moment, I knew my faith was anchored on a historical reality; and that affirmation by sight solidified what I already believed by faith.

Since that first trip so many years ago, I have returned to Israel many times to lead tours, teach, study, and pray. Going to Israel is like going home. Soon the day will come when Jesus returns; and those of us who know Him shall all make it to the Holy Land as we join Him there, to rule and reign with Him forever. ★



by Frank Lenihan,
pastor of Lustre Mennonite Brethren Church
in Lustre, Montana



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LET'S MAKE A DEAL

*
Kadesh Treaty, 1269 BC

➔ In 1963 the American television game show *Let's Make a Deal* came on the air. It became famous for awarding prizes based on choices the contestants made. They could choose what lay behind curtain number one, two, or three; and their choices won them either desirable rewards or undesirable consequences.

In like manner, God made a “deal,” or covenant, with the children of Israel that generated either a blessed outcome or a cursed one, depending on their choices. The terms of the Mosaic contract between God and Israel were specific and binding:

All of you stand today before the LORD your God . . . that you may enter into covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath, which the LORD your God makes with you today, that He may establish you today as a people for Himself, and that He may be God to you, just as He has spoken to you, and just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Dt. 29:10, 12–13).

A divine covenant was an agreement with God to serve Him and be in position to receive His promises. If the Lord swore to keep the covenant, it meant He would be faithful to fulfill it. A principle of contract law is the need for a “meeting of the minds.” Each party must unambiguously, unequivocally understand what the other is pledging. There can be no confusion or doubt as to who will fulfill the agreement or how it will be fulfilled. A relationship is forged with obligations and responsibilities for each party.

The Mosaic Covenant’s form was well established in law codes throughout the ancient Near East. Not surprisingly, God accommodated the known structure so that Israel and the nations could understand the relationship agreed to at the foot

of Mount Sinai. The form was the Hittite suzerain-vassal treaty, and the archaeological record has many examples from 1400 BC to 1200 BC.

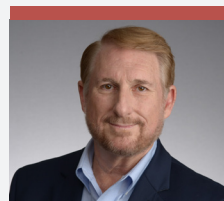
The suzerain (ruling authority) pledged to and received pledges from the vassal (his inferior), who would pay him tribute or fight in his army. These treaties began with a preamble naming the suzerain and giving his titles, followed by a prologue recounting how the suzerain previously provided for the vassal and therefore should give him allegiance, followed by covenant stipulations describing what the suzerain would do for the vassal and what was expected from the vassal in return. Everything was pledged before “divine witnesses,” with a final statement to the vassal of blessings for his obedience and curses for his disobedience.

Deuteronomy reveals this structure as Moses, the mediator of the covenant (1:1–4), reviews God’s historical acts as Suzerain in protecting and providing for Israel as vassal (1:5–4:43). The covenant stipulates what God promises the nation entering the Promised Land and what He expects from His covenant people (4:44–11:32).

Since He alone is divine, God calls on “heaven and earth” (4:26; 30:19; 31:28; cf. 32:1) as witnesses, gives the terms of blessing and curses (chaps. 27–28), and concludes with a covenant summary (chaps. 29–30).

God accommodated customs and culture to give His Word to His people. The Bible itself followed this pattern, existing in the forms of a scroll and a codex. Moreover, God Himself took our form when the Word became flesh (Jn. 1:14) and dwelt among us. As the Messiah, He observed the culture and customs of the day, mediating a New Covenant (Heb. 9:15) through His death on a Roman cross under the condemnation of Jewish law.

To each of us willing to enter into a relationship with Him, He says, “Let’s make a deal.” But unlike the game show, the rewards are all desirable because He suffered the curse for us, leaving only blessings for those in covenant with Him.



Randall Price

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PAUL'S TRIUMPHANT TESTIMONY

2 TIMOTHY 4:6–8

Are you prepared to die? The last words a person utters or writes when death is imminent are usually of great importance to family and friends. They reveal the individual's soul. This fact was especially true of the apostle Paul.

Apart from Luke, the beloved physician, Paul had no one to comfort him when he penned the concluding section of his final epistle. Languishing in Rome's Mamertine dungeon, falsely accused of sedition and condemned to death, Paul endured abuse from guards who considered him an enemy of Rome. Many believed his miseries proved God had forsaken him. But nothing could be further from the truth.

Despite his circumstances, Paul voiced no regret or complaint; nor did he fear death. In fact, he told the Philippians, "For I am hard-pressed, . . . having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you" (Phil. 1:23–24). Paul looked forward to what awaited him in heaven.

Knowing his time on Earth was short, he urged Timothy, his son in the faith, to come to him quickly for he was ready to pass the baton of ministry to him, along with a challenge and words of encouragement.

In 2 Timothy 4:6–8, Paul spoke of three things: his readiness to die, his faithfulness in serving the Lord, and the reward that awaited him in heaven.

PAUL'S READINESS

Paul knew his days were numbered: "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand" (v. 6).

The word *departure* (Greek, *analuō*) means "to unloose." In the first century, it often referred to death. It also was used of sailors pulling up anchor and departing for a new port and of

an army striking its tents and moving to a different location. Peter, also in a Roman prison, talked about his death as taking down his tent (2 Pet. 1:13–15).

The word *offering* (Greek, *spendomai*) speaks of the libation or drink offering the Israelites were instructed to offer the Lord with a burnt offering (Num. 15:5, 7). The drink offering was either poured on the sacrifice or beside it. As the liquid vaporized, it ascended, symbolizing the sacrifice was meant for God. Paul spoke of his life being poured out as a drink offering, a reference to his sacrificial ministry (Phil. 2:17). He knew he probably would be beheaded, not crucified like his Savior, because he was a Roman citizen.

PAUL'S RECORD

Knowing the end of his life was near, Paul reviewed his calling, conversion, and conflicts in the ministry. From his conversion on the Damascus Road, he knew he was a chosen vessel to bear Christ's name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel and that he would suffer for the Lord throughout his ministry (Acts 9:15–16).

Although an apostle to the Gentiles, Paul preached the gospel to everyone—Jews and non-Jews. Later, he revealed all the suffering he endured to preach Christ (2 Cor. 11:22–33).

Looking back over his life, he wrote, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7).

I have fought the good fight. This statement alludes to a Greek athlete engaged in an Olympic wrestling match. The word *fight* (Greek, *agon*) has the same root as the English word *agonize*. It pictures a wrestler striving to win, putting all his strength and effort into obtaining the prize.

The contest was "good" (Greek, *kalos*), meaning Paul considered his struggle noble and the cause worthy. The word can be applied to Paul's relentless struggle against Satan, sin, evil men, and the spiritual wickedness that surrounded him daily. He contended with Jewish opposition, false teachers (whom he called savage wolves) who had infiltrated the church, diabolical beliefs, Gnosticism, and pagan philosophers in Athens and Corinth. He faced fights and fears within and without as he penned his epistles.

He summed up his struggles when he wrote, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12).

I have finished the race (2 Tim. 4:7). This is an analogy to a Greek athlete competing in the Marathon at the Olympic games. Never taking their eyes off the goal in the distance, such athletes ran vigorously, determined to obtain the prize. Afterward, they had the satisfaction of knowing they kept all the rules and completed the grueling race.

Earlier, Paul explained what was required to win the crown: A contestant needed to be “temperate in all things” (1 Cor. 9:25), exercising self-control and self-denial if he expected to be in condition to win.

Paul gave his entire life in preparation—training and performing what God called him to do. He knew the objectives and did not waste time on things that did not matter, unlike a shadow boxer who beats at the air with no opponent before him (v. 26).

Paul disciplined himself, bringing his impulses under subjection so that he would not become disqualified (v. 27). Like a Marathon runner, he looked back with satisfaction, knowing he successfully completed the course the Lord had laid out for him at the time of his salvation.

I have kept the faith (2 Tim. 4:7). Paul was not referring to his personal faith but, rather, to the gospel message and ministry the Lord had entrusted to him. He “kept,” or guarded, the

PAUL’S REWARD

With service for the Lord behind him and death before him, Paul looked forward to the reward he expected to receive at the Judgment Seat of Christ: “Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing” (v. 8).

The phrase *crown of righteousness* refers to the reward Paul expected from Christ, the “righteous Judge.” He knew it was safely stored in heaven, waiting for him. He will receive his reward “on that Day,” when all believers stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ to have their works judged (1 Cor. 3:10–15).

Christ, the righteous Judge who makes no mistakes, will reward everyone who strived to bring honor and glory to God and “to all who have loved His appearing.” It will be a time when all believers are rewarded for how they served Christ

PAUL WAS NOT A SPECTATOR. HE WAS A FAITHFUL PARTICIPANT IN THE LORD’S SERVICE. PRIZES NEVER GO TO PEOPLE ON THE SIDELINES OR ON THE BENCH. THEY GO TO THOSE WHO RUN—THOSE WHO STRIVE TO GLORIFY GOD.

gospel against perversions. Not one time did he transgress the revelation he received from God and penned in his epistles.

Like a wrestler, he “fought the good fight” and won. Like a runner, he “finished the race,” keeping all the rules and getting the prize. Like a soldier, he “kept the faith,” the gospel entrusted to him. Now he was ready to give an account before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Paul was not a spectator. He was a faithful participant in the Lord’s service. Prizes never go to people on the sidelines or on the bench. They go to those who run—those who strive to glorify God (2:3–6).

Paul used his personal testimony in chapter 4 to challenge Timothy and encourage him to manifest the same commitment. When he used the pronoun *I* before each statement in verse 7, he was not bragging. He was not proud, egotistical, or boastful about his achievements. In fact, the opposite was true. In deep humility, he thanked God, who brought him victoriously through the multitude of struggles he had to endure.

and were faithful to Him.

This promise is for everyone who has been born again, loves the Lord, and longs to see Jesus (1 Jn. 3:2–3). Jesus Christ will appear in the clouds to Rapture the church to heaven (1 Cor. 15:51–54; 1 Th. 4:16–17). Then believers will experience ultimate conformity to His likeness.

The apostle summed up how we should live: “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do; do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).

Are you prepared to die, as was Paul? If not, perhaps it’s time to reevaluate your priorities. Only what’s done for Christ will last.



by David M. Levy,
media resource specialist and a Bible teacher
for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry

JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE

PART 3: THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE OF REST

BY DAN PRICE

As a boy, I got a little anxious each Sunday morning when my parents stopped at a convenience store to buy mints prior to church. I was convinced we shouldn't buy anything on Sunday. Somehow, I got the idea Sunday was the "Christian Sabbath" and that we simply should rest.

It wasn't until years later that I learned the Bible says nothing about a Christian Sabbath. The Sabbath was part of the Mosaic Covenant, and Christians—whether Jewish or Gentile in heritage—are not required to keep it. The Sabbath was a sign to the world that God had set apart the Hebrew nation as His own people (Ex. 20:11). In Christ, we are free from Torah observance (Rom. 3:20–22).

But as I've grown in my walk with Jesus, I've come to realize that, though the Bible doesn't require us to keep *Shabbat*, as it's called in Hebrew, learning how to rest can significantly strengthen our relationships with God. In fact, when God gave *Shabbat* to the Israelites, He was teaching them the spiritual discipline of rest, a habit Christians today desperately need, both physically and spiritually.

PHYSICAL REST

Interestingly, God didn't tell the Hebrews about the Sabbath until their Exodus from Egypt. Adam and Eve weren't told of it, nor were the patriarchs. According to the Bible, no one kept *Shabbat* until God commanded the Israelites in the wilderness not to collect manna on the seventh day (Ex. 16:5). Then He formalized *Shabbat* in the Ten Commandments (20:8–11).

God knew people needed a command to stop working.

The word *sabbath* literally means "to cease working." When God gave Israel the Sabbath, He said slaves, animals, and foreigners also must receive a day off. He Himself was the role model: After creating the world in six days, "He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done" (Gen. 2:2). God insisted the Israelites rest and dedicate themselves to Him and to remembering the redemption He provided (Ex. 35:2; Dt. 5:15).

Most of us lead busy lives. Our calendars are filled, and our days are hectic. Given the option, we sometimes take work to an inhuman, spiritually destructive level—to the detriment of our souls. It's no wonder Jesus taught that extremely stringent Sabbath rules missed the point by creating work instead of rest. "The Sabbath was made for man," Jesus said, "not man for the Sabbath" (Mk. 2:27).

Usually, we are starved for rest—all due to sin. Our habits of filling our days with impossible to-do lists, being addicted to work, and being unable to go to bed early or sleep soundly all come from sinfully behaving as though we can control more of our world than we really can. We live the lie that if we work harder, we'll accomplish things only God can do. Our inability to rest is driven by the fact that we don't really know how to live fully dependent on God. I love this Jewish bedtime prayer:

Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings sleep to my eyes. . . . Into Your hand I entrust my spirit.

... Our God in Heaven, assert the unity of Your rule; affirm Your sovereignty, and reign over us forever.¹

This is a prayer of ceasing and affirming that God works when we sleeping humans cannot. How deeply we need the discipline to submit our agendas to Him. I know a pastor who says that sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is admit we need to go to bed.

Consider how you can physically rest with and in God. Give yourself times of intentional rest. It need not be a full day; it could be an afternoon or a few minutes during a hectic morning. Rest with God on a short prayer walk after a long meeting. Turn off your cell phone for part of your day and use that time to seek God.

I have deeply enjoyed setting aside a day to seek God's beauty in creation or through a favorite artist as a way to rest my soul in His goodness. Whatever you choose to do, physically rest with God. You are not obligated to do so, as Israel was commanded; but it might be exactly what your soul needs.

SPIRITUAL REST

Sabbath in Jesus' time had devolved into an enormous list of manmade minutiae. Religious leaders created such strict rules about what constituted work they even regulated how many minutes before sundown one could light candles and when someone inside a house could give or receive something from someone outside without it being "work." Jesus had a different point of view. He taught the type of rest that brings spiritual life.

On one particular Sabbath, Jesus entered a synagogue, as was His custom (Lk. 4:16), and found a man with a withered hand (Mt. 12:9–13). Trying to trap Jesus, the religious leaders asked, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" (v. 10). In reply, Jesus taught a Jewish doctrine later called *pikkuah nefesh* based on Leviticus 18:5, which says when a person's life is in danger, even Sabbath laws take a back seat. Then He healed the man, telling the leaders, "It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath" (Mt. 12:12).

Jesus didn't break the Sabbath; He placed it back on its foundations. People are so valuable to God that healing and preserving life is not considered work. True rest comes from recognizing how precious we are to the Almighty. We are made in His image, filled with His life, and created to reflect Him. True spiritual rest for a Christian can be found in the discipline of remembering and believing that we are of inestimable value to our Creator.

On another Sabbath, Jesus was accused of breaking the Law because He healed a woman who had not been able to stand up straight for 18 years (Lk. 13:10–14). By the same reasoning, Jesus declared, "Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it

away to water it? So ought not this woman . . . whom Satan has bound . . . be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?" (vv. 15–16). He argued the principle in Jewish doctrine later called *tza'ar ba'alei chayim*, or "preventing suffering to living things," based on Genesis 9:3–4 and Exodus 23:5.

For Christians, Jesus' teaching reminds us how deeply our suffering affects God. He is not untouched by it (Heb. 4:15). We can find rest in knowing we don't suffer alone and unnoticed. The spiritual rest we need in suffering can be found in the promise that God cares about our pain. That is why Scripture tells us to cast all our care on Him "for He cares for you" (1 Pet. 5:7).

On another occasion in Jerusalem, Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath who had been paralyzed 38 years (Jn. 5:5–15). The Jewish leaders "sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath" (v. 16). But Jesus argued that healing the man wasn't breaking the Sabbath: "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working" (v. 17). In other words, Jesus said God does not stop working. Men need rest, but God does not! Since the seventh day of the creation week, God has never ceased His work.

Consequently, we can rest secure in the knowledge that God will never stop working in our lives. "He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Ps. 121:3–4). Your story is not finished. You can find spiritual rest in the truth that even though you rest, God is working.

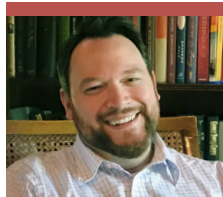
ULTIMATE REST

Resting is a central part of Christianity—a defining truth. Hebrews 4:10 says, "He who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works."

Our salvation is based on learning to rest in what God has done on our behalf. We cannot work to redeem ourselves. We can only trust the work Jesus has already done. When we intentionally practice the habit of resting, both spiritually and physically, we illustrate the truth of our salvation—and doing so draws us closer to God.

ENDNOTE

- 1 Joshua Rabin, "Bedtime Shema," My Jewish Learning <myjewishlearning.com/article/bedtime-shema>.



Dan Price

is assistant director of International Ministries for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

WHY AMNESTY'S REPORT ON ISRAEL IS SO DANGEROUS

BY JONATHAN S. TOBIN

(JNS)—Amnesty International's outrageous report calling Israel an "apartheid state" has brought nearly all of the Jewish world together to condemn the organization. All agree the claims are bogus and that Amnesty should not criticize specific policies or push for Israel to withdraw from the 1967 borders.

The report wants to brand Israel as illegitimate. In calling for the outcome of the 1948 War of Independence to be reversed by instituting a "right of return" for descendants of Arab refugees, Amnesty's objective is to eliminate the one Jewish state on the planet. As such, there is no way to regard its efforts as anything but antisemitic.

There is also no way to ignore the fact that this obsession, masquerading as advocacy for "human rights," is Jew-hatred—not an intellectual argument about Zionism or an effort to promote the interests of the Palestinian Arabs, let alone peace.

While it's good that liberals, centrists, and conservatives all reject the apartheid lie, it's not clear that Jerusalem, Washington, or most Jewish groups fully understand its dangers.

The Amnesty report doesn't come out of nowhere. It was timed specifically to support the UN Human Rights Council's (UNHRC's) open-ended inquiry into all alleged violations of international law in Israel, Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza. This has created what is in effect a new, permanent UN agency inside the UNHRC whose sole purpose will be to demonize Israel. The report builds on the despicable antisemitism displayed at the UN Durban Conference in 2001 when the racism charge first gained steam.

The stage is being set to revive the old Soviet "Zionism is racism" lie. More than that, by employing the imprimatur of the world body to bolster the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement to isolate Israel, the report can breathe new life into an antisemitic campaign that hasn't gotten as much traction on a global scale.

It is vital to point out that, contrary to the claims of Israel's critics, none of these actions stem from any legitimate criticism of policies or even the Jewish presence in the territories. Rather, they form an open assertion that a Jewish state is illegitimate, no matter what its policies are or where its borders are drawn.

Still, most of the Jewish world does not seem overly alarmed, much as it failed to understand the significance of what happened in Durban and three more similarly named conferences



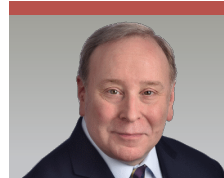
that followed. Observers have grown used to anti-Israel lies and incitement from groups like Amnesty and Human Rights Watch, as well as from leftist Israeli groups like B'Tselem. As a result, most Israelis and supporters of Israel have grown numb to these assaults and lack the enthusiasm to respond.

Many Jews and friends of the Jewish state today think that, in a world where Israel's president is warmly greeted in an Arab capital, worrying about what leftist ideologues and UN bureaucrats say about Zionism is a waste of time. Though Israel is strong, prosperous, and here to stay, the Amnesty report and UN inquiry can hurt Israel by using the blunt instrument of international law against it, even if the claims are utterly false.

Pro-Israel groups must make opposition to the UN inquiry and associated efforts a top priority. That's also true for liberal groups like the Jewish Council for Public Affairs and the Anti-Defamation League, which have denounced Amnesty but are far more interested in aiding the Biden administration's domestic agenda.

The latest apartheid smear is a shot fired over their bows that must be answered. They must mount a full-scale offensive aimed at making clear to the UN that if the inquiry goes forward, it may jeopardize further American financial support, as well as raise the possibility of a complete withdrawal from the world body.

Amnesty apartheid propaganda is not just a terrible libel of Israel. It's the beginning of a struggle at the UN that can undermine the Jewish state's ability to function on the world stage. Those who underestimate its potential danger are unable to see the forest for the trees.



Jonathan S. Tobin

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ANTISEMITISM SURGES EVERYWHERE, JEWS BLAMED FOR PANDEMIC

From campuses to communities, antisemitism is surging. Here is a small sample of incidents reported by a variety of news sites:

- Hundreds of antisemitic flyers were distributed throughout Colleyville, Texas, where the mayor said distribution “appears to be a coordinated effort in cities across the country.”
- Hundreds of flyers with pictures of Adolf Hitler were dumped in Houston, Texas; San Francisco and Beverly Hills, California; Miami Beach and Surfside, Florida; Maryland; Colorado; and Wisconsin. Many blame COVID-19 on the Jewish people. Flyers also showed up at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.
- Jewish officials in Salem, Massachusetts, have been targeted with antisemitic messages, threats online, and voicemails.
- Someone tossed fireworks from a car into a group of Hasidic men in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York. The explosion occurred one day after New York Mayor Eric Adams convened a meeting of Jewish leaders to express concern about the 300 percent rise in antisemitic incidents.
- A Greek life website at Indiana University carried a tirade accusing men in Jewish fraternities of being “east coast Jews” with an appetite for “money, greed, and sexually assaulting women.”
- The University of Vermont reported more antisemitic incidents (58) than any other North American college in 2021. Following Vermont were Tufts University and George Washington University with 34 and 25, respectively.
- A pro-Palestinian group has forced more than a dozen universities in the Netherlands to publicize their connections to Jewish and Israeli organizations and universities.
- In Switzerland, more than 50 “real

world” antisemitic incidents occurred in 2021 and more than 800 online. The report, published by the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities, said, “The corona pandemic acted as a trigger for almost the entire reporting year. As in the previous year, antisemitic conspiracy theories related to the corona pandemic were particularly widespread.”

INTEL TO BUY ISRAELI FIRM FOR \$5.4 BILLION

Intel Corporation will buy Tower Semiconductor, based in northern Israel, for \$5.4 billion, reported ISRAEL21c. “Intel is the most active foreign corporate investor in Israel and employs thousands at five Intel facilities in Israel,” the site reported. Tower, which also has a factory in Texas, “is a leading foundry for analog semiconductors in high-growth markets such as mobile, automotive, and power.”

HYPERBARIC OXYGEN RELIEVES PTSD

Israeli researchers have relieved post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms of 35 Israel Defense Forces combat veterans using hyperbaric oxygen therapy, reported JNS.org. “The scientists and doctors from Tel Aviv University and Shamir Medical Center said all of the vets who were treated showed significant improvement in all classes of symptoms following a controlled clinical trial. The results were published in the scientific journal PlosOne.”

ISRAELI GAS TO GO TO EGYPT

Israel will begin exporting natural gas to Egypt via Jordan, reported JNS.org. According to a report in *Globes*, the fuel will first travel through a pipeline to Jordan, passing near Beit She’an, and then on to Aqaba and Egypt. Currently, Israel exports 3 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually to Jordan and separately 5 billion to Egypt through a pipeline from Ashkelon

to Sinai. Israeli gas should start flowing through the new route to Jordan and then on to Egypt later.

CONVERSION REFORM COMING TO ISRAEL?

The Israeli government’s Ministerial Committee on Legislation has approved a controversial proposed law to give municipal rabbis authority to perform conversions to Judaism, Israeli news site Walla reported. The law, which would end the Rabbinate’s monopoly on conversions, has been the object of intense controversy and opposition from many religious figures and the Haredi community, which dominates the Rabbinate, Walla reported. The proposed law would accept conversions by non-Orthodox branches of Judaism for purposes of exercising *Aliyah* rights under the Law of Return, in particular Conservative and Reform conversions, which currently are not recognized.

DRONES SLIP PAST IRON DOME

Two drones slipped into Israeli air space from Lebanon within a 24-hour period and returned home without being hit by Israel’s Iron Dome. “The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] activated the Iron Dome defense system to intercept the [second] drone, but the attempt was unsuccessful,” reported *allisraelnews.com*. Hezbollah claimed it sent the vehicle, which was under Israeli Air Force surveillance the entire time. Another drone infiltrated the previous day. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah boasted in a televised speech that his organization has been manufacturing drones and precision-guided missiles for years. “Whoever wants to buy them, submit an order,” he said.

For news about Israel updated daily, log on to foi.org/news.



*
Zvi with Orthodox rabbis

PHOTO: THE FRIENDS OF ISRAEL ARCHIVE

**“I came
because I
believe what
is written in
the Holy Bible.
Is that against
the law?”**

by Zvi Kalisher

People in Israel are always trying to find something new and interesting. For a long time, the ultra-Orthodox Jews promoted as messiah a man from New York City. Now they boast yet another one. I try to open the blind eyes of these people to the truth of the Lord. But they like to listen to fables. It is our duty to go to them to teach them what is written in the Holy Bible by the Holy Spirit.

Recently I went to an ultra-Orthodox synagogue, as I have many times before. This time I came with a picture of a rabbi riding on a big lion. The rabbi calls himself the messiah. “Where is it written that the Messiah will come on a lion?” I asked the rabbi at the synagogue.

“In which yeshiva have you studied?” he asked me.

“I never studied in a yeshiva,” I replied.

“So you are an ignorant man,” he said.

“From where have you taken these stories about the Messiah?” I asked once more.

“How do you know this is not the truth?” he asked me.

I opened the Bible to Zechariah 9:9

and read it in Hebrew to the rabbi and all who were with him. But before I read, I showed them the Bible to ask them if it was kosher so they could not claim it was a Christian book. When they agreed it was kosher, I read, “Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey.”

“From which children’s book have you taken this nice picture and called the man on the lion the Messiah of Israel?” I asked the rabbi.

This was too much for them. How could I, who had never studied in the yeshiva, criticize them? They became suspicious and asked how I came to my beliefs.

“This was too much for them. How could I, who had never studied in the yeshiva, criticize them?”

you really are. Why did you come here? To which organization do you belong?”

“I came because I believe what is written in the Holy Bible. Is that against the law? It is written in Ezekiel 33:11, ‘Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?’ It is my obligation to warn people like you. Read what is written in Leviticus 26 to learn the clear answer.”

“Do you believe in the rabbi from New York?” one man asked.

“If you show me what is written about the man from New York in the Bible, I will believe,” I replied. “But you have come to a false belief. It is clearly written who the Messiah is in Zechariah 9:9. You can also read the truth in Isaiah 53. Those who believe what is written here have believed in Christ.”

“No more questions!” one said. “You have made it clear who you are. You have come to try to make us Christians!”

“I have no Christian books, only the Holy Bible,” I said. “It gives you a clear picture of who the Messiah is and what He has done for us all. Your nice pictures will not help you. Our obligation is to be the watchmen of the house of Israel. Though there are always many people who agree with you, many more are coming to us. They have heard enough of your fictitious stories, and they want the truth from the Bible itself.”

Some of the men were interested in hearing more, so I showed them all that is written in the Bible about the Messiah. I also read for them Jeremiah 31:34: “For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

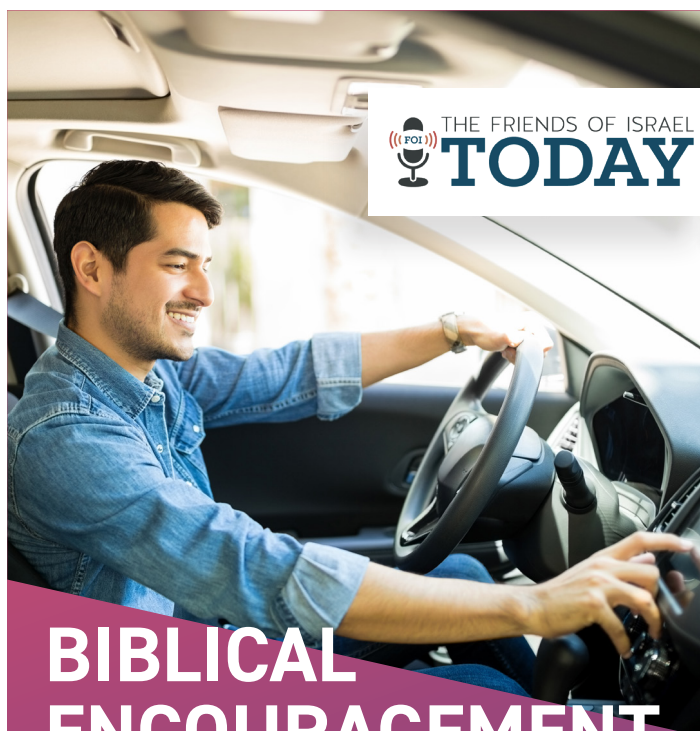
It is important to pray for these people who walk in such great darkness.

“I believe only what is written in the Holy Bible, not in fables,” I replied. “None of you can change my mind, as your minds have been changed.”

The rabbi replied, “You spoke for a long time, and we listened to you. But now it is our turn to learn who

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF **ISRAEL MY GLORY**

THE WOMAN, THE CHILD, AND THE DRAGON



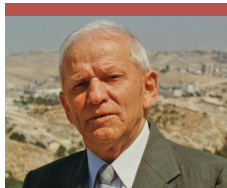
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Zvi Kalisher (1928–2014) was a Holocaust survivor who was known for his unswerving faithfulness to the Lord and his bold witness in Jerusalem. He was with The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry for more than 55 years.

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