

dispatch from Jerusalem

A Publication of Bridges for Peace

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ALL EYES ON ISRAEL

BRIDGES FOR PEACE

Christians supporting Israel and building relationships between Christians and Jews in Israel and around the world.

It is our desire to see Christians and Jews working side by side for better understanding and a more secure Israel. Bridges for Peace seeks to be a ministry of hope and reconciliation. Through programs both in Israel and worldwide, we are giving Christians the opportunity to actively express their biblical responsibility before God to be faithful to Israel and the Jewish community. For too long Christians have been silent. For too long the Jewish community has had to fight its battles alone. It is time Christian individuals and congregations speak up for the people who gave us the Bible.

We are committed to the following goals:

To encourage meaningful and supportive relationships between Christians and Jews in Israel and around the world.

To educate and equip Christians to identify with Israel, the Jewish people and the biblical/Hebraic foundations of our faith.

To bless Israel and the Jewish people in Israel and worldwide through practical assistance, volunteer service and prayer.

To communicate Christian perspectives to the attention of Israeli leaders and the Jewish community-at-large.

To counter anti-Semitism worldwide and support Israel's divine God-given right to exist in her God-given land.

Dispatch from Jerusalem

The *Dispatch from Jerusalem* is Bridges for Peace's signature publication presenting positive news and perspectives from Israel to encourage understanding and support for the Jewish people and the Land of Israel.

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On September 15, the world watched history unfold as former foes Israel, the UAE and Bahrain inked an agreement to forge a friendship that was impossible a decade ago. But why the shift in alliances? What are the building blocks of the new Middle East?

By Cheryl Hauer

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The UAE and Bahrain stepped up to end the longstanding peace stalemate with Israel. What type of country gets first in line to shun decades of rejectionism? The profiles of these Arab peacemakers turned out to be a good recipe for Middle East peace.

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Longtime terror allies Hamas and Hezbollah have recently vowed to strengthen their already strong ties, raising an alarming question: could Israel be caught in the grip of a united Iran-backed terror front on its borders?

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For eight days, the lively holiday of *Hanukkah* (Festival of Lights) is filled with the warmth of light, the sweetness of festive foods and the joy of family time. Join as we unpack some of the delightful traditions that surround *Hanukkah*.

By Sarah Yoder

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Israel is no stranger to heartbreak and tragedy. Yet instead of succumbing to the evil committed against them, Israelis have the extraordinary ability to seek out rays of light in the darkest pit and bring blessing from what seems like a curse.

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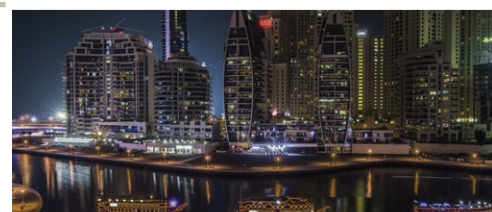
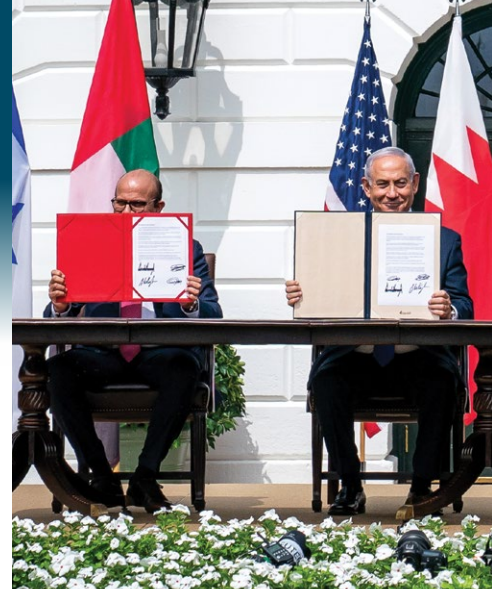
Sabbath. In Israel, it's as if simply saying the word has a calming effect. It's a holiday that comes around faithfully every week, as prescribed by God to the ancient Children of Israel. Today, Israelis still observe with joy the hallowed rest, just as God commanded.

By Kate Norman

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At 91, Norman Frajman is a man on a mission. He suffered unimaginable horror during the Holocaust, but his tale is also one of hope and faith. Now more than ever, as anti-Semitic violence escalates across the globe, the world needs to know what happened.

By Kathy DeGagne



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Thank You

“Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; talk of all His wondrous works!”

Psalm 105:1-2



WHEN ANOTHER YEAR DRAWS TO AN END, it is customary to take a moment to reflect on the 12 months that were. 2020 was no ordinary year. Some say that we don't have so much to be thankful for this year. The world has experienced a pandemic, riots and racial unrest, which, in many cases, have led to job and income loss. It seemed like one barrage after another.

Even so, my heart is full of gratitude to the Lord and His people around the world. Though we have been struck with challenges on every side, it is in the midst of the chaos that God has been with us—and so have you. Our work in Israel has continued without pause. In fact, we are helping more people as the needs have become greater.

Patrick Verbeten, our Israel operations director, interacts with those we help regularly. Listen to what he says. "I consider myself greatly privileged to interact with Israelis on a daily basis. If you ask me what I believe the pulse of the people is and what the narrative is I am hearing regularly, the answer would be: 'Thank you!' So many people are so thankful that we are standing with them during these desperate times.

"These desperate times call for creative measures, and the operations teams have been diligently working to come up with innovative ways to continue blessing the people we serve. Due to the lockdown and limited transportation, new immigrants are finding it difficult to make their way to our offices to pick up their Immigrant Gifts. The kitchen sets, school kits, blankets and Bibles are just as important now as ever to these new immigrant families.

"Our team decided that if they can't come to us, we'll go to them. And that's exactly what we did. For the last month, we have brought these gifts—along with a smile and a message of love and hope from Christians around the world—directly to the people in several communities in the north of Israel. Their response is always the same: 'Todah rabah' (Hebrew), 'spasibo' (Russian), 'thank you!'

"The economic challenges here in Israel are presenting us with many needs on a daily basis. I was recently introduced to Na'ima Perl, who is on our Adoption Program. Na'ima asked if she could share something with me. The words that came out of her mouth were: 'Thank you, thank you, thank you' for the assistance we had given her. It wasn't the words that moved me so deeply, but rather the expression I could read in her eyes above her mask. It is not easy to mistake big, wet tears streaming down the face of a grateful and appreciative member of the community."

As I write this, Israel is again in lockdown, with voices in the health ministry and government saying we will most likely stay in some form of lockdown until the end of January. This is crushing news for the poor and newly poor. Many people will have been out of work for most of a year. Most people in Israel simply don't have a year's worth of savings. About 20% of the workforce have been managing on a much smaller percentage of income from government programs like unemployment or stimulus packages. The self-employed and small business owners have

often received nothing. Soup kitchens are overwhelmed with the needs, as are organizations like Bridges for Peace.

As you reflect on 2020 and the bounty the Lord has given you this year, will you help us continue to feed the people of Israel in their time of need? Together we can show God's love in practical ways.



We are so thankful to have partners like you. Thank you, *todah rabah*, *spasibo*! Every day I am praying for your health and well-being. May you experience the miracle-working power of God in your life, home, church, school and community.

Blessings from Israel,
Rebecca J. Brimmer
International President and CEO

Rosa, a Holocaust survivor, saying: "Thank you!"



The “Woke” Indifference to Jew-Hatred

Woke: a perceived awareness of social injustice

JEW HATRED in the United States has grown more prevalent in recent years. In 2019, there were 2,107 anti-Semitic incidents, according to a May report by the Anti-Defamation League. It was the highest number in 40 years. The incidents included 61 physical assault cases, 1,127 instances of harassment and 919 acts of vandalism.

Anti-Semitism is also peaking in several European countries. In 2019, Germany, with 2,032 incidents, saw the highest number of anti-Semitic crimes in nearly two decades. The United Kingdom registered “a record number” of anti-Semitic incidents in 2019 for the fourth year in a row with 1,805 incidents—“the highest number ever logged in a calendar year,” according to a report in the *Guardian*. In France, anti-Semitic attacks surged by 74% in 2018 compared to the previous year and an additional 27% in 2019. One violent attack in 2018 was the brutal murder of Mireille Knoll, an 85-year-old French Jewish Holocaust survivor, who was murdered in her Paris apartment by two men who shouted *Allahu Akbar* [Arabic for “Allah is greater”] as they stabbed her 11 times and set her apartment on fire.

The growth in anti-Semitism comes a mere 80 years after millions of Jews were rounded up in Europe and subjected to enslavement, mass shootings, “medical experiments” and industrial mass murder in Nazi concentration camps, for no other reason than being Jewish.

In our hypersensitive, hyper-racialized “woke” culture, where speaking obvious truths such as “all lives matter” will get you immediately “cancelled,” terminated from your job and classified as racist, one would assume that the rise in anti-Semitism would prompt maximum outrage. Promoting anti-Semitism, however, rarely gets anyone—apart from the occasional white supremacist—cancelled. This double-standard continues despite hate speech being generally considered completely unacceptable and dangerous, as reflected in the policies against hate speech of the social media and tech giants.

Typically, “wrongthinkers” who make the career-crushing mistake of publishing their thoughts on social media receive no mercy and are greeted with instant cancellation. Apologies that are offered, however groveling, are usually not accepted.

In the rare cases, however, when anti-Semites do experience sustained pushback and even consequences to their careers, there seems to be a strong willingness by those who would usually do the cancelling to forgive and forget. US media personality Nick Cannon, for instance, was recently fired by *ViacomCBS* after he promoted anti-Semitic conspiracy theories on his podcast. Nevertheless, *Fox* did not fire Cannon from his role as host in the network’s reality series the *Masked Singer*.

Twitter itself plays a significant role in promoting anti-Semitism. In the UK, the rapper Wiley recently went on a 48-hour anti-Semitic rant on Twitter. He not only spread a number of conspiracy theories and insults against Jews, but also said that they should be shot and that he was coming to “sit with” them in Golders Green, a Jewish neighborhood in London. Despite thousands of complaints, Twitter left most of the rapper’s tweets up for six days and only decided to ban him for life after a 48-hour boycott of the platform by thousands of British users, including Home Secretary Priti Patel.

It appears that the self-righteous outrage of the wokerati is absent when the person at the receiving end of racism is a Jew.

Excerpt from an article by Judith Bergman, *Gatestone Institute*

Hamas's Wave of ENVIRONMENTAL TERRORISM

TERRORISTS IN GAZA have launched rockets and hundreds of explosive balloons into Israel in recent months. These balloons ignited fires on thousands of acres of Israeli land, terrorizing civilians. Here are some things you need to know about these attacks.

NOT A NEW PHENOMENON

Since the Gaza border events of 2018, terrorists in Gaza have launched balloons with incendiary and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) attached to them. This has become such a pervasive method of terror that Hamas and other terrorist organizations within the Gaza Strip have established units within their organizations to manage manufacturing and launching these incendiary devices. For example, the Hamas-affiliated Sons of Al-Zawari unit is dedicated to terrorizing Israeli civilians with IEDs attached to balloons.

HARMLESS TOYS OR LETHAL WEAPONS?

The ecological and economic impact that these fires cause can be irreparable. Terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip have carried out some of the largest acts of environmental terrorism in the world. The fires sparked by balloons destroyed thousands of acres of natural forests and farmland in southern Israel, killing massive amounts of wildlife. Local farmers' crops, farming equipment and livelihoods were damaged.

In addition to the physical damage, these attacks cause long-lasting psychological damage to the people who live in these communities, especially children. Terror organizations often deliberately create explosive balloons that will target children. For example, on August 17, 2020, an incendiary device attached to a terror balloon started a fire near an Israeli kindergarten in Sderot. Thanks to the speed and coordination of nearby firefighters, no one was hurt. However, the impact, both physical and psychological, was drastic.

The launching of explosive and incendiary devices such as balloons is just one part of a broader wave of terror that Hamas inflicts on Israeli communities. The threats that Israeli civilians face from terror organizations in Gaza do not start or stop with the arson-balloon attacks. Other means of terror that are frequently deployed by Hamas and other terrorists in Gaza include rockets, violent border riots, Molotov cocktails, border infiltrations, stabbings, terror tunnels, kidnappings, suicide bombings and more.

In response to the violent and persistent terror attacks from Gaza, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has used technology ranging from laser interceptors to drones to stop Hamas's environmental terrorism.

The IDF will continue to defend Israeli civilians from all enemy threats in Gaza.

Excerpt from an article by the *IDF*



Seal Impressions

from the Kingdom of Judah Uncovered



ONE OF THE MOST important collections of seal impressions ever found in Israel was uncovered in southern Jerusalem near the US Embassy. The impressions were stamped on 120 jar handles with the letters LMLK (to the king) written in ancient Hebrew script with the name of an ancient city in the kingdom of Judah. These impressions are characterized by a sun disk flanked with two wings. Other seals bear the name of a senior official of the kingdom of Judah or a wealthy individual from the First Temple period.

The jar handles were found in a significant administrative storage center from the time of Kings Hezekiah and Menashe (eighth century to the middle of the seventh century BC) exposed at archeological excavations in the Arnona neighborhood of Jerusalem. Excavation at the site revealed an unusually large structure built of concentric ashlar walls.

According to Neria Sapir and Nathan Ben-Ari, directors of the excavations for the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA): "Evidence shows that at this site, taxes were collected for agricultural produce such as wine and olive oil. The site once dominated large agricultural plots and orchards of olive trees and grape vines which included agricultural industrial facilities such as winepresses for winemaking. The site is dated to a period documented in the Bible by upheavals such as that of the Assyrian conquest campaign under the command of King Sennacherib in the days of King Hezekiah."

During the ancient period, the large building at the site was covered with a massive pile of flint stones forming an artificial hill. Even today, this huge pile of stones is visible

from a great distance. According to the researchers, "These artificial stone hills have been identified at several sites in Jerusalem and are a phenomenon of the end of the First Temple period and have aroused the curiosity of Jerusalem researchers since the beginning of archeological research in the area. Nevertheless, the reason for the huge effort made in stacking them over many acres remains an unresolved archaeological mystery."

Another find that sheds light on the character of the period is a collection of figurines or clay statuettes. According to archaeologists Sapir and Ben-Ari: "Some of the figurines are designed in the form of women, horse riders or as animals. These figurines are usually interpreted as objects used in pagan worship and idolatry, a phenomenon, which according to the Bible, was prevalent in the kingdom of Judah."

According to Dr. Yuval Baruch, the Jerusalem district archaeologist of the IAA, "The discoveries at Arnona identify the site as...the most important in the history of the final days of the kingdom of Judah and of the return to Zion decades after the destruction of the kingdom."

Excerpt from a press release by the IAA



First Temple Period Royal Structure Discovered

WHO WAS PRIVILEGED to live in the monumental structure possessing a breathtaking view of the City of David and the Temple, uncovered in an archeological excavation on the Armon Hanatziv Promenade? Was it one of the kings of Judah, or was it perhaps a Jerusalemite family of nobility and wealth during the First Temple period?

Several dozen impressive architectural stone artifacts, all part of a magnificent structure, were discovered in an Israel Antiquity Authority's (IAA) excavation on the promenade. The artifacts were made of soft limestone with decorative carvings. Among them are capitals of various sizes in the architectural style known as "Proto-Aeolian," one of the most significant royal building features of the First Temple period.

The collection includes three complete medium-sized stone capitals and items from lavish window frames, incorporating balustrades composed of stylish columns on which a series of tiny Proto-Aeolian style capitals were affixed.

According to Yaakov Billig, director of the IAA's excavation: "This is a first-time discovery of scaled-down models of the giant Proto-Aeolian capitals, of the kind found thus far in the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, where they were incorporated above the royal palace gates. The level of workmanship on these capitals is the best seen to date, and the degree of preservation of the items is rare."

Two of the three column capitals were found neatly buried, one on top of the other. Unlike the capitals, which were preserved in excellent condition, the rest of the building was destroyed, probably in the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. The remains of the building were demolished and dismantled for the purpose of making secondary use of the valuable items.

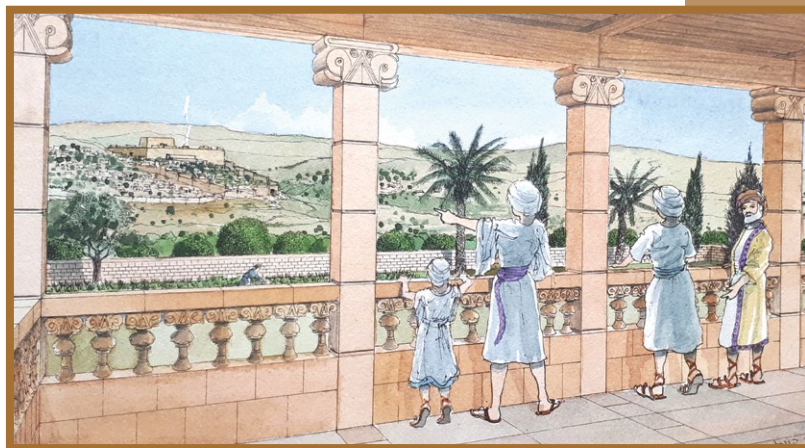
In Billig's estimation, the magnificent structure, built in the period between the days of King Hezekiah and King Josiah, indicates the restoration of Jerusalem after the

Assyrian siege of the city in 701 BC during the reign of King Hezekiah—a siege the city barely survived.

"This discovery, along with the palace previously uncovered in Ramat Rachel and the administrative center recently uncovered in Arnona, attests to a new revival in the city and an 'exit from the walls' of the First Temple period after the Assyrian siege. We reveal villas, mansions and government buildings in the area outside the walls of the city," Billig said.

Recognition of the strategic and panoramic nature of the area was also expressed some 2,600 years later, when the British Mandatory administration built its central seat of government, known as the "Commissioner's Palace" (Armon Hanatziv) there. A few decades later, one of the most famous promenades in Israel was established on the site, the Armon Hanatziv Promenade, from which a spectacular view of the City of David and the Temple Mount can be seen to this day.

Excerpt from a press release by the IAA



Unpacking the Abraham Accords



MOST PEOPLE WOULD AGREE we are living in pretty remarkable times. However, some might not recognize that one of the hallmarks of life today is a very short collective memory. Yesterday's news seems to disappear in the clamor of today's headlines, and somehow, as important as it might have seemed when it was read yesterday, it may well never be thought of again.

Such seems to be the case with recent events in the Middle East, developments of enormous importance that could potentially affect the future of the entire world. Although the signing of the Abraham Accords on September 15 caught the attention of the international community,

there seemed to be less international attention given to subsequent measures taken to advance goodwill and cooperation in one of the most volatile regions in the world.

Perhaps that is because the peace being cultivated flies in the face of the narrative we have heard for decades from the world media, the United Nations, the international community and the Arab world itself: no peace in the Middle East without a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. No Palestinian state, no peace. And as Israel struggled to establish itself as a legitimate member of that international community as a sovereign nation with the same right to peace and self-determination as any other democratic

state, the Arab bloc stood stubbornly in its way, supporting their Palestinian brethren at every turn.

A New Middle East

Today, the landscape is changing rapidly, beginning with the extraordinary developments on Israel's diplomatic front in what the *Wall Street Journal* called Israel's greatest month since 1948, when both the United States and the Soviet Union recognized the newly formed state.

On August 13, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Israel announced an agreement to normalize relations, followed by a similar agreement with Bahrain on September 11. On September 13, Oman issued a statement of support for Bahrain's decision, while on September 15, the historic signing of the Abraham Accords was held in Washington DC. The following day, the UAE's *Dubai TV*, Israel's *Channel 12* and Bahrain's *TV News* shared a live broadcast for the first time in history. On October 23, the nations sat up and took notice again when Sudan, historically a staunch enemy of Israel, announced plans to be the next Muslim nation to normalize relations with the Jewish state.

And let's not forget Kosovo, who became the first Muslim-majority country in the world to agree to place an embassy in Jerusalem, or Saudi Arabia, who agreed to allow flights between Israel and the UAE to use their airspace.

Perhaps the biggest shift became apparent when the Palestinian Authority (PA) introduced a resolution condemning the UAE's interaction with Israel at a Zoom session of Arab foreign ministers. In a complete departure from what surely would have been the response in the past, the motion failed. Clearly, the PA has lost its veto power over its fellow Muslims' relations with Israel.

The Signing of the Abraham Accords

There has been rampant speculation as to the root causes of this change in attitude toward Israel. Some have referred to the economic, military, scientific and humanitarian benefits a relationship with Israel could bring to the entire region as a motivating factor. Others have suggested that the motivation is actually fear, a recognition of the threat that Iran—and now perhaps Turkey—presents to the region and the benefits of a united diplomatic and military front with Israel. But the Abraham Accords signing ceremony was alive with goodwill, and the speeches made by the various national leaders perhaps provide a window into the heart of the matter.

In his remarks, UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan continually referenced the importance of economic and scientific achievements in the advancement of the future of the Middle East. Peace is the only choice, he frequently reiterated, with any other option resulting in destruction, poverty and human suffering. But he made it clear that the UAE brings a lot to the table too, mentioning the Hope Probe to Mars launched earlier this year as well as astronaut Hazza Al Mansourie, the first Arab astronaut to spend time at the International Space Station. Al-Nahyan reminded the distinguished gathering that peace

requires courage and shaping the future requires knowledge, while the advancement of nations requires sincerity and persistence.

"We have come today to tell the world that this is our approach," the foreign minister said, "and that peace is our guiding principal. In a difficult year in a difficult region, the peace accord is a bright starting point for the Middle East's future."

In a *Wall Street Journal* article published the day before the signing, Al-Nahyan referred to the "perpetual resistance and sectarian extremism that have delivered a deadly and decades-long pandemic of chaos and strife" in the region.

"Non-Arab countries and a mob of nonstate actors exist in a warped axis of perpetual resistance, advocating various brands of extremism, nostalgic over lost empires and obsessed with a new caliphate, thriving on conflict, disorder and instability while bashing America, Israel and the UAE," Al-Nahyan continued. "The signing of the peace accord is the virtuous response, a reminder that the people of the Middle East are tired of conflict."

Bahrain's Foreign Minister Abdullatif Al-Zayani told the White House gathering that the agreements with Israel are a "historic step on the road for genuine and lasting peace across the region." More than any other speaker, however, he used the words "hope" and "opportunity" repeatedly, speaking of relationships based on trust, respect and understanding. He spoke several times of the importance of a new and lasting peace to the future generations of the Middle East.

"For too long, the Middle East has been set back by conflict and mistrust, causing untold destruction and thwarting the potential of generations of our best and brightest young people," he said. "Now, I am convinced, we have the opportunity to change that."

Perhaps many were reminded of the famous quote attributed to former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir: "Peace will come when the Arabs love their children more than they hate us."

It was Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, however, who spoke primarily of gratitude. He talked of the blessing of peace to the entire region, the cessation of hostility, the pain and the price of war. He expressed his gratitude to all the parties involved, to all Israel's friends throughout the Middle East, for the support of US President Donald Trump and the American people, for a future brightened by the possibility of real peace. Telling the

gathering that the God of Israel promised His people that peace would come, he acknowledged the long and difficult journey it has been. "Those who bear the wounds of war," the prime minister poignantly remarked, "cherish the blessings of peace."

Cheryl Hauer,
International Vice President





Profiling the First Peacemakers

Getting to Know the UAE and Bahrain

IT HAD BEEN ALMOST 27 YEARS since the last peace treaty was signed between Israel and an Arab state. Then, starting in August, two Arab nations reached peace accords with Israel in less than a month: the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain. While Sudan followed in October with the promise of yet more peace accords to come, it was the UAE and Bahrain that started this groundbreaking parade of peace.

What type of country breaks that longstanding diplomatic stalemate? What was it about the UAE and Bahrain that prompted them to take that step? Many have pointed to the mutual threat that Iran poses to Israel, the UAE and Bahrain as a key reason for the Arab nations reconciling with their Jewish neighbor. Yet while the common Iranian

threat certainly helped encourage the UAE and Bahrain to reach for peace, that is just one factor in the multi-faceted profiles of these two Arab peacemakers.

IDENTITIES OF THE PEACEMAKERS

On the surface, the UAE and Bahrain have a lot in common. Both countries declared independence from Britain in 1971. Both are smaller oil-producing states in the Persian Gulf, and both are led by monarchies. Both are friends of the United States and threatened by Iran.

The populations of both countries comprise a large percentage of immigrants. Almost half of Bahrain's population

are immigrants, mostly from Asia. The UAE's immigrant population is even bigger, accounting for nearly 88% of the inhabitants in 2019, with most of those immigrants also coming from Asia. The influence of these immigrant populations—or perhaps the openness the UAE and Bahrain leaders displayed to allow so many immigrants into their countries in the first place—may be one reason why they were so willing to be the first Arab Muslim nations this millennium to reach peace deals with Israel.

Yet despite all the similarities, the UAE and Bahrain are not identical.

In terms of population, one is much larger than the other. According to a July estimate in the US Central Intelligence Agency's *World Factbook*, Bahrain has slightly more than 1.5 million people. The UAE is notably larger at just shy of 10 million people as of July.

Economically, both countries rely on oil, and while the UAE has been blessed with more success in the financial realm, both nations have experienced trouble. Bahrain has struggled with debt, while the UAE has managed to stay afloat despite taking hits from the decline in oil prices and the 2008 financial crisis.

Economics—especially for Bahrain—are another benefit to peace with Israel. The summary of the peace accords states that “normalized relations will accelerate growth and economic opportunity across the region by expanding business and financial ties” between Israel and the Arab states. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu summed this up well in a press release: “This will be a warm peace, [an] economic peace in addition to the diplomatic peace, also peace between peoples.”

The Kingdom of Bahrain has a tiny military, numbering only 10,000 active personnel. But what it lacks in numbers, Bahrain makes up in its ties to the US military. The island hosts the American fifth fleet and US Naval Forces Central Command, with the US State Department's US Relations with Bahrain web page calling Bahrain “a vital US partner in defense initiatives.”

The UAE has its own ties to the US. In addition to the US being the main supplier of arms to the UAE, the US has also helped the Gulf nation develop nuclear energy. According to a US State Department spokesperson, the US “enjoys a longstanding strategic partnership with both Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.”

PRIORITIES OF THE PEACEMAKERS

While the characteristics of Bahrain and the UAE may make them more open to peace with Israel and more willing to work with the United States in that regard, one factor that certainly helped was the common Iranian threat to all the peace partners. While Iran's desire to wipe Israel off the map is well known, the Islamic Republic has engaged in conflict with the UAE and Bahrain as well.

The UAE has battled Iranian proxies in Yemen and has a territorial dispute with Tehran over the ownership of three islands that the UAE says are occupied by Iran. For its part,



Bahrain has even had to fight Iranian malevolence in its own country.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran has sought to undermine the stability and security of Bahrain by fomenting sectarian tensions and providing arms to proxy groups and terrorists and continuously threatens the UAE as well,” the State Department spokesperson explained. “The United States remains committed to our deep and effective partnerships with our Gulf partners to counter Iranian threats.”

In a region dominated by conflict and decades of Arabs saying “no” to peace with Israel, there have been glimmers of commonalities between Israel and the UAE and Bahrain for a while now—from economic needs to mutual alliances with the US to the shared threat of Iran. The State Department spokesperson noted that US President Donald Trump recognized those overlapping interests.

Commenting on President Trump's role in the peace accords, the spokesperson said: “He built trust with our regional allies and reoriented their strategic calculus by identifying shared interests and common opportunities, moving them away from perpetuating old conflicts.”



In other words, the profile of these peacemakers—their strengths, weaknesses, hopes and fears—turned out to be a good recipe for Middle East peace.

Joshua Spurlock,
The Mideast Update



Hezbollah Leader Hassan Nasrallah | Hamas Political Leader Ismail Haniyeh

AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE

RELATIONSHIPS THAT LAST, psychologists teach, are built on a foundation of shared interests. Factors like a similar background and geographic location play their part, but the secret to forging a lifelong bond, they say, is as simple as rallying around a common purpose, passion or pastime.

This principle cuts across friendships to businesses, organizations and even terror groups. Take Hezbollah and Hamas, for example.

At first glance, the two seem like an unlikely match. Lebanon-based Hezbollah is Shiite, while Hamas, the terror group controlling the Gaza Strip, is Sunni—a point of religious contention that has pitted Muslims against each other for centuries.

Despite the clash in creed, the two longtime terror allies have much in common. Among others, both are Iranian

terror proxies that do the bidding of their puppet masters in the Islamic Republic and obtain their funding from Tehran's cash coffers. And both are perched on Israel's border like a growing pack of predators ready to pounce—Hamas in the south and Hezbollah in the north.

These commonalities play their part, but ultimately, the unholy Hamas–Hezbollah alliance is built on a foundation of shared interests: both have the annihilation of Israel as a *raison d'être* and both employ suicide bombings, rocket fire, kidnappings and all-out war to achieve that purpose.

Two closely linked Iranian terror proxies baying on Israel's borders is concerning enough. However, the two have recently vowed to strengthen their already strong ties, which raises an alarming question: could Israel be caught in the vice grip of a united terror front encircling its borders?

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

Hezbollah was born in southern Lebanon in the early 1980s as a progeny of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini's fanatical ideology, supposedly to drive Israel from Lebanese lands. Eighteen years of guerilla warfare later, the South Lebanon Conflict drew to a close and the last Israeli troops left the security zone. Hezbollah claimed victory, and the Muslim world hailed the terror group as heroes for achieving what no other Arab army could: triumphing over the seemingly invincible Israel.

Under Iran's tutelage and backed by Iranian funds, Hezbollah continued waging a relentless war of terror against Israel. The Lebanese terror army became *the* success story, *the* big brother for other Mideast terror groups—including Hamas—to emulate.

Gaza-based Hamas sprouted from the equally fanatic seedbed of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The terror group spent its formative years dabbling in armed struggle against Israel before taking a leaf from Hezbollah's book to launch waves of suicide bombings and terror attacks, and then graduating to rockets, mortars and kidnappings. In 2007, Hamas gained control of the Gaza Strip in a violent coup, thrusting the terror group into the role of governance and plunging the Gazan people into a life of untold suffering.

TOGETHER IN TERROR

Bonding over their common purpose of destroying Israel, the two terror groups became thick as thieves early on. Hezbollah fulfilled its big terrorist brother role, providing military training to Hamas combatants, offering political advice and using its media platforms to sing Hamas's praises. The bond was so close that Hamas even opened offices in Beirut for regular terror group get-togethers.

Hezbollah was also the matchmaker that introduced Hamas to its terror patriarch, Iran—leading the Gazan terror group into the fold of the so-called axis of resistance, an anti-Western, anti-Israel alliance between Iran, Syria and Hezbollah.

Once again, Israel's destruction was the cement that bonded Iran and Hamas together, with each bringing to the table something the other coveted. Iran pledged US \$50 million annually to help Hamas arm, train and pay its terror army, while Hamas offered a second front in Gaza to complement the Hezbollah front in the north.

A BUMP IN THE ROAD

As with any relationship, the bond between Hamas and Hezbollah has seen its ups and downs. The Arab Spring—and more specifically the Syrian Civil War—pitted the two on opposing sides. Hezbollah threw its weight behind the Assad regime, putting boots on the ground to help the Butcher of Damascus slaughter the opposition. Hamas openly condemned Assad, eventually severing ties with the axis of resistance in favor of reestablishing relations with the newly instated Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi and Hamas's ideological parent, the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Iranian cash coffers slammed shut, cooperation between Hezbollah and Hamas reached an all-time low, and the terror groups on Israel's northern and southern border went from bosom buddies to slinging mud at each other.

CLOSER THAN EVER

The Muslim Brotherhood proved a poor choice. Following Morsi's short-lived reign, Hamas was forced to curry favor with its former allies. By the start of 2017, Hamas was safely back in the bosom of the axis, receiving millions annually from Tehran and working alongside big brother Hezbollah. Allowing Hamas back into the fold was in no way altruistic, but rather a strategic move to regain a partner with a common interest: destroying Israel.

Two recent events brought Hamas and Hezbollah closer than ever. The first came in July, when Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh reached out to Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah, suggesting that they “unite ranks” to prevent Israel from applying sovereignty to Judea and Samaria. Both groups subsequently released statements slamming Israel and hailing their “unity” to “confront” Jerusalem.

The second was the historic peace between Israel and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain—and the likelihood of more Arab states joining the peace circle. The prospect of their Arab brethren cozying up to their arch-enemy elicited harsh condemnation from Hezbollah and Hamas, and prompted Haniyeh to visit Nasrallah in Beirut for the first time in nearly two decades.

The two terror chiefs hailed their strong bond, emphasizing “brotherhood and *jihad* [Islamic war with unbelievers],” and discussed forming a “regional alliance” against the “Zionists.”

It seems that years of armed struggle against Israel with little in the form of victory combined with a bevy of Arab nations realizing that Israel is not the enemy have brought Hamas and Hezbollah to the conclusion that they must pull together to counter what Haniyeh calls a “strategic threat to the Palestinian aspirations,” warns Seth Frantzman, Mideast affairs analyst for the *Jerusalem Post*.

The bottom line? The two terror groups on Israel's border may soon pool arms, troops, experience and intelligence to come against Jerusalem as a united force.

But perhaps more concerning is Iran positioning its two charges like chess pieces for its own malevolent intentions. And if Tehran has its way, says political science expert Charl Anthony Wege, Israel may find itself between the hammer of Hezbollah and the anvil of Hamas.



Ilse Strauss, News Bureau Chief

Israel Helps the World Battle Forest Fires



The team of Israeli firefighters in California

IN SEPTEMBER, a team of Israeli firefighters touched down in San Francisco to join their more than 16,000 American colleagues fighting the devastating wave of wildfires raging across California.

Lending the US a helping hand is but one example of Israeli efforts to come alongside countries around the globe with expert advice on fire prevention, detection, firefighting and rehab strategies, *Israel21c* reports.

The assistance is greatly needed.

Hotter, drier temperatures combined with improper use of land and a gross human disregard for nature have created the perfect storm for an uptick in the number of wildfires burning with greater frequency and ferocity across the globe, according to *Israel21c*.

As with nearly all Israeli expertise, the Jewish state firefighting know-how was hard-gained through bitter national trials.

Israel regularly battles a spate of wildfires during the hot, dry summer months. The tiny Jewish state is also the target of terror arson, with frequent incendiary balloon attacks launched from the Gaza Strip. Over the past two years, thousands of acres of agricultural land, parks and forests have been burned up.

The precarious situation has forced Jerusalem to find creative answers to the diabolical problem. And as usual, Israel is eager to share its expertise—literally forged in the fire—with others.

The list of Israeli firefighting inventions utilized around the world is a long one. Perhaps the simplest and most cost effective entails roping in farm animals.

Israeli studies have shown that grazing herds of cows, sheep and particularly goats offer a highly effective fire prevention strategy, with the foraging flocks creating ecologically friendly firebreaks in wooded areas.

The logic is simple: the grazing herds feed on the excess grass, bushes and low branches in densely vegetated areas like forests. The thinner vegetation means that a fire that sparks at ground level is unlikely to spread upwards where the flames can easily spread from treetop to treetop, turning a small blaze into a raging inferno.

Since the start of the year, tens of thousands of sheep have been brought to pasture in southern Israel's woods—the prime target area for Gaza's terror arson attacks—with great success.

California has taken note of the triumph and now looks to Israel for help to re-introduce the practice, *Israel21c* reports.

According to Dr. Liron Amador, a researcher at the Open Landscape Institute (OLI) at Tel Aviv University, employing grazing as a fire prevention strategy may soon be employed in other areas in Israel.

"In many places, communities come to realize that grazing is a more lucrative and environmentally benign option than mechanically cutting down the vegetation and dumping it in waste sites," *Israel21c* quoted Amador as saying.

"Instead, you can take out a herd of goats that does all the work."

Ilse Strauss, *Bridges for Peace*

Israel Closer to Harnessing DNA for Disease Detection

3D rendering of DNA

DNA MOLECULES express heredity through genetic information. However, in the past few years, scientists have discovered that DNA can conduct electrical currents. This makes it an interesting candidate for roles that nature did not intend for this molecule, such as smaller, faster and cheaper electric circuits in electronic devices, and to detect the early stages of diseases like cancer and COVID-19.

In a recent study published in *Nature Nanotechnology*, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HU)'s Professor Danny Porath and his team at HU's Institute of Chemistry and the Center for Nanoscience and Nanotechnology helped move the needle closer to such applications by demonstrating a highly reliable method to measure electric currents that pass through a DNA molecule.

They were able to locate and identify individual molecules between the electrodes and measure significant electric currents in individual DNA molecules. Their most

surprising finding was that the current passes through the DNA backbone, contrary to prior assumptions in the scientific community that the current flowed along DNA base-pairs.

"Our method's high degree of reliability, experimental reproducibility and stability allows for a wide range of experiments in which researchers may learn about the conduction properties of DNA and bring the field closer to creating DNA-based medical detectors and electronic circuits," shared Porath.

For Porath, these findings are a career highlight. "We were able to debunk a 20-year-old paradigm. While many technical hurdles still need to be worked out, we've taken a big step forward toward the holy grail of building a DNA-based electronic circuit."

Excerpt from a press release by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Technology

Israeli Device Predicts Epileptic Seizures before They Strike

ISRAELI researchers are offering a ray of hope to the more than 65 million people worldwide suffering from epilepsy.

Epiness, a first-of-its-kind artificial intelligence wearable device, is the brainchild of Dr. Oren Shriki and his team at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev's Department of Cognitive and Brain Sciences. It employs EEG technology to detect the specific brain activity that occurs before a seizure strikes and sends an advanced warning of an impending episode—up to an hour before its onset.

While various medications are available to help manage the disease, 30% of epilepsy patients do not respond to anti-epileptic drugs, leaving millions without recourse. Moreover, seizures often strike with little or no warning, dooming patients to a life of uncertainty and fear of the next unexpected episode.

The Epiness advanced prediction device seeks to remedy that, offering epilepsy patients greater peace of mind, an enhanced quality of life and the opportunity to prepare for the seizure, thus minimizing injuries.

"Epileptic seizures expose epilepsy patients to various preventable hazards, including falls, burns and other injuries," Shriki explained.

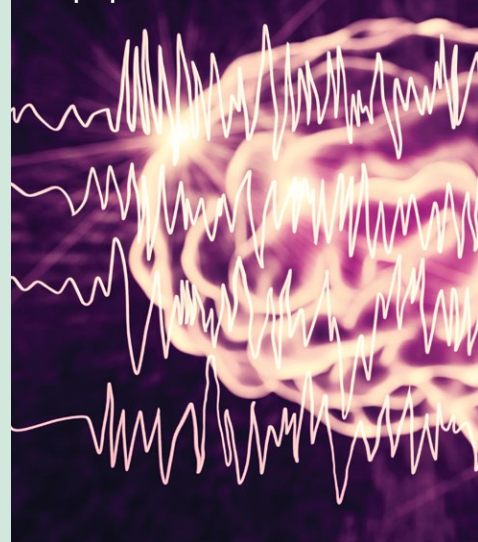
"Unfortunately, there are no seizure-predicting devices that can alert patients and allow them to prepare for upcoming seizures. We are therefore very excited that the algorithms that we developed enable accurate prediction of impending seizures up to one hour prior to their occurrence, Shriki continued.

Shriki is currently working with NeuroHelp, a high-tech startup company, to further develop and commercialize the Epiness prototype. Clinical trials are set to start later this year.

If all goes according to plan, epilepsy may soon be added to the long list of diseases, scourges and plagues for which Israel offers a breakthrough.

Ilse Strauss, *Bridges for Peace*

Brain waves during an epileptic seizure





"Oh, dreidel, dreidel, dreidel
I made you out of clay
And when you're dry and ready
Oh Dreidel we shall play"

The Dreidel Song

SWEET TREATS AND FAMILY FUN

The Delightful Traditions Surrounding Hanukkah

DURING THE SEASON when daylight is short in Israel and sheets of rain are accompanied by frigid winds, the holiday of *Hanukkah* (Festival of Lights) offers a welcome reprieve. For eight days, this lively holiday is filled with the warmth of light, the sweetness of festive foods and the joy of family time. Join me as we unpack some of the delightful traditions that surround *Hanukkah*.





Sufganyot

Sufganyot is a word that has become synonymous with *Hanukkah* in Israel. *Sufganyot*, the plural form of the word *sufganiyah*, are the sweet doughnuts that characterize the sweetness of the Festival of Lights. These yeasty treats range from the traditional jelly-filled doughnut topped with a dusting of powdered sugar to more elaborate flavor combinations and decadent toppings. In the weeks leading up to *Hanukkah*, endless varieties of *sufganyot* overflow from bakeries, cafes and malls in Israel as bakers contend for the most delicious doughnut. According to the *Times of Israel*, more than 20 million *sufganyot* are consumed in Israel each year.

How exactly did these sweet treats come to characterize the holiday of *Hanukkah*? The most common explanation is that the doughnuts fried in oil celebrate the miracle of one portion of oil lasting for eight days at the rededication of the Temple. This rededication took place on the heels of the Maccabees' astounding victory over the Seleucid Empire in the second century BC, when they took back Jerusalem and regained the freedom to worship the Lord in His Temple.

The origin of the word *sufganyot* is similar to the Greek word *sufan*, which means "spongy" or "fried," as well as the Arabic word *sferj*, which is a small, deep-fried doughnut. There was a longstanding tradition of eating these small doughnuts during *Hanukkah* in northern Africa for centuries before the establishment of the Jewish state. But these doughnuts do not resemble the traditional, jelly-filled doughnuts enjoyed during *Hanukkah* today. It would seem that the jelly filling and round shape were adopted from European culture when Ashkenazi Jews [Jews of German/Eastern European origin] began immigrating to their ancient homeland in the early 20th century. And so *sufganyot*, like many other customs unique to Israel, emerged through the mingling of extraordinarily diverse Jewish cultures.

Dreidels

The dreidel game is one of the most beloved family activities during *Hanukkah*. A dreidel is a four-sided spinning top marked by a Hebrew letter on each side: *nun* (נ), *gimel* (ג), *hey* (ה) and *shin* (ש).

The game is played with an unlimited number of players who each contribute something to the middle pot, such as coins, candy or *gelt*—the chocolate coins given as gifts during *Hanukkah* specifically for use in the dreidel game. Each player then takes a turn spinning the dreidel and performing the action indicated by whichever Hebrew letter is face up when the dreidel lands. If a *nun* (נ) is played, nothing happens. For a *gimel* (ג), the player takes all of the treasure from the middle pot. If it's a *hey* (ה), half of the pot is taken, and for a *shin* (ש), the player adds one token to

the middle. The game continues until someone wins by collecting everything from the middle.

Similar spinning-top games have been played all over the world throughout history, and archeologists have uncovered various styles of tops dating back as early as 2,000 BC. It was not a Jewish custom, however, until the 16th century when the Yiddish speaking Jews of Europe adopted the game from a German spinning top. This German top—called a *Torrel* (or *Trundl*)—also had four sides with four letters and was a popular winter game for children. Gradually, the dreidel game gained popularity in Jewish culture, and the addition of the Hebrew letters connected the players to their ancient history. These four letters are an acronym for the phrase נס גדול היה שם, which translates to "a great miracle occurred there," referring to the great miracle of the Maccabean victory in Israel.

When immigrants from Europe brought the *Hanukkah* tradition of the dreidel game to Israel, it became necessary to change one of the Hebrew letters on the dreidel. No longer was the dreidel spun in remembrance of the miracle that occurred *there*—the Jews living in the Land could now victoriously proclaim "a great miracle occurred *here*." Consequently, the letter *shin* (ש) for שם or "there" was replaced by the letter *pey* (פ) forפה or "here" to alter the acronym, and the new dreidel unique to the Land of Israel became known as a *sivivon*.

Latkes

A conversation about *Hanukkah* traditions would not be complete without mentioning *latkes*, the satisfying deep-fried potato fritters. Much like the origin of the dreidel, *latkes* became part of Jewish festivities because of a Yiddish adaptation of a very popular fried pancake in Europe. *Latke* in Yiddish means "a little oily thing" and is traditionally made from shredded potatoes combined with egg, bread crumbs and spices, and deep fried in a pancake shape. As with the *sufganyot*, *latkes* are deep fried in oil to commemorate the miracle of the oil burning for eight days.

A Delightful Heritage

Each of these delightful *Hanukkah* traditions speaks to the unique Israeli phenomenon of decidedly diverse cultures coming together to forge new customs. Each year in Israel as families gather around to light their *hanukkiyah* (nine-branched candelabra), they demonstrate not only a remembrance of their heritage but also the resilience of a people group that has overcome enormous cultural challenges and emerged victorious.



Sarah Yoder, BFP Staff Writer



What Was Meant for Evil

NEARLY 4,000 YEARS AGO, a Hebrew boy turned slave turned second-in-command of Egypt came face-to-face with the architects of the evil that tore him from everything he'd known. Facing the brothers who had sold him into slavery, Joseph could have lamented the loss or rehashed the heartbreak. Instead, Israel's favorite son rejoiced in the blessing that flowed from the tragedy. "*You meant evil against me,*" he conceded, "*but God meant it for good*" (Gen. 50:20).

Today, the shadow of heartbreak still hovers over Joseph's progeny. The Jewish state has a history so tragic it warrants three annual days of mourning. Evil lies in wait on and within Israel's borders, lashing out with unnerving frequency to sow more suffering. Yet instead of succumbing to the evil committed against them, Israelis have the extraordinary ability to seek out rays of light in the darkest pit and bring blessing from what seems like a curse.

Light over Darkness

Dov Kalmanovich was on his way home when a 14-year-old Palestinian lobbed a Molotov cocktail through the windshield of his car, setting both vehicle and driver alight.

By the time the flames were extinguished, melted skin and seared flesh covered 75% of his body. With one flick of a Palestinian teenager's arm, Kalmanovich went from heading home for dinner to facing life with a 263% disability rating.

Kalmanovich opted to pursue the light in the seemingly senseless tragedy. "I decided to survive," he told

Israel National News, "and not just to live, but to live in order to serve..."

That he did. Kalmanovich became the deputy mayor of Jerusalem, led the team that rebuilt the Hurva Synagogue in Jerusalem's Old City and often stands at the bedside of terror victims as a living testimony that evil doesn't have the last word.

The Palestinian lobbing the Molotov cocktail at Kalmanovich wanted to kill a Jew, he shared. Kalmanovich didn't only emerge alive, he also brought more Jewish lives into the world. And every morning at breakfast, Kalmanovich's children look at their father's scarred face and start their day knowing: darkness doesn't win; light does.

Kalmanovich's story is inspiring, but not unique. There's the tale of the bride inviting the nation to her wedding two weeks after her father and brother were murdered in a terror attack—pledging to dance instead of mourn and sing instead of cry. There's the account of an aged survivor of the Munich Massacre returning to the city of his nightmares to belt out *Am Yisrael Chai* ("the nation of Israel lives") as a lone figure in a public square. And a father, days after burying his firstborn—a three-day-old boy born prematurely and too weak to cling to life after his pregnant mother was shot in a terror attack—praising God for the life of his son.

Testimonies like these raise the question: what is the secret to Israel's ability to choose light in the perpetual onslaught of darkness?



The Source of All Things

The Jewish people see the world from a foundation that God is One, explains Rabbi Jeremy Gimpel, founder of The Land of Israel Fellowship and Arugot Farm. God's Oneness entails that He is the source of all things: the Author of what we see as good, what we perceive as devastating—and everything else in between.

"Everything that happens is from Him and ultimately for good, even if we don't understand it at the time," Gimpel says. "And if everything comes from Him, it means there's light in everything."

"When a crisis hits, we know there's purpose in the hardship," he continues. If God brought the pain, there's something to find or go through, something to mold or strengthen us. We look at a tragedy and know there's light hidden somewhere inside."

The presence of evil, he holds, often thrusts the polar opposite—good—into the spotlight. "In the face of heartbreak, we unlock what it means to be a Jew, to stand for compassion, love and truth. We're meant to be a light unto the nations, and if we do our job, we'll expose the light through the evil done unto us."

Blessed Memory

This worldview is particularly pertinent when a loved one passes away—especially in a violent act, Gimpel explains. "We respond by asking how we can turn the tragedy into a blessing. How can we find meaning in this pain

beyond ourselves, beyond merely surviving? How can we reach out and encourage the person next to us?"

In Israel, it is common to dedicate everything from public squares to parks, sporting facilities and even communities to the memory of someone who passed away—often in a terror attack. The practice is about more than a memorial, Gimpel explains. It's a practical expression of Israel's blessing-from-calamity worldview.

"Our impact is not limited to the years we spend on this earth. We continue to influence and hopefully bless long after we're no longer here. Also, if someone passes away and an action is taken in this world in their memory, they continue to bless, even though they're no longer in this world."

Eighteen-year-old Ezra Schwartz, an American spending a gap year in Israel, had big plans for the future. He would make *aliyah* (immigrate to Israel), serve in the military and establish his life as a blessing to Israel and her people. A Palestinian terrorist put a quick end to those plans.

Five years after his murder, jubilant Israeli teens gathered to watch Israel's Olympic baseball team inaugurate "A Field for Ezra," the third-ever baseball field in Israel—built in memory of the terror victim who "loved to play baseball."

"I can't imagine Ezra's life without baseball," his father said, "and I can't imagine growing up and not having a field to play on. Now these boys and girls in Israel will have that."

The field isn't the only way Schwartz continues to bless Israel—even after his death.

Four years ago, the Wilderness of Ziph—where David hid from Saul and poured out his heart in psalms—was nothing but barren hilltops and dust-swept valleys. Today, a patchwork of terraced orchards, silvery olive groves and emerald grape arbors have transformed the desolate heights into a Garden of Eden. The lush oasis was planted in honor of the young man "who planned to make *aliyah*, who wanted to make an impact and bless this land. Even though he was taken from us, he's fulfilling that mission," Gimpel explains.

Because God

When the dark clouds descend, Israel's ability to look for light in the darkness and blessing in calamity does not attempt to negate the tragedy, defang the searing grief or deny the pain. It simply acknowledges that God is in everything—even in the darkness. And because of God, the tragedy can, will, must bring forth life.



Ilse Strauss, *News Bureau Chief*



Shabbat

"Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made."

Genesis 2:3

SHABBAT. SABBATH. In Israel, it's as if simply saying the word has a calming effect. It's a holiday that comes around faithfully every week, as prescribed by God to the ancient Children of Israel in Exodus 20:8-11: "*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work...For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*" Today, the modern Children of Israel still observe with joy the weekly hallowed rest, beginning at sundown on Friday and ending at sundown the next day, just as the God of their fathers commanded.

Preparation

Friday morning and afternoon are a hustle and bustle of activity in Israel as families clean their houses, run last-minute errands and rush to catch the last bus before public transportation shuts down until Saturday night. Walking down the street, through apartment stairwells and past open windows, you can smell the fruits of their labor as tempting scents of the *Shabbat* meal hover outside each apartment. Shops are brimming as people rush to get last-minute ingredients for dinner and stock up on supplies to see them through the weekend. Most markets have buckets outside their doors filled with colorful bouquets of *Shabbat* flowers for husbands to take home to their wives or guests to offer their dinner hosts.

About an hour before sundown, the atmosphere instantly shifts from one of last-minute scurrying to complete stillness. The buses and other public transportation stop running, except for a few stray Arab taxis. Shops, markets, businesses and most restaurants shut their doors. A peaceful calm and stillness hover in the air.

Deep Breaths

Once the sun sets, families and friends sit down to the table for the big meal. Traditionally, the woman of the house lights the *Shabbat* candles, signaling an end to the frenzied preparations leading up to this moment and ushering in the holiday of rest. She takes three deep breaths, shrugging off





the stress from the week and entering into a time of rest and refreshment with her family. The clock stops ticking for a while.

Erev Shabbat ("Sabbath eve," Friday night) looks different at every table. For some, it's simply a meal to relax and enjoy time with family and friends. For the religious, it is the same, but includes an order of saying *kiddush* (blessing the wine) and a blessing over the *challah* (braided bread) accompanied by prayers and singing before diving into the meal. Many religious families dress in their finest clothes and leisurely stroll to the local *shul* (synagogue) for Friday night prayers.

Walking down the street throughout the evening, you will pass families, parents pushing strollers and toting their young children to synagogue or over to a friend's house for the evening. Otherwise, the streets are generally quiet. But passing by open windows or past balconies—wherever there is a dinner table—there is gathering, conversation, singing and life. The glow of candles and warm lights emanates from each home, as booming voices involved in lively conversations in multiple languages waft through the streets. You can also hear families belting out traditional (and not-so-traditional, depending how early in the evening) *Shabbat* songs, often accompanied by clapping and stomping feet. Putting your heart and soul into singing and clapping to the rhythm might elicit strong encouragement from your neighbor to quiet down on any other night—but not this night. This is *Shabbat*. This is a holiday. And likely, your neighbors can scarcely hear you over their own gathering. Or perhaps your neighbors aren't even home, but instead are celebrating at someone else's table.

Different Strokes

The atmosphere of *Shabbat* differs throughout Israel. The above description is true for most of Jerusalem, where a majority of the people are observant Jews. Places like Tel Aviv, however, have a completely different atmosphere. The beachfront city is much more secular and laid back. While most businesses close like anywhere else, several restaurants remain open and inviting for customers to sit outside and enjoy a leisurely meal. Tiberias, a city sprawled along the Sea of Galilee, holds a significant Arab population and therefore also holds a more laid-back view of the Seventh Day. Eilat, a resort town in southern Israel next to the Red Sea, similarly offers open restaurants and other Friday night entertainment for tourists.

And just a few miles away, smaller Jewish communities hold the same restful atmosphere as Jerusalem, only quieter, without the occasional Arab taxi buzzing by. Often, no cars are seen on the roads at all in religious communities. The roads are quiet—but laughter, singing and the clinking of silverware are emanating from the warm glow from the windows of each home.

The Day Of Rest

Saturday morning all across Israel is calm and quiet. After feasting, fellowshiping and celebrating the night before, most Israelis are asleep or at least lounging indoors for a restful morning. Slowly as the sun stretches higher, families trickle back out into the empty streets, as parents push strollers leisurely around the neighborhood or walk their children to the park to play. Religious Jews stroll back to the neighborhood *shul* for another round of prayers and the weekly *Torah* (Gen.–Deut.) reading. The streets are still quiet as public transportation is still shut down. It truly is a day of rest, refreshment and renewal before beginning another week.

And then, almost regrettably, the clock starts ticking again. About an hour after sunset, buses start running again. Shops and restaurants reopen. Grocery stores open

their doors, and people filter in to buy food for the new week. Sundays in Israel look like Mondays in the Western world. It's the beginning of the work week, as everyone dives back into routine—but always looking forward to the next *Shabbat*, the next hallowed day of prescribed rest.



Kate Norman, *BFP Staff Writer*



An Act of Providence



AT 91 YEARS OF AGE, Norman Frajman is a tall, dignified man on a mission. The words roll off his tongue easily as he tells his story. He has spoken before thousands of young people through the years. They hang on his every word.

Norman suffered unimaginable horror as he lived out the formative years of his life in the Holocaust, but his story is also one of enduring hope and faith. Now more than ever, the world needs to know what happened as violence against Jewish communities escalates across the globe.

THE BOXCAR was filled with the stench of 120 people crammed into the small, airless space. Young Norman was scared. Where were the Germans taking them? His mother, Hela, and sister, Renia, were with him. That was reassuring, but there was no room for them to sit or even bend. The five-gallon (19-liter) bucket for waste was filled to overflowing. The other five-gallon bucket meant for drinking water was long empty. Desperate people wiped the sweat off their neighbor's face just to moisten their lips. The trip lasted days.

THE WARSAW GHETTO

They had been loaded on the transports after being imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto for almost two-and-a-half years. Eleven-year-old Norman was already familiar with terror. He had learned how to smuggle food into the ghetto like many other child smugglers. He knew to duck out of sight when the Nazis raced through the streets on their motorcycles, randomly shooting people with a machine gun mounted on the sidecar. Norman saw bodies lying in the gutters every day, victims of starvation, typhus or the Nazis' diabolical game. But he had to focus on keeping his mother and sister alive. With his father imprisoned in a Russian prison camp, he was now the man of the family.

Masters of deception, the Nazis enticed the people in the ghetto with promises of bread and marmalade if they would volunteer for a work camp. Driven by starvation, thousands willingly boarded the transports bound for the Treblinka extermination camp, where they were summarily gassed. Very few in the ghetto believed the horror stories when news trickled back. Ultimately, Treblinka swallowed up 365,000 Jews from the ghetto.

THE UPRISING

In April 1943, Jewish fighters in the ghetto mounted an armed resistance. One fighter told Norman: "We're all going to die, but not without a struggle. We want people to know that the Jews didn't go like lambs to the slaughter." The resistance put up a valiant fight, but 7,000 died. The Nazis sent 7,000 more to Treblinka, and 56,000 were loaded onto transports. Norman, his mother and sister were among them.

HELL ON EARTH

The train, they discovered, was bound for Majdanek, one of the six Nazi extermination camps. Life and death were determined by the jerk of an SS officer's thumb. Norman, separated from his family, was now completely on his own in a place he described as "hell on earth." Life was so wretched that "a trip to the crematorium was almost an act of mercy." One inmate, pointing to the chimneys belching smoke, told Norman that only his ashes could be free.

In October 1943, he jostled his way onto a train bound for another camp, Skarzysko. Less than a month later, the Nazis machine-gunned the remaining Jewish inmates at Majdanek. Forty-three thousand Jews were slaughtered

there and at two adjacent camps in Operation *Erntefest* (Harvest Festival), the largest single massacre of Jewish people during the Holocaust.

FAMILY

In Skarzysko, Norman contracted typhus and was selected for extermination, but a fellow inmate named David Reischer hid Norman under a pile of wood shavings in his carpenter shop until he recovered. Since Norman no longer had a family of his own, he considered David a member of his family. His mother and sister had died a year earlier at Majdanek. Renia had contracted tuberculosis and was to be gassed. Hela could not bear to see her daughter die alone and chose to be gassed along with her. News of their deaths sent Norman into a spiral of grief.

BUCHENWALD AND BEYOND

By August 1944, he was shipped to Buchenwald and Schlieben to make bazookas for the German home guard. As the Allies began to close in, Norman and his fellow inmates were forced on a death march to dig anti-tank ditches. Others working alongside him succumbed daily to starvation, exhaustion or an SS bullet.

In early May 1945, they arrived in a town near the German-Czech border. Awakening one morning, they realized the German guards had fled as the Russian army moved in. Norman was finally free. Fifteen-year-old Norman walked into the first church he saw, knelt down and prayed, "Thank you, God, for letting me live." It didn't matter that he was Jewish and praying in a Christian church. He wanted to offer thanksgiving to the Almighty. How did he survive? "It was by the providence of God, and nothing else." Even in the darkest days, he never lost hope—he never felt forgotten by a loving God.

Jewish blood shed during the Holocaust continues to cry out from the ground, and Norman is a voice for those whose voices were silenced. "As long as my eyes are open," he says, "I will share the story of this tragedy."

Norman emigrated to the US after the war, married his wife, Shelley, and had two children and two grandchildren. He later learned that his father, Leon, had also survived and was living in Israel. He lost 126 family members to the Holocaust. He serves as president of the Child Survivors/Hidden Children of the Holocaust of Palm Beach County in Florida and received a Medal of Freedom from Governor Rick Scott. His accomplishments are too numerous

to list. His bar mitzvah (religious coming-of-age for boys held on their 13th birthday) at age 73 was held at a synagogue two miles from Auschwitz. Norman's full story can be found in the book We Remember the Children.



Kathy DeGagne, BFP Staff Writer

All Eyes on Israel

CALLING 2020 an unusual year would be quite the understatement. This was, after all, the year of a global pandemic without cure sweeping the world, shuttering the nations in isolation, grinding health care systems, international travel and everyday life to a halt and bringing business, economies and livelihoods to their knees.

Israel was far from immune to the fallout, facing the onslaught of COVID-19 alongside the rest of the world. However, the coronavirus was but one of the weighty matters Israel walked through over the past 12 months.

The year kicked off with the unveiling of US President Trump's Peace to Prosperity plan. Then, Blue and White party leader Benjamin (Benny) Gantz agreed to join his main rival, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—a man he vowed never to serve with—in a deal that provided Israel with a unity government, ended a year of political deadlock and spared Israelis from the fourth round of national elections in a year.

As the new government was sworn in, Netanyahu vowed to apply sovereignty over Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, unleashing a firestorm of condemnation in the international community. The prime minister's sovereignty plans faced a few more bumps in the road and were finally set aside—for the time being—to pursue regional peace gains.

Then the world watched history in the making in August when the United Arab Emirates announced it was normalizing ties with Israel, making it the third Arab state to do so in the 72 years since the rebirth of Israel, following Egypt in

1979 and Jordan in 1994. Bahrain followed suit less than a month later, and according to those in the know, more Arab countries will soon join the peace fold.

Even as the world suffered through one of the worst crises in our generation, is it any wonder that all eyes were once again on Israel in 2020?

Divisive Unity

"We prevented fourth elections. We will protect democracy. We will fight the coronavirus and take care of all Israeli citizens. There is a national emergency government."

—Alternate Prime Minister Gantz hails the unity government with Netanyahu

"A unity government as a response to a national emergency is based on consensus, formed in light of very severe military or economic crises...A unity government forges a basis of solidarity and gives the political system a breather, during which time it can make fateful decisions that fall within the national consensus."

—The Israel Democracy Institute defines a unity government

"We warmly welcome the announcement of the formation of a new government of Israel. We are extremely fortunate to have such strong and experienced partners in Jerusalem, and we will work together to advance the security and prosperity of our peoples."

—US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo

"...The agreement marks an end to one of the most turbulent periods in Israeli political history and amounts to a victory for Mr. Netanyahu..."

—Tom Bateman, BBC correspondent

"It's a remarkable achievement. The coronavirus certainly played a role by creating a feeling of emergency, a feeling that the arguments between the pro-Netanyahu and anti-Netanyahu camps needed to be put aside in favor of setting up a unity government."

—Senior correspondent
Anshel Pfeffer

"I promised the State of Israel a national emergency government that would work to save the lives and livelihoods of Israeli citizens."

—Prime Minister Netanyahu

"This will not be the government of my dreams...This apparently will also not be the dream government of Netanyahu. But at the end of the day, the people wanted and needed unity. The time has come to put everything aside and focus on the good of the State of Israel."

—Alternate Prime Minister Gantz

"They are kicking the political footballs down the road until they see if this government can function."

—Jason Pearlman, former adviser to Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, expressing his reservations about the unity government

Did the UAE Peace Deal Halt Sovereignty?

"It's time to apply the Israeli law and write another glorious chapter in the history of Zionism."

—Prime Minister Netanyahu at the swearing in of the unity government

"Few took seriously the United Arab Emirates argument that full normalization of relations with Israel as part of the US-brokered 'Abraham Accords' would actually halt annexation of territories in the West Bank [Judea and Samaria]."

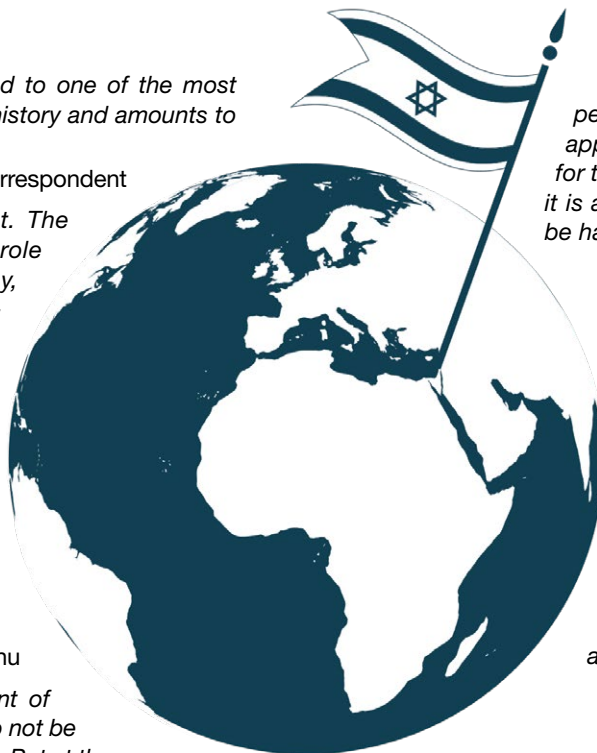
—Oraib Al Rantawi, founder and director general of the Amman-based Al Quds Center for Political Studies

"There is no change in my plan to apply our sovereignty in Judea and Samaria, in full coordination with the United States. I am committed, it has not changed."

—Prime Minister Netanyahu on the day the UAE deal was announced

"The word suspend was chosen carefully by all the parties. 'Suspend' by definition, look it up, means a temporary halt. It's off the table now but it's not off the table permanently."

—US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman assures that sovereignty is a matter of time



"Israel has agreed to suspend the annexation, to suspend applying Israeli law to those areas for the time being. But in the future it is a discussion that I am sure will be had..."

—US Special Adviser Jared Kushner makes it clear that sovereignty is not off the table

Peace x 2

"This concept of 'peace through withdrawal and weakness' is gone from the world. It has been replaced by a different concept: genuine peace, peace for peace, peace through strength. This is what we are advancing today."

—Prime Minister Netanyahu celebrates two peace deals in 30 days

"This historic diplomatic breakthrough will advance peace in the Middle East region and is a testament to the bold diplomacy and vision of the three leaders and the courage of the United Arab Emirates and Israel to chart a new path that will unlock the great potential in the region."

—Joint statement of the United States, the State of Israel and the United Arab Emirates

"Another HISTORIC breakthrough today! Our two GREAT friends Israel and the Kingdom of Bahrain agree to a Peace Deal—the second Arab country to make peace with Israel in 30 days!"

—President Trump hails the second peace deal between Israel and a Gulf state

"Blessed are the peacemakers. Mabruk and Mazal Tov [congratulations in Arabic and Hebrew]!"

—US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo congratulates Israel and the UAE on a historic peace

"Today, we are ready—we are already witnessing a change in the heart of the Middle East, a change that will send hope around the world."

—Emirati Foreign Minister Bin Zayed at the signing of the Abraham Accords

"We are here to change the course of history. We mark the dawn of a new Middle East."

—President Trump at the signing of the Abraham Accords

"For far too long, the Palestinians have had a veto on peace, not only between the Palestinians and Israel, but Israel and the Arab states...As more Arab and Muslim countries join the circle of peace [the Palestinians] will be hard-pressed to remain outside. We are ready to till fields of peace and bring its bountiful fruits to our people."

—Prime Minister Netanyahu

TOURS

UK

UK ISRAEL TOUR

October 12–19, 2021

Hosted by: Michael Treharne

Join us as we travel through Israel, exploring the Sea of Galilee, Golan Heights, Jerusalem, Judea, the Dead Sea, Masada, Megiddo, Caesarea and much more.

Canada

EXPERIENCE ISRAEL DISCIPLESHIP TOUR

January 31–February 11, 2021

Hosted by: Rev. Don & Victoria James

Join us as we travel through Israel and experience firsthand the wonder and beauty of the land of the Bible.

**Special rates for pastors and their spouses.*

PROMISE—PROPHECY—POSSESSION

March 14–25, 2021

Hosted by: Rick & Grace Knelsen and Réal Bois

Many say visiting Israel is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. We believe it is much more than that. If you have visited Israel to see the biblical and historical sites and now long to go deeper, this is your opportunity to experience Judea and Samaria, the heartland of Israel. Marvel at the magnificent mountains of Israel, visit Jewish communities, meet the people who live there and feel their passion to be good stewards of the land God entrusted to them. See where God spoke His promises to Abraham, where the prophets lived, and where prophecy is being fulfilled today as the Jewish people once again work the land. Experience the heart of God, the heart of the land and the heart of the people.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT: EUROPE & ISRAEL TOUR

November 7–23, 2021

Hosted by: BFP Canada leadership team

A tour to Europe and Israel. Come face-to-face with the Holocaust, visiting the Anne Frank House, Corrie ten Boom Museum, Auschwitz concentration camp and more. Then fly to Israel, where we will learn about

the struggle for the Jewish state against all odds and see how our covenant-keeping God has restored His land and people of Israel. Tour includes the Netherlands, Germany, Poland and Israel.

**Option to extend Israel component.*

United States

THE LIFE AND LAND OF JESUS CHRIST ISRAEL STUDY TOUR 2021

February 24–March 6, 2021

Hosted by: Dr. Dennis D. Frey & Dr. Noel P. Sanderson

Be immersed in the land and lessons of the Bible as you are led on an 11-day journey through Scripture while your local guide and driver bring the past and present culture of Israel to life for all your senses.

ISRAEL STUDY TOUR

March 13–25, 2021

Hosted by: Bobby Peck

Come experience the miracle of ancient and modern Israel by visiting the land, experiencing the culture and meeting the people.

BIBLICAL HOLY LAND TOUR

June 25–July 6, 2021

Hosted by: Jill Czelusta

You are invited to join this 12-day tour for the journey of a lifetime. Explore the land of the Bible and experience Scripture coming to life.

THE “FOLLOWING JESUS” ISRAEL TOUR 2021

March 7–18, 2022

Hosted by: Bill & Liz Adams

Join veteran hosts Bill and Liz Adams and an Israeli guide in the land of the Bible, following in the footsteps of Jesus. This learning, worshiping and serving adventure goes off the beaten path without missing the essential biblical and historic sites. Partake in the privilege of blessing the Israeli people and re-greening the Promised Land.

For more details on tours, see contact information on page 2.

VOLUNTEER WITH US

The COVID-19 pandemic has left us short-staffed, and we are in need of both long- and short-term volunteers to fill the gap. Please note that ever-changing travel and visa procedures require flexibility.

Home Repair Team
(Long- and short-term)

Web Developer
(Long-term)

Food Bank Floor Workers
(Short-term)

For more information, visit www.bridgesforpeace.com/get-involved/volunteer/



Pomegranate Chicken Stew

By Sarah Yoder, BFP Staff Writer

ISRAELI FOOD today is a unique collection of recipes passed down from generations in the Diaspora (the Jewish population outside Israel). Inspired by a Persian dish called *Fesenjan*, this stew is a classic example of how Jewish culture has preserved some of the most delightful and ancient flavor combinations. This hearty chicken stew boasts the tangy flavor of pomegranate combined with the comforting warmth of Middle Eastern spices and makes for the perfect winter dish.

Ingredients

1 large yellow onion, diced
3 gloves of garlic, minced
4 Tbsp olive oil
2 lb (1 kg) boneless chicken breast, cubed
1 Tbsp orange zest
2 Tbsp fresh orange juice
1 tsp turmeric
1 tsp cumin
½ tsp cinnamon
½ tsp ground nutmeg
Salt and pepper to taste
3 cups chicken stock
½ cup pomegranate molasses (make your own by simmering 2 cups pomegranate juice down to ½ cup)
2 Tbsp sugar

Directions

1. Sear the chicken in 2 Tbsp olive oil over medium heat until the pieces are browned on all sides.
2. Remove the chicken from the pan and set aside. Add remaining olive oil, diced onion and minced garlic to the pan and sauté on medium-low heat until soft and fragrant, about 7–8 minutes.
3. Add the orange zest and spices and cook for another 2–3 minutes.
4. Add the cooked chicken, chicken stock, orange juice, pomegranate molasses and sugar. Stir to combine, cover and simmer on low heat for one hour, stirring occasionally.
5. Remove from heat and add salt, pepper and additional spices to taste.
6. Serve over couscous and garnish with walnuts, pomegranate arils and fresh parsley.

Serves 4

To Serve

4 servings of couscous, prepared according to package instructions

Garnish (Optional)

½ cup walnuts, chopped
½ cup fresh pomegranate arils
¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped



Israeli Cover of Emirati Hit Wins Fans across Arab World

An Israeli ensemble has won praise across the Arab world for a recently released instrumental rendition of an Emirati hit song celebrating the peace accord struck between the two countries.

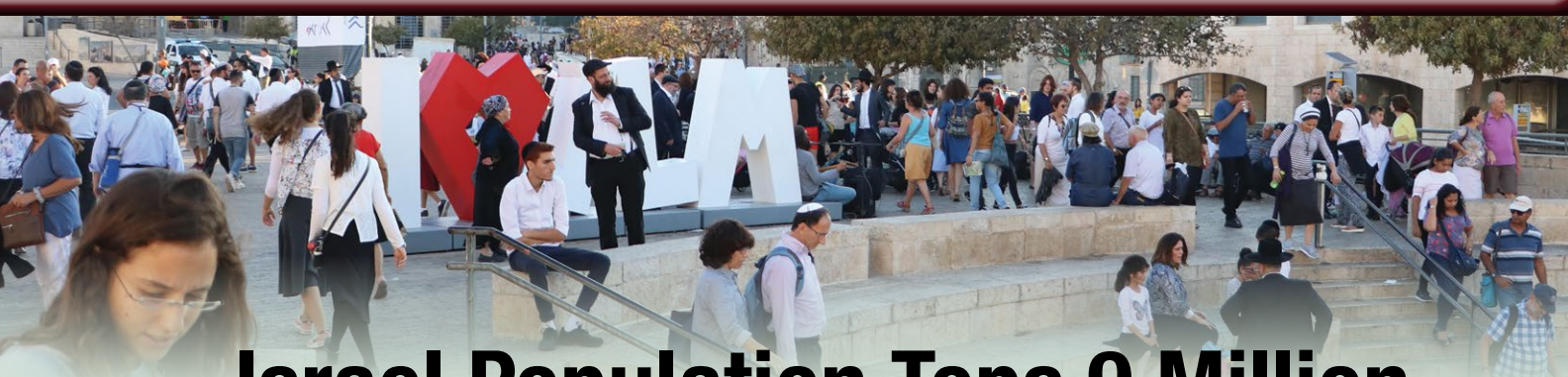
Firqat Alnoor's musical director, Ariel Cohen, produced the instrumental arrangement of the song "Aheibak" by Emirati musician Hussain al-Jassmi in honor of the newly signed bilateral agreement between Israel and the UAE [United Arab Emirates].

Israeli artistic director Ronen Peled Hadad also created a music video to accompany the rendition of the song, filmed with a drone atop Tel Aviv's Azrieli Tower skyscraper.

The video is filled with shots of the Tel Aviv landscape and shows the orchestra's Arab and Jewish members flying both the Israeli and Emirati flags while white doves are released to symbolize the peace between the countries.

The video has garnered hundreds of thousands of views across different social media platforms and was shared thousands of times on Twitter and WhatsApp groups across the UAE and Bahrain, who also recently normalized its relations with Israel.

Excerpt from an article by Itamar Eichner, *Ynetnews*



Israel Population Tops 9 Million

THERE ARE TODAY some 9,246,000 residents of Israel, the Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS] said in its annual population report on the eve of *Rosh HaShanah* [Jewish New Year].

The CBS also predicted that Israel's population was set to reach 10 million people by the end of 2024, 15 million by the end of 2048 and 20 million by 2065.

According to the CBS, since September 1, 2019, approximately 170,000 babies have been born in Israel, 44,000 people have died and 20,000 people have made *aliyah* [immigrated to Israel].

All in all, Israel's population has grown by 150,000 people since *Rosh HaShanah* 2019.

About 6,841,000 of Israel's residents are Jews, constituting 74% of the population. About 1,946,000 (21%) are

Arab and some 459,000 people are non-Arab Christians, members of other religions and people without a religious affiliation.

The data also shows that 43.1% of Jews in Israel define themselves as secular, 21.1% as traditional, 12.8% as traditional-religious, 11.3% as religious and 10.1% as ultra-Orthodox.

The data also show that life expectancy for women in Israel is 84.7 years and 81 years for men.

The data show that 11.5% of Israelis experienced poverty in the past year. In addition, 20.2% of Israelis feel permanently or periodically stressed, while 19.6% feel often or occasionally lonely and 24.9% have felt discriminated against in the past year.

Excerpt from an article by Yaron Druckman, *Ynetnews*



Honored as One of Israel's Top Christian Allies

In honor of the holiday of *Sukkot* (Feast of Tabernacles), the Israel Allies Foundation (IAF) published its first annual list of the Jewish state's 50 foremost Christian allies, honoring Bridges for Peace CEO and International President Rebecca J. Brimmer with one of the top spots on the prestigious list.

According to the IAF, an umbrella organization that coordinates 44 Israel Allies Caucuses in countries around the world to mobilize support for Israel based on shared Judeo-Christian values, the Christian leaders on the list were selected because of their deep love, staunch support and invaluable contribution—flowing from a foundation of faith—for the State of Israel.

The IAF explained that the 50 pastors, organization leaders and former politicians constitute “the leading defenders and advocates for Israel worldwide...”

Hailing the list as a nod to Christian advocates' crucial contribution, president of the IAF and compiler of the list, Josh Reinstein, said: “Recognizing the heroic work of our Christian supporters is an important display of our gratitude towards them. It is only due to the Christian political support for Israel, that Israel is welcoming embassies to Jerusalem and is now in the position to negotiate new peace deals on the basis of peace through strength.

“Faith-based diplomacy has empowered Israel and its leadership to reach new heights, and it would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of these 50 unique individuals,” Reinstein continued.



Brimmer took the 13th spot on the list. “It is a great honor to be selected as one of 50 of Israel's top Christian Allies,” she said.

“This honor is not just about me, it is about the Bridges for Peace team and our worldwide network of Christians supporters who love Israel and show it through their prayers, financial support and advocacy for Israel. We love Israel because we love the God of Israel.”

Ilse Strauss, *Bridges for Peace*



We're All in This Together

Shoppers at the AllStock Supermarket located south of Caesarea were surprised to see an unexpected sign hanging over the shelves. It was just before the fall holidays and Israel was once again going into lockdown. The store owners had fastened a sign scrawled in big, black letters to the shelves packed with canned goods, sugar, oil and chocolate chip cookies. The sign invited: “Whoever is in need of food during these difficult times is invited to take freely. (No need to inform the staff).”

As Israel continues to deal with the coronavirus and uncertain days ahead, it warms the heart to see acts of kindness and compassion such as this one piercing the dark clouds like small rays of light.

Bridges for Peace is also bringing rays of light into these dark times. Representing Christians from around the world, we continue to provide food to over 22,000 in need

each month, including Holocaust survivors, immigrants, children and widows.

These efforts are a perfect example of *tikkun olam*, a Jewish concept teaching that each of us is responsible to do our part to help repair the world.

Rebecca J. Brimmer, *Bridges for Peace*



BRIDGES FOR PEACE

HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS: Bring joy into the lives of people who have suffered so much. Partner with us to deliver food and supplies to Holocaust survivors to ensure their basic needs are met. More than providing food, we bring joy and companionship to these precious people, even including special birthday baskets as an extra treat for their special day.

WIDOWS AND ORPHANS: God is described as a champion of the *“fatherless and the widow”* in Deuteronomy 10:18, and He invites us in Isaiah 1:17 to partner with Him to *“defend the fatherless”* and *“plead for the widow.”* We help care for these people who are often unable to care for themselves. Help us provide food parcels to help make ends meet and put food on empty tables.

FOOD: You can help feed over 22,000 needy Israelis in 40 communities every month by supporting our food banks in Jerusalem and Karmiel.

ADOPTION: Sponsor an Israeli individual or family for one year and become personally connected by exchanging letters. Your gift will provide food, bus tickets, financial assistance for special needs and badly needed encouragement.

FEED A CHILD: Change the future for an impoverished Israeli child by providing hot lunches at school, birthday and holiday gifts, school books, a backpack filled with supplies and funds for special needs (sponsorship program). One-time gifts allow us to enhance the schools with computer labs, modern playgrounds, improved facilities and more.

ADOPT AN ISRAELI TOWN: Show compassion to needy families by supporting one of 18 Israeli towns that are experiencing severe economic hardship. We work with community officials across Israel to ensure that those in need are fed.

PROJECT RESCUE: We help the Jewish people of the Diaspora return to Israel. Your financial assistance helps pay for passports, visas, ground transportation, lodging and more. Thus far we have helped rescue over 76,000 people.

PROJECT TIKVAH (HOPE): Support the elderly and sick who cannot immigrate to Israel. Your gifts fund soup kitchens that provide hot, nutritious meals; heaters for the winter season for those living in unheated quarters; emergency medical assistance and more.

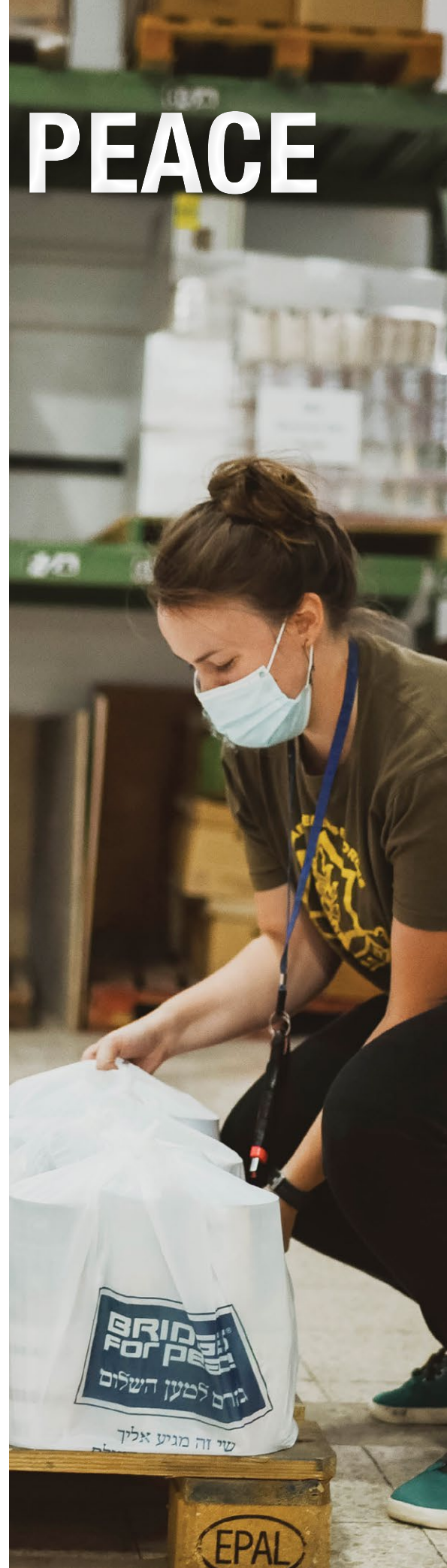
IMMIGRANT WELCOME GIFTS: Welcome new immigrants to Israel with a large gift package that includes a kitchen set of pans and utensils, blankets, school kits for children and a 3-volume Hebrew–Russian or 2-volume Hebrew–Spanish edition of the Hebrew Scriptures.

CRISIS ASSISTANCE FUND: Your gifts enable us to respond quickly to crisis situations. These may include critical needs, such as bomb shelters, ambulances or help for emergency situations, such as terror-motivated arson attacks and more.

HOME REPAIR: Teams of skilled construction workers renovate homes of the poor and elderly in dire conditions, fixing leaky plumbing, replacing broken windows, painting, plastering, rewiring and installing cabinets.

VICTIMS OF TERROR: We deliver special cheer baskets to anyone touched by terrorism. Special needs, such as wheelchairs, food vouchers and financial assistance for medical bills are provided for those in long-term rehabilitation.

DENTAL/MEDICAL AID: Bring back smiles to the faces of the poor. Israeli health insurance does not cover dental care or special medical needs. This fund helps the needy cover those expenses.





DONATE

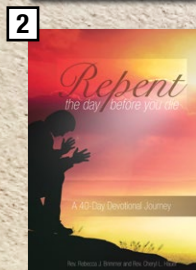


Recommended Reading

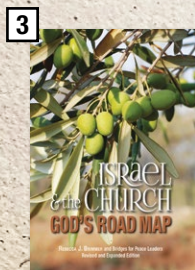
New!



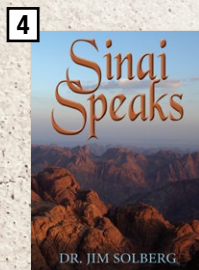
- 1 LOVING GOD: THE ANSWER FOR A TROUBLED WORLD**
Rebecca J. Brimmer
Jesus taught that the greatest commandment was to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. Knowing and loving God enables us to love others, the second greatest commandment. This book explores how Jesus' truth provides the answers our troubled world needs.



- 2 REPENT THE DAY BEFORE YOU DIE**
A 40-DAY DEVOTIONAL JOURNEY
Rebecca J. Brimmer & Cheryl Hauer
• Suggested homework activities to enhance the journey
• Daily Scripture readings and accompanying prayer points
• Spiral bound journal



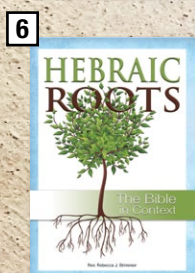
- 3 ISRAEL & THE CHURCH: GOD'S ROAD MAP**
Rebecca J. Brimmer & BFP Leaders
Revised edition introduces the Hebraic roots of Christianity and tells the story of God's covenant relationship with Israel. Includes study questions. Excellent for small group or personal study. **Also on Kindle.**



- 4 SINAI SPEAKS**
Dr. Jim Solberg
Rediscover the *Torah* (Gen.–Deut.) and its relevant messages for today through this amazing devotional. Enter a new realm of Bible study as ancient stories with modern applications bring you closer to the God of Israel. **Also on Kindle.**



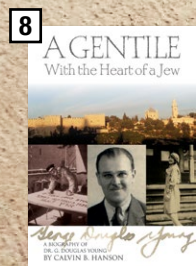
- 5 ISRAEL TOUR JOURNAL**
BFP & MIUD Leadership
Each beautifully designed page describes an important biblical site; offers spiritual application, modern life lessons and Scripture verses; and provides a place to chronicle thoughts and reactions, creating memories that will last forever.



- 6 HEBRAIC ROOTS: THE BIBLE IN CONTEXT**
Rebecca J. Brimmer
Our understanding of the Scriptures is shaped by our thinking and culture, which is quite different from the Hebraic background. Concepts that are sometimes complex and foreign to our Western worldview are explained from a Hebraic perspective. **Also on Kindle.**



- 7 JOSEPH & MARY: A MODEL FOR TODAY'S FAMILY**
Cheryl Hauer
A fresh look at the lives of Mary and Joseph, gleaned from what history tells us of first-century family life—a desperately needed model for families today. **Also on Kindle.**



- 8 A GENTILE WITH THE HEART OF A JEW**
Calvin B. Hanson
The life of Dr. G. Douglas Young, founder of Bridges for Peace, will inspire you to stand with Israel. His messages are timeless, his passion contagious. **Also on Kindle.**

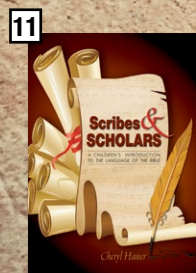


- 9 HEBREW TREASURES**
R. Brimmer, C. Hauer, T. Riddering & C. Sprinkle
The 20 word studies found in this hard-cover gift book are a good beginning to understanding the richness of the Hebrew language. Well-known scriptural texts will come to life in a refreshing new light. **Also on Kindle.**



- 10 FORGOTTEN PATRIOT**
THE STORY OF HAYM SALOMON
David Allen Lewis
Perhaps no one did as much to help establish the United States as Haym Salomon—a forgotten hero who gave everything for the cause of freedom.

Children's Books



- 11 SCRIBES & SCHOLARS**
A CHILDREN'S INTRODUCTION TO THE LANGUAGE OF THE BIBLE
Cheryl Hauer
Learn about the Hebrew language: write it, speak it, mix your own ink and make a biblical scroll. Includes fun activities and 40 Hebrew flash cards. (Ages 11–14)



- 12 ISRAEL: THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE**
Cheryl Hauer
Through puzzles, games, crafts and other activities, children will learn about Israel's land, people, food and language...and have fun doing it! (Ages 7–12)



- 13 THE BLESSING**
Carolin Sadler
Join a Jewish family as they joyfully share their *Shabbat* (Sabbath) traditions. The fourth commandment will become personal as your family learns to experience God's rest. (Ages 7–12)



- 14 CELEBRATE WITH ISRAEL HOLIDAY COLORING BOOK**
Children will experience the joy and excitement of Israel's festival cycle through our holiday coloring book, a great introduction to life in Israel.



- 15 TRIBES OF ISRAEL**
Cheryl Hauer
Well-known Bible stories come alive as your children read about the tribal lifestyle of the patriarchs. The book includes activities that will enrich their understanding. (Ages 11–14)

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visit bridgesforpeace.com

LOVING GOD

THE ANSWER
FOR A
TROUBLED
WORLD

REBECCA J. BRIMMER

From the Author's Heart

For a number of years, I have been drawn over and over again to the words of Jesus (Yeshua) concerning the greatest commandments. I have written repeatedly on the subject. This year, I felt an urgency from the Lord to compile these writings into a book. At the time, we had no idea that the world would be plunged into a time of crisis and trouble sparked by a worldwide pandemic—but God was not surprised. I truly believe that the truths contained in this book are what our world needs to overcome in the midst of trouble. Even if you have read the original teaching letters, I encourage you to get a copy of the book for your library and a second copy for a friend. Now, more than ever, we need to love God and love our neighbor.

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