

dispatch from מסאבסן

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ישראל
ISRAEL
اسرائيل

ברכה צפירה
Bracha Zefira

התר"ע - התש"ן
1910-1990

שח 4

אם ננעלו
If Doors were Locked

One Way to Remember

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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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Join us in practical expressions to bless Israel by becoming an active bridge-builder and participating in fulfilling biblical prophecy through the following educational and humanitarian programs of Bridges for Peace.

Publications: The bimonthly *Dispatch from Jerusalem*, the monthly in-depth study of the Israel Teaching Letter and the weekly e-mailed Israel Current News Update with Prayer Focus. To subscribe, sign up on the front page of our website at www.bridgesforpeace.com

Chai (Life) Night Prayer and Study Groups: A monthly intercessory prayer program for groups desiring to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Ps. 122:6).

Bridge-building Projects: Promote better Christian-Jewish understanding and support for Israel at the local and regional levels around the world. Projects offered include Hebrew classes, film series, Israel awareness programs, speakers bureaus and study seminars.

Bible Study Tours in Israel: Bridges for Peace provides a variety of travel opportunities and lectures to help you or your tour group gain a deeper understanding of Israel. (See page 28 for current tours).

Discovery Groups: Groups have the opportunity to serve with us for a period of one to four days.

Short-term Service: A wonderful opportunity for Christians to build sincere relationships by volunteering to serve as short-term staff assisting Israel's poor.

Operation Ezra Projects: Through our food banks, food gifts are distributed to help Israel's needy.

Project Rescue/Project Tikvah (Hope): These programs help the poorest Jews in the countries of the Diaspora.

ZEALOUS8:2: This branch of Bridges for Peace aims at reaching and impacting the young adult generation (18-30) with the message of God's plan and purpose for the nation of Israel (www.zealous82.com).

For more information, contact any of our national offices. We are also available to help you plan activities in your area. When you come to Israel, we would like to meet you or speak to your group. Please contact us in advance to visit our International Headquarters and Outreach Center in Jerusalem.

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dispatch from Jerusalem

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The Battle for the Heartland

Judea and Samaria is one of the most contested regions on earth. But the battle over Israel's heartland is more complex than Israelis versus Palestinians—and takes place against the backdrop of an ongoing power struggle among the Palestinians.

By Kate Norman

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Rules of Engagement

Israel is known for minimizing civilian casualties during military operations, a record that is far better than most other countries. An IDF soldier must shout at a suspect to halt activities, and then fire a warning shot into the air, only using lethal force when facing a direct threat. That stellar record was recently called into question.

By Cheryl Hauer

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Meet My Israelis

"What are the Israelis like?" It's a difficult question to answer, but not impossible. There are some traits that many Israelis share, cutting across the population to make for a spunky, delightful nation. Allow me to introduce you to a few Israelis—and a few Israeli traits—for a glimpse of what the Israelis are like.

By Ilse Strauss



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One Way to Remember

When mailing letters I often ask the clerk, "I'd like some pretty stamps." With the advent of email and video calls, handwritten letters are becoming things of the past, with less need for postage stamps. But in Israel, postage stamps are not just the means to get a letter delivered; they are a way to remember.

By Janet Aslin

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The Spectacular Caves of Beit Guvrin

Beneath the countryside of central Israel lies an impressive underground system of caves and quarries. This area of the Judean lowlands stretches out over 1,250-acres in the Beit Guvrin–Maresha National Park. In the early spring, the national park is a feast of flowers, but the best-kept secrets are underground.

By Nathan Williams

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Europe for Israel

Europe presents Israel with a distinct paradox. Harnessing the potential and pitfalls emanating from the 44 countries comprising the world's second smallest continent is no small feat. The Israel Allies Foundation has taken on the task of channeling the support of Bible-believing Christians to turn Europe for Israel.

By Ilse Strauss



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The Quirks of Israel—Gastronomic Delights

From the pen of Peter Fast, national director of Canada and the future CEO of Bridges for Peace International, comes the fifth installment of this exciting series. Join Peter on a journey through the wonderfully peculiar culture, traditions, heritage and daily life of this singular nation.

By Peter Fast

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Food Needs

**Dramatically
Increase**



In the past months, we have seen requests for food increase dramatically as food prices have risen by 18%. We have continually dug deep into our reserves to help meet the needs, but now our reserves are getting low. Unless we see an increase in food giving, we will not be able to continue at the same level of distribution. Many who were just barely getting by before the food prices rose dramatically now simply can't supply the food their families need. Some 25% of Israelis live in poverty. Of these, 265,000 experience severe shortages of nutrition, while an equal number experience moderate shortages of nutrition. Only 30,000 of these needy Israelis receive state food assistance. Bridges for Peace is helping meet food needs for 24,000 people every month, but the needs are much higher.

Kiryat Malachi

We help 50 families in a small central city called Kiryat Malachi (City of Angels). The food is distributed through the social welfare department to those with the greatest needs. Here are a couple of their stories.

A Mother's Story

"I am a single parent with four children. My children and I are living only from the allocation from Israel's National Insurance [a pittance, which doesn't even come close to covering rent on a basic, run-down apartment]. I have a lot of difficulty supporting my family in my given condition.

"Once a month I do receive food parcels, which are a big help for me and my children. The food items which I receive are allowing me to save the money so I can buy other food items for my family like dairy products, vegetables and some meat. Those food parcels are a gift of Bridges for Peace, which are a great relief for my family's economy. A woman like me needs to carefully calculate about every *shekel* (US 25 cents) I spend. Thank you very much."

An Elderly Woman's Story

"I am an elderly woman of 80 years of age. I do receive my elder's allowance from the Israel National Insurance and this is my only income, which is hardly enough for my living. But Bridges for Peace is giving our community on a monthly basis a food pallet, which is given to us, the needy, in printed plastic bags [saying Christians from Bridges for Peace supplied this food]. As I save those

food items, I can buy for myself another item, which is for my basic needs. Thank you very much, dear donors of Bridges for Peace."

A Social Worker Comments

"There are more needy people who receive food from you and they are very happy to know that somebody cares for them. We all are very happy for you and for your monthly support to our city, Kiryat Malachi."

Inflation Hits Us All

We recognize that you are also experiencing soaring food costs. Even though it is hard, most of us are still able to supply food to our families. In North America, October and November is when we praise God for His provision of food (Canada's Thanksgiving Day was on October 10, while the US celebration was on November 24). Let's remember that many of Jesus' (Yeshua's) earthly family are suffering from food insecurity. He told us to feed the hungry saying, "...Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (Matt. 25:40b). The single mother with four children counting every *shekel* (like every US quarter) and the elderly woman are some of the family of Jesus. It makes me smile to know Jesus accepts this as a gift from us to Him. It makes me sad when we don't have the funds to help more in desperate need. Please give from your heart for the needy of Israel. No gift is too small or too large. The needs are great.

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





RUSSIA LAUNCHES IRANIAN SATELLITE THAT COULD SPY ON WEST

IN AUGUST, RUSSIA successfully launched an Iranian satellite into orbit from a Russian spaceport in Kazakhstan.

The launch is the “beginning of strategic cooperation between Iran and Russia in the space industry,” said Iran’s minister of communication and information technology, Eesa Zarepoor, who was present at the launch, Iran’s *Tasnim News Agency* reported.

High-resolution images taken by the satellite will be used for Iran’s environmental and agricultural sectors, Zarepoor said.

Washington and Jerusalem disagree.

The *Associated Press* reported ahead of the launch that Iran will be able to wield the satellite to monitor Israel as well as the rest of the Middle East.

The West also fears that Russia will use the satellite to spy on Ukraine amid Moscow’s ongoing invasion of its neighbor, according to the *Associated Press* report, which was republished by the *Washington Post*.

The Iranian Space Agency (ISA) responded to the allegation in a statement saying the satellite will be controlled and operated by Iranian experts from Iranian bases.

“No third country is able to access the information” from the satellite, the ISA said, as quoted by *Tasnim*, calling the Western allegations “untrue.”

Even if the Iranian claims are true, Tehran did not counter the claim that the information will be used against its archenemy, the Jewish state.

The satellite “is a real breakthrough,” Tal Inbar of the US-based Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance told the *New York Times*. “For the first time, Iran owns and operates a satellite with a high imaging resolution, much better than they had until now.”

The high-image resolution images from the satellite will provide Tehran with “much more accurate intelligence information for military operations of their forces as well as for the organizations they support,” Inbar added.

Organizations that Iran supports in the region include Hezbollah, the terror army based in Lebanon, as well as Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip.

“This is a significant narrowing of the technological gap between Iran and Israel and the United States,” Inbar warned.

The satellite launch comes just under a month after Russian President Vladimir Putin’s visit to his Iranian counterpart, Ebrahim Raisi, as well as Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khomeini. It was Putin’s first international trip since his invasion of Ukraine began on February 24, and was intended to strengthen ties between the two nations that are under severe Western sanctions.

A day before Moscow announced Putin’s trip, the White House said the Iranian government was preparing to equip Russia with several hundred drones for use in its invasion of Ukraine.

Kate Norman, *Bridges for Peace*

Israel Thwarted over 300 'Significant' Terror Attacks this Year

IN THE FIRST NINE MONTHS of 2022, Israel's internal security agency, the Shin Bet, prevented widespread bloodshed by thwarting more than 300 "significant" terror attacks, translating to nearly 40 major assaults foiled per month.

Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar said, "We foiled 312 significant terrorist attacks, stabbings, shootings, suicide attacks, and have made 2,110 arrests" since the beginning of the year.

According to Bar, the achievement can be ascribed to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) ramping up its operations in Judea and Samaria under the Shin Bet's direction.

The IDF launched Operation Break the Wave in late March to curb a deadly terror wave that saw 19 people murdered in six separate attacks across Israel in a matter of weeks. While the operation has brought an end to the deadly wave of terror and returned a sense of security to Israel's streets, tensions in Judea and Samaria—or the so-called West Bank—have been simmering.

The area has experienced multiple terror attacks, including Palestinian gunmen firing at a number of military posts and civilian targets across Judea and Samaria, stabbing attacks, car ramming and multiple stone-throwing attacks on civilian cars across the area.

Following a shooting attack on a passenger bus traveling in the Jordan Valley in September, a senior IDF officer said, "We are in a very complex period that has not yet ended. Every month we arrest terrorists who could carry out attacks like these. This is a fact. We manage to thwart some attacks, but sometimes some slip through."

Ilse Strauss, Bridges for Peace

Israel Defense Minister
Benny Gantz



Iran Setting up New Missile Factories in Syria

IN SEPTEMBER, ISRAELI DEFENSE Minister Benny Gantz revealed a map marked with 10 red dots across Syria. Each of these dots, he said, represents a military facility used to produce advanced weapons for Iran and its terror proxies in the region.

"Iran is building terror industries in Syria for its needs," Gantz explained. "Recently it started building advanced industries in Yemen and Lebanon as well. This trend must be stopped."

"The sites that I reveal to you on the map, and in particular the underground site in Masyaf where precision missiles are manufactured, constitute a significant potential threat to the region and to Israel," he added.

According to Gantz, the Iranian initiative to assemble a "terror industry" in Syria for its personal use was born under the former head of Iran's elite Quds Force, Qassem Suleimani, who the US killed in a targeted airstrike in Bagdad in January 2020.

Gantz said that the two years since Suleimani's assassination have seen a "sharp increase in Iran's violent activity" in the region, with Tehran funneling some US \$1 billion to its terror proxies in the region. Lifting Western sanctions on the Islamic Republic, he expounded, would translate to an additional US \$100 billion at Iran's disposal, much of which will end up in its terror proxies' coffers.

He called on the international community to answer Iran's terror activities with a "credible and tangible military option"—and issued a stern warning to Syria to put a swift end to Iran using its facilities to produce precision-guided missiles.

Ilse Strauss, Bridges for Peace



Extremely Rare Document from First Temple-period Repatriated

IN A JOINT INTELLIGENCE OPERATION, the Antiquities Theft Prevention unit of the Israel Antiquities Authority [IAA] and Professor Shmuel Ahituv, recipient of the Israel Prize for Biblical Studies—with the help of the Ministry of Culture and Sport as well as the Ministry of Jerusalem and Heritage—succeeded in repatriating a First Temple-period document, dated to the late seventh or early sixth century BC. The document is written in ancient Hebrew script on papyrus, and it was probably found in the Judean Desert caves.

The extremely rare document is composed of four torn lines that begin with the words, “To Ishmael send...” The text hints that it is a fragment of a letter containing instructions to the recipient. Based on the writing, it is proposed that the ‘Ishmael Papyrus’ dates to the seventh to sixth centuries BC, joining only two other documents from this period in the IAA Dead Sea Scrolls collection. All three papyri come from the Judean Desert, where the dry climate enabled the preservation of the papyri.

The story began when Dr. Ada Yardeni, scholar of Ancient Hebrew Scripts, passed away in June 2018, and Ahituv was asked to complete the publication of a document she was working on. Ahituv was surprised to encounter the photograph of a rare and until then unknown document from the First Temple-period, together with Yardeni’s preliminary decipherment. This led to a joint campaign by Ahituv and the Antiquities Theft Prevention unit of the IAA to locate the whereabouts of the original document.

The intelligence mission succeeded, and the person who owned the papyrus—a resident of Montana, USA—was located. He explained that the papyrus was given to his mother when she visited Jerusalem in 1965 by Joseph Sa’ad, curator of the Rockefeller Museum, and Halil Iskander Kandu, a well-known antiquities dealer from Bethlehem, who many years ago, sold thousands of Dead Sea Scroll fragments. Back home, his mother hung the framed scroll fragment on the wall.

In order to persuade the owner to transfer the fragile document to Israel, where it would be conserved in

climate-controlled conditions, he was invited to visit the IAA Judean Desert Scroll department’s conservation laboratory in Jerusalem. After the visit, the owner was convinced that those were the best conditions to conserve and research the rare document, and he generously gave it to the IAA.

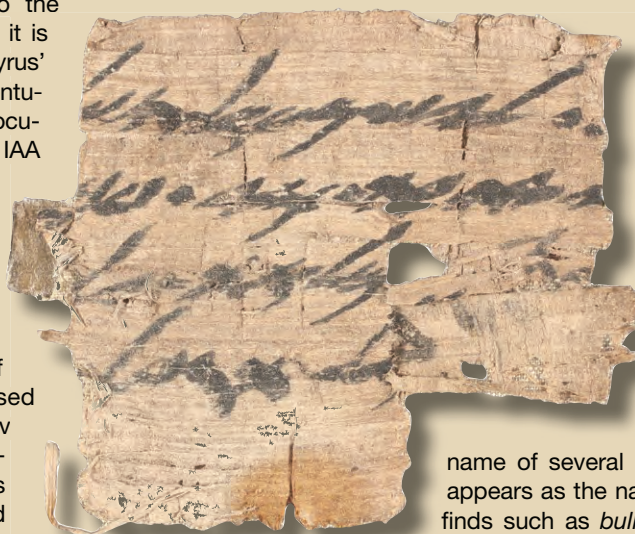
The Dead Sea Scrolls department conserved the papyrus and documented it with the modern multispectral system used to monitor the state of the scrolls.

In order to confirm that the document was genuine, a small sample was radiometrically dated in the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot. The sample provided a date similar to that determined by the paleographic evaluation (based on the letter forms), thus consolidating the dating towards the end of the First Temple period.

According to Ahituv, “The name Ishmael mentioned in the document was a common name in the biblical period, meaning ‘God will hear.’ It first appears in the Bible as the name of the son of Abraham and Hagar, and it is subsequently the personal name of several individuals in the Bible. It also appears as the name of officials on paleographic finds such as *bullae* (clay stamp seals) used for sealing royal documents in the administration of the Kingdom of Judah, for example the *bullā* reading, ‘To Yishmael, son of the king.’ The present document probably certified a dispatchment either to or from Yishmael.”

“Towards the end of the First Temple period, writing was widespread,” says Dr. Joe Uziel, director of the IAA Judean Desert Scrolls department. “However, First Temple-period documents written on organic materials—such as this papyrus—have scarcely survived. Whilst we have thousands of scroll fragments dating from the Second Temple period, we have only three documents, including this newly found one, from the First Temple period. Each new document sheds further light on the literacy and the administration of the First Temple period.”

Israel Antiquities Authority





Ancient Burial Cave Unearthed on Israeli Beach

AN EXCEPTIONAL AND amazing discovery from the time of Rameses II, the Pharaoh associated with the biblical Exodus from Egypt, was revealed in September when a mechanical digger penetrated the roof of a cave in the Palmahim Beach National Park in the course of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority development works.

The Israel Antiquities Authority [IAA] archaeologists were called to the site and descended via ladder into the astonishing space that appeared to have frozen in time. The hewn cave is square in form with a central supporting pillar. Several dozens of intact pottery and bronze artifacts were lain out in the cave, exactly as they were arranged in the burial ceremony, about 3,300 years ago. These vessels were burial offerings that accompanied the deceased in the belief that they would serve the dead in the afterlife.

According to Dr. Eli Yannai, IAA Bronze Age expert: "This is a once-in-a-lifetime discovery! It is extremely rare to come across an 'Indiana Jones' film set"—a cave floor laid out with vessels untouched for 3,300 years since the Late Bronze Age, about the time of the powerful King Rameses II. The fact that the cave was sealed and not looted in later periods will allow us to employ the modern scientific methods available today to retrieve much information from the artifacts and from the residues existent on the vessels. The cave may furnish a complete picture of the Late Bronze Age funerary customs. The cave predominantly contains tens of pottery vessels of different forms and sizes, including deep and shallow bowls, some red-painted, footed chalices, cooking pots, storage jars and lamps for lighting.

"The finds in the cave date to the 13th century BC (Late Bronze Age IIB). In this period, in the long reign of the Nineteenth Egyptian Dynasty Pharaoh Rameses II, the

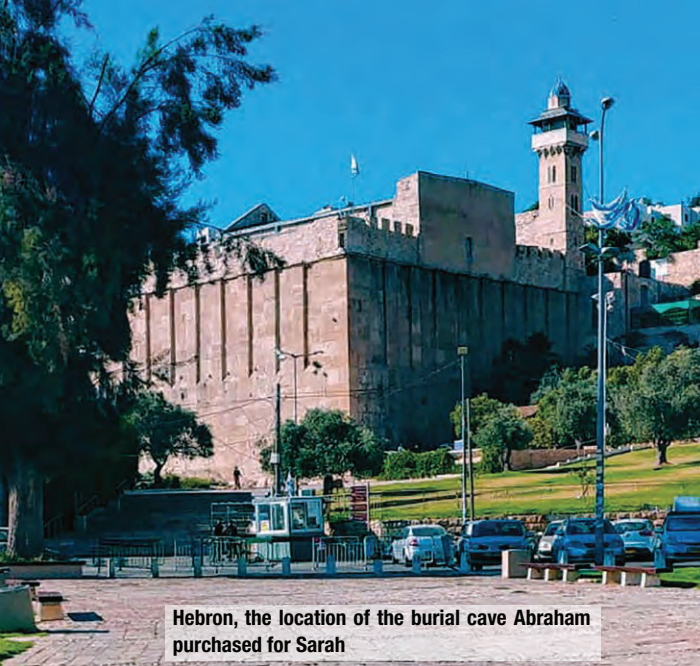
Egyptian Empire controlled Canaan, and the Egyptian administration provided secure conditions for extensive international trade. These economic and social processes are reflected in the burial cave that contains pottery vessels imported from Cyprus and from Ugarit on the northern Syrian coast, as well as from nearby coastal towns, including Yafo (Jaffa), Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gaza and Tel Ajjul, clearly showing that the population of Yavneh-Yam (Palmahim Beach), played an integral part in the lively trading activity that took place along the coast."

Once discovered, the burial cave was sealed and guarded, but it is evident that it was disturbed by one or more looters, who stole some vessels. This is now under investigation.

According to Eli Eskosido, director of the IAA, and Raya Shurky, the director of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, "The discovery in the Palmahim National Park is unique and absolutely astonishing! The news of the discovery of the cave spread like wildfire in the academic world, and we have already received requests from many scholars to take part in the planned archaeological excavation. Within a few days, we will formulate a plan to carry out the research and the protection of this unique site, which is a feast for the archaeological world and for the ancient history of the land of Israel."

Israel Antiquities Authority

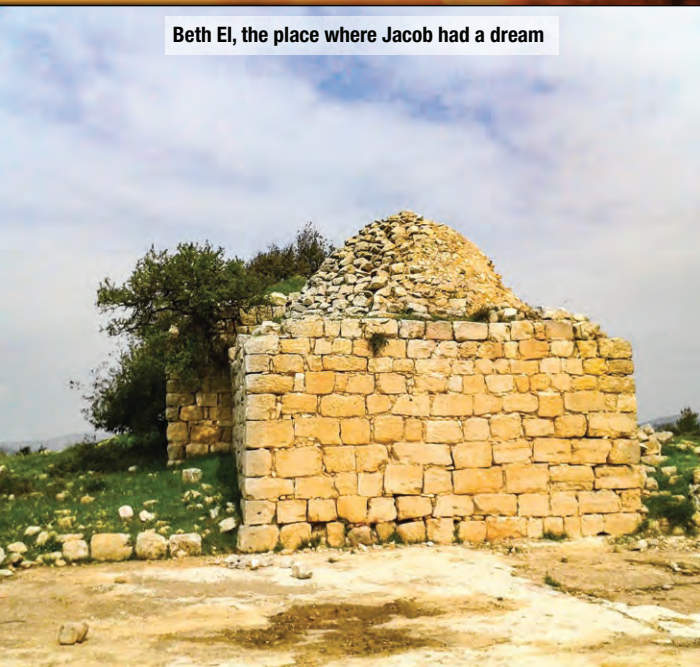




Hebron, the location of the burial cave Abraham purchased for Sarah



Shiloh, the home of the Tabernacle for 369 years



Beth El, the place where Jacob had a dream

The

BATTLE

for the Heartland

"Judea and Samaria"—the name Judea says it all—is territory that historically had an important Jewish presence," former US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman said in 2020. "As they say, it is the biblical heartland of Israel. It includes Hebron, where Abraham purchased a burial cave for his wife Sarah; Shiloh, where the Tabernacle rested for 369 years before the Temple was built by King Solomon in Jerusalem; Beth El, where Jacob had his dream of the ladder ascending to heaven; Kasr al-Yahud, where Joshua led the Israelite nation into the Promised Land and John the Baptist baptized Jesus [Yeshua], and so many other famous locations."

"So," Friedman asked, "intuitively, who has a good claim to the land?"

Despite the obvious answer, Judea and Samaria is one of the most contested regions in the world. The name "West Bank" dates back to when the parcel of land, located on the "west bank" of the Jordan River, was under Jordanian control from 1948 to 1967. It is home to half a million Jewish people and over 2.7 million Arabs. It is the main portion of land that the Palestinians say they want for an independent state, with eastern Jerusalem as its capital.

But the battle for control over Israel's heartland is much more complex than Israelis versus Palestinians—and takes place against the backdrop of an ongoing power struggle among the Palestinians.



Kasr al-Yahud, the Jordan River

The Palestinian Authority

Just north of Jerusalem lies Ramallah, the de facto capital of the Palestinian Authority (PA), which governs the Palestinian population in parts of Judea and Samaria.

PA President Mahmoud Abbas is currently serving the 17th year of his four-year term. Though the president proclaims words of peace at the United Nations and to international audiences, at home he incites violence among his own people, praising and financially rewarding “martyrs” who spill Jewish blood. However, Abbas is 86 years old, and his declining health has sparked a competition for the coveted role of his successor.

Hamas, Backed by Iran

Meanwhile, Hamas maintains control of the more than two million people living in the Gaza Strip. Yet the terror group is no longer content with being relegated to the coastal enclave, and is extending its reach into the biblical heartland.

Hamas ended a power struggle for the Gaza Strip in 2007, when it violently ousted Fatah officials from the enclave. Fatah, the leading secular Palestinian political party, comprises most of the PA. The two have been rivals since then to win the Palestinian throne.

The puppet master behind Hamas—as well as behind the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), Hamas’s rival and the second largest terror group in Gaza—is Iran. The regime in Tehran provides money, weapons and training for both these terror proxies, who, in turn, do Iran’s bidding. Tehran’s terror puppets extending their reach into Israel’s biblical heartland furthers the regime’s dream of expanding its Shia Crescent across the Middle East.

Wave of Terror and Tensions

A deadly terror wave broke over Israel between March and May 2022, when 19 people were killed in six separate terror attacks across the country.

Though Hamas did not claim any of the terrorists involved in the bloody wave, the group issued statements after each attack, praising the bravery and heroism of each “martyr” for their part in the “resistance” and calling for more blood.

In March, the Israeli military launched “Operation Break the Wave” to curb the flood of terror. The operation entails frequent counterterrorism raids, mostly in the Samarian cities of Jenin and Nablus, both hotbeds of terrorist activity. Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi announced in September that 1,500 wanted Palestinians had been arrested and hundreds of terror attacks thwarted.

The Palestinians are not taking the operation lying down, as terrorists—reportedly funded by Hamas and PIJ—are regularly ready and waiting for the incoming Israeli soldiers.

At the end of September, when the Jewish people were celebrating the fall festivals, the counterterror raids were met with fierce resistance, sparking a gunfight that saw four terror suspects killed. The Israeli military identified one of them

as the brother of a terrorist who murdered three people in Tel Aviv in April as well as a terrorist behind shooting attacks in Judea and Samaria. According to the military, they were planning “significant attacks against Israel in the near future.” Israel’s leaders have vowed to continue the fight against terrorism as long as the threat remains.

Head of the Heartland

Such a complicated situation negates the seemingly simple two-state solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Who would be Israel’s partner in peace? The PA? Hamas? The PIJ? Iran?

Most people turn to the PA as Israel’s most likely peace partner, viewing it as a moderate Palestinian entity. They overlook the groups’ ties to terror and its “Pay-for-Slay” financial reward program for terrorists. Yet even if the PA were a willing peace partner, Abbas and his leadership—who advocate for peace and diplomacy before the United Nations and incite to bloodshed back home—have governed their people with corruption and mismanagement. That has left a bad taste in the mouths of the next generation of Palestinians.

As a result, more young Palestinians are turning to Hamas and the PIJ for less talk and more action. And Hamas is wielding its growing influence and preparing for a takeover in Israel’s heartland, an expert on Israeli and Palestinian relations warned in September.

Col. (res.) Grisha Yakubovich served as head of the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), the IDF’s organization that promotes coordination between Israelis and Palestinians in Judea and Samaria.

“Hamas has been silent recently; we are not hearing them,” Yakubovich told *JNS*. “On the Palestinian street, this silence is being interpreted as preparations by Hamas to attempt a repeat of their 2007 takeover of Gaza—this time in Judea and Samaria.”

Yakubovich added that Hamas seeks to “become the primary leader of the Palestinians, and it is skillfully navigating a path towards that goal,” cautioning that the power struggle could result in a Palestinian civil war.

In fact, each Palestinian group attempting to manipulate the escalating violence for its own ambitions could spark an all-out war, with Israel fighting for its ancient heartland while Hamas, the PIJ and the PA duke it out for the Palestinian throne—all while Iran pulls the strings from behind the scenes.

In the battle for the biblical heartland, will the Israeli counterterror operations bring the violence under control, or will the Palestinian power struggle explode on the land where the patriarchs, prophets and kings walked?



By Kate Norman, *BFP Staff Writer*

RULES of Engagement

In the past months, the State of Israel has come under fire regarding the Israel Defense Force's (IDF's) Rules of Engagement (ROE). ROE are simply the internal rules or directives afforded military forces that define the circumstances, conditions, degree and manner in which the use of force may be applied. Open-fire policies determine those instances when lethal force is merited. It is up to every sovereign nation to determine what those rules and policies will be and how they will be implemented during times of armed conflict.

The State of Israel is known for its record in minimizing civilian casualties during military operations, a record that is far better than most other countries, including the United States. An IDF soldier is required to shout at a suspect to halt activities, and then fire a warning shot into the air, only using lethal force in case of a direct threat.

Only in 2019 were those protocols changed to include allowing soldiers the option to fire on thieves who are breaking into military bases to steal weapons and ammunition or when enemy combatants are raining stones on their heads or lobbing Molotov cocktails at them or civilians. Even with those options on the table, however, IDF soldiers often choose non-lethal responses, even if it endangers their lives. The following excerpt is from the Fundamental Core Values in the IDF Code of Conduct:

The IDF servicemen and women will use their weapons and force only for the purpose of their mission, only to the necessary extent and will maintain their humanity even during combat. IDF soldiers will not use their weapons and force to harm human beings who are not combatants or prisoners of war, and will do all in their power to avoid causing harm to their lives, bodies, dignity and property.

(Read *Extreme Measures* in our October edition that unpacks how the IDF incorporates the sanctity of life—both that of its soldiers and that of the enemy—in its Code of Conduct.)

Another Shot Heard Round the World

That stellar record was called into question, however, on May 11, 2022, when Shireen Abu Akleh, a Palestinian-American journalist, was shot and killed. The incident occurred while Abu Akleh was working as a reporter for the Arabic-language channel *Al Jazeera*, covering an armed conflict between the IDF and Palestinian insurgents near Jenin.

Abu Akleh was the daughter of Arab Christians from Bethlehem and spent time in the US with relatives where she obtained US citizenship. She was a 25-year veteran of battlefield journalism and one of the most prominent names across the Middle East for her reporting on events affecting Palestinians and analyzing Israeli politics. Outrage over her death was immediate and widespread.

Although Israel immediately invited the Palestinian Authority (PA) to a joint investigation of the circumstances surrounding the incident, the PA refused in favor of their own investigation—all the while blatantly accusing Israel of intentionally targeting Abu Akleh. *Al Jazeera*, *CNN*, the *New York Times*, the EU and countless global news and social media outlets immediately jumped on the bandwagon, holding Israel solely responsible for Abu Akleh's death, making her a "martyr to the Israeli occupation."

Initially, Israel thought the journalist had been killed by a stray Palestinian bullet. Yet after conducting their own thorough investigation, the army issued a statement indicating that there was a "high possibility" that she was "accidentally hit by IDF gunfire that was fired toward suspects identified as armed Palestinian gunmen during an exchange of fire in which life-risking, widespread and indiscriminate shots were fired toward IDF soldiers." Although the IDF stated they had the rifle that may have fired the shot, it was impossible to tell without a forensic examination of the bullet. That bullet was in the possession of the PA, who refused to surrender it at the time.



Pointing Fingers

The next day, the Biden administration publicly demanded that Israel change its ROE. US State Department spokesman Ned Price said the US “has made it a priority to mitigate and respond to civilian harms caused by military operations.” Other US officials were outspoken in their condemnation of Israeli actions and promised to continue to pressure the Jewish state until their ROE were changed.

According to British political correspondent Melanie Phillips, American intervention in the sovereign affairs of Israel was nothing but “extraordinary arrogance.” Former Prime Minister Naphtali Bennett responded cryptically: “I expect our friends in the world not to preach morality to us but to back us up in our war on terror. No one will dictate our rules of engagement to us when we are the ones fighting for our lives.” Prime Minister Yair Lapid added, “I will not allow an IDF soldier that was protecting himself from terrorist fire to be prosecuted just to receive applause from abroad. Our soldiers have the full backing of the government of Israel and the people of Israel.” However, he also extended Israel’s deepest sympathies to Abu Akleh’s family and expressed profound sorrow over her death.

In July, the PA surrendered the bullet that killed Abu Akleh to a team of Israeli technicians and renowned ballistic expert Nahum Shahaf. That bullet, said Shahaf, had undergone “a severe transformation at the hands of a hammer creat[ing] a deep depression in its back.” It had been rendered unusable in determining what gun had fired it. Further, the type of rifle used by the IDF which the PA said fired the bullet was “considered lethal at a distance of over 100 meters.” A bullet from such a rifle couldn’t have caused the terrible wounds to the reporter’s head and spine.

The US responded by referencing “an extremely detailed forensic analysis,” which indicated that they had found “no reason to believe that this was intentional but rather the result of tragic circumstances.” They welcomed Israel’s evaluation of the incident and made no further request for changes to the IDF’s ROE.

The Witch Hunt Continues

Unfortunately, this is not the end of the story. The PA has made clear their intention to appeal to the International Criminal Court, accusing the IDF of intentionally murdering Abu Akleh and demanding that criminal charges be brought against the soldier who fired the shot.



Cheryl Hauer, *International Vice President*

In the meantime, Israel continues to face an enemy who reveres death, teaches its young people to seek martyrdom and uses women and children as human shields—all the while struggling to protect the dignity of every human being regardless of his or her religion or nationality, gender or race, whether friend or foe.



Meet My Israelis

"What are the Israelis like?"

It's a question I get asked often. Friends and family who have never visited Israel are naturally a bit curious about the people who call the Promised Land home. It's a difficult question to answer though. How do you summarize an infinitely diverse melting pot of a nation with some 9.5 million inhabitants—many who have come home after generations in America, Africa, Australia and everywhere else in between, carrying bits of the culture of the lands of their exile with them?

Still, it's not entirely impossible. There are a number of unique traits that many Israelis share, cutting across the population to make for a distinctively spunky, delightful nation unlike any other. So allow me to introduce you to a few Israelis—and a few typical Israeli traits—for a glimpse of what the Israelis are like.

They're Direct

I was having coffee with an Israeli friend one day, when she suddenly paused mid-sentence, studied me through narrowed eyes and then blurted, "I don't like your hair like that. It makes your face look fat."

Direct. Straightforward. Brutally honest. Call it what you will. Israelis are known for candidly voicing an uncut version of their thoughts and feelings. They tell it like it is—sometimes to the point of appearing blunt—without sugarcoating their opinion with socially acceptable niceties or a veneer of pleasantries.

It can sting, sure, but here's the thing. You never have to wonder where you stand with an Israeli. There's no hypocrisy, no pretense and no insincerity; just the simple, unfiltered truth as they see it.

Perhaps more importantly though. The typical Israeli directness is not mean-spirited. It comes from a place of

love. The population of Israel functions more like an extended family than mere countrymen or women sharing a geographical location. And family protects family, defends family and above all, loves one another enough to tell the unvarnished truth—even if it stings.

They Get Involved

I once helped an elderly lady lug her groceries up the stairs to her apartment. After depositing the bags in her kitchen, she snuck a peak at my left hand and inquired, "Are you married?"

Yes, Israelis are inquisitive—some would even say nosy. No detail of your life is off limits, including the ones you consider private. Everyone from the cashier at the corner shop to the grandmother next to you on the bus to the guy selling *falafel* feels perfectly at ease asking—sometimes within the first few minutes of striking up a conversation—if you're married (and if not, why?), how many children you have (and if none, why?) or who you voted for in the election.

The distinctive Israeli inquisitiveness also extends to the everyday, mundane parts of your life. Only in Israel will a fellow shopper weigh in on your choice of tomatoes; will a stranger on the sidewalk reprimand you for your child's lack of headgear in such hot weather; or will a waiter instruct you to rethink the order you just placed.

Hear me out though. Israelis don't pry—and weigh—into one another's affairs to satisfy their curiosity. All of Israel functions as an extended family, remember? And the job of a family is to get involved in each other's business so that they can help one another out. If you're single, the grandmother on the bus has a grandson who'd be perfect for you. The stranger on the sidewalk

recognizes a new mom unaccustomed to the Middle Eastern heat. The waiter knows that the dish you just ordered is terrible. And as part of the family, they have to intervene so that they can help you out.

They're Loud

Then there was the time I sat down for dinner with an Israeli friend and his parents. During the first few bites of the meal, the rapid-fire Hebrew conversation—which I'd lost track of almost immediately—descended into a full-blown fight. As father, mother and son traded heated arguments, I excused myself to wait out the quarrel in the garden.

My friend followed moments later, curious as to why I had walked out mid-meal. I explained that I wanted to give them privacy during their fiery family feud. His jaw dropped.

"I was telling them what I did today," he exclaimed.

Ah, yes. Israelis live unashamedly out loud. This trait applies to everything from everyday conversations between individuals who feel no animosity toward one another sounding like shouting matches to breaking into spontaneous song in the dead of night in a residential area where everyone else is sleeping.

The reason behind this trait remains a mystery. Perhaps Israelis have simply learned to live to the utmost, with every bit of heart, heat and passion—and, of course, with the volume turned up all the way.

They're the Sons and Daughters of the Faithful

I could go on. I could tell you about Israelis' respect for the elderly, how everyone under the age of 50 leaps from their seats when an older person gets on the bus. I could share about their aversion to forming an orderly line, turning every queuing situation into a tense, unspoken battle to reach the front first. And I could touch on the innate sense of trust that prompts them to deposit their baby in the embrace of a perfect stranger in a coffee shop while they pop to the bathroom. I'd rather leave you with this final example though.

I once shared a bus seat with a burly soldier scrolling through the newsfeed on his phone of Iran unleashing a barrage of rockets on Israel. As he caught me watching him, he motioned to the pictures of fiery explosions lighting up the night sky and offered reassuringly, "Don't be afraid. He who watches over us doesn't slumber or sleep."

Of course, not everyone in Israel is religious, but even in the most secular of Israelis lingers the echoes of faith woven into their DNA. These are the sons and daughters of Abraham, Esther, Gideon and Ezra. These are the offspring of the people God calls a "*special treasure*" (Deut. 14:2). Is it any wonder then that the Israelis are a nation unlike any other?



Ilse Strauss, News Bureau Chief



A SNAPSHOT OF BLESSING

THE VOLCANI CENTER IS THE LARGEST institution devoted to agricultural research and development in Israel, advancing agriculture in the Jewish state and abroad through innovation and problem solving.

Headquartered in Rishon LeZion with experimental research stations in the north and south, the Volcani Center is responsible for many of Israel's groundbreaking developments in plant and animal breeding, protected agriculture, irrigation, arid-land agriculture, postharvest handling, crop protection and farm mechanization.

Here are 10 of the many Volcani Center innovations over the past century:

- The Israeli cow is the world champion milk producer. A hundred years ago, milk production per cow was 700 liters [183 gal.] per year, while now it's 12,000 liters [3,170 gal.]. The secret: the Israeli Holstein cow, a breed developed at the Volcani Center.
- A series of durum wheat cultivars—each named after an Israeli agriculture minister—are used to produce top-quality pasta. One was even grown in Italy by a leading pasta company.
- A closed-loop aquaculture system provides fish for food and wastewater for crops that can feed livestock.
- Globally successful new fruits and vegetables such as easy-peeling Orri mandarin oranges and Or tangerines; the nutritious Orangetti spaghetti squash; the Table-Sugar acorn squash; the Tomaisin cherry tomato; and the bright yellow Goldy zucchini squash.
- A gene therapy that prevents day blindness in sheep that was later applied to humans suffering from a disease that causes blindness by damaging the retina.
- A machine that can pick out 95% of the seeds in a pomegranate, extracting the seeds from 16 pomegranates per minute.
- The Aliza grapefruit, named after Volcani researcher Aliza Vardi, is unique among grapefruits because it does not contain furanocoumarins, compounds that can interact dangerously with some medications.
- A simple, quick and inexpensive technique for detecting pesticide and drug residues on fruits and vegetables, as well as in water and air, based on the same principle as home pregnancy tests.
- The use of insect pheromones as “traps” for monitoring and disrupting the mating of harmful pests such as the red palm weevil, that can infest date trees.

Excerpt from an article by Abigail Klein Leichman, *Israel21c* via *Jewish News Syndicate*

NASA Heads to Space with a Little Help from Israel



IN EARLY SEPTEMBER, NASA's Artemis I, an unmanned space expedition, departed on a 42-day journey which took it on a voyage around the moon. This launch was the first in a series of three intended to test systems designed by NASA for future deep space travel—possibly to Mars.

One of the biggest hazards faced by space crews is solar radiation which increases dramatically the further one travels from planet earth. Tests performed at the International Space Station have revealed that astronauts living there face radiation levels about 50 times higher than we do. NASA's website speculates that, "Farther from Earth's magnetic field and into interplanetary space, the level of radiation exposure during exploration missions could be much higher—up to 150 times more."

Enter the Israeli-made AstroRad vest and the two female manikins (phantoms) aboard the Artemis I. Made of material that simulates human bones, soft tissue and organs, manikins Zohar and Helga will play an important role in determining the level of protection the vest offers. Zohar will wear the protective vest while Helga will not.

Developed by StemRad, an Israeli-American company, working in conjunction with Lockheed Martin, the AstroRad vest is made of high-density polyethylene (HDPE) that protects bone marrow and vital organs from chronic radiation exposure.

NASA writes that "the phantoms have a three-centimeter grid embedded throughout the torsos that will enable scientists to map internal radiation doses to areas of the body that contain critical organs. With two identical torsos, scientists will be able to determine how well the new vest might protect [the] crew from solar radiation, while also collecting data on how much radiation astronauts might experience inside Orion on a lunar mission—conditions that cannot be recreated on Earth."

StemRad was founded in response to the Chernobyl disaster that saw many first responders die from radiation exposure. Today, StemRad fulfills its initial mission by designing and manufacturing radiation protection for civilians who live and work in an ever-increasing nuclear world. And now its products will also protect the astronauts who may one day travel to Mars and beyond.

Janet Aslin, *Bridges for Peace*

GROUNDBREAKING ISRAELI STUDY CURES CANCER IN MICE

ISRAELI RESEARCHERS from Tel Aviv University have discovered a method of targeting a type of brain cell to slow the growth of or completely cure glioblastoma, an aggressive form of cancer that targets the brain and spinal cord.

The research team developed a method that successfully eradicated glioblastoma in lab mice by essentially cutting off the energy supply of the tumors, thus "starving" them.

The researchers targeted astrocytes, star-shaped brain cells that surround the tumors. The astrocytes feed the tumor's growth through two mechanisms: the astrocytes convert immune cells in the brain to switch from attacking the tumor to protecting it and helping it grow. The other mechanism occurs when the astrocytes provide the tumors with cholesterol, which provides them with the energy they need to continue quickly dividing and growing.

"We discovered that the astrocytes surrounding the tumor increase the production of cholesterol and supply it to the cancer cells," Dr. Lior Mayo, supervising doctor of the research team, said. "Therefore, we hypothesized that, because the tumor depends on this cholesterol as its main source of energy, eliminating this supply will starve the tumor."

Their hypothesis produced good results. The research team genetically produced mice with glioblastoma and then targeted the astrocytes surrounding the tumors, suppressing

the cells from releasing cholesterol, effectively starving the tumors by cutting off their energy source.

"We found that when we did this, the tumors vanished and stayed away for as long as we repressed the astrocytes," Dr. Mayo explained.

"In fact, even when we stopped suppressing the astrocytes, some 85% of the mice stayed in remission. However, among the control group...all mice died."

In addition to the mice, the Israeli research team also saw successful results in samples taken from human patients.

"For each patient, we examined the expression levels of genes that either neutralize the immune response or provide the tumor with a cholesterol-based energy supply," the team wrote in their study. "We found that patients with low expression of these identified genes lived longer, thus supporting the concept that the genes and processes identified are important to the survival of glioblastoma patients."

The next step, according to Dr. Mayo, is to either develop a new drug to target the astrocytes, or find an existing drug and repurpose it. If all goes well, this could happen within the next two years.

Kate Norman, *Bridges for Peace*



One Way to Remember

When mailing letters I often ask the postal clerk, “I’d like some pretty stamps, please.” With the advent of email and free video calls via WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger, handwritten letters are becoming things of the past, with less and less need for postage stamps—never mind pretty ones. But in Israel, more than any other country, postage stamps are not just the means to get a letter delivered; they are a way to remember.

As a die-hard letter-writer, I can say that Israel’s stamps have never disappointed me in their variety and significance. They remind us of specific events in Israel’s history, display the natural beauty of the Land, depict influential leaders as well as lesser-known Israelis or call to remembrance the biblical foundation upon which much of the nation’s daily life revolves. Taken as a whole, Israel’s postage stamps are an excellent way to learn about the Land—its past and present, its hopes and dreams, its struggles and successes.

Remembering Biblical Roots

One of Israel’s most colorful biblical stamps is the “High Priest’s Breastplate” and the corresponding set of twelve stamps with individual stones—sardius, topaz, emerald, turquoise, sapphire, diamond, jacinth, agate, amethyst, beryl, onyx, jasper—each engraved with the name of one of the sons of Jacob (from Exod. 39:10–14).

Over the years, many stamps have been issued in commemoration of the Fall Feasts (Lev. 23:23–43) and other biblical holidays. This whimsical series shows the

building of a *sukkah* (booth) for the Feast of Booths and the joyful dancing with a *Torah* (Gen.–Deut.) scroll on *Simchat Torah* (rejoicing in the *Torah*—a day when the *Torah* reading ends and begins anew each year).

Remembering People—Known and Unknown

Remembering people is woven throughout Jewish tradition, and there are many postage stamps that reflect this. Two stamps help us remember two women who contributed to the modern State of Israel in distinctly different ways. Bracha Zefira (1910–1990) was born in Jerusalem to Yemenite



parents and orphaned when she was just three years old. She became a folk singer and actress who helped to create a new style of Middle Eastern Jewish music during her long career.



In contrast, there is little information available in English about Batia Makov (1841–1912). Her commemorative stamp says, “Rehovot—the early days.” We know that Rehovot was founded in 1890 during the First Aliyah (immigration to Israel) by Polish Jews. The early beginnings were difficult, as families like Batia’s struggled to turn uncultivated wasteland into productive agricultural fields. As we look into her face of determined resolve, we catch a glimpse of the fortitude of those early pioneers.

Remembering the Past

When the Israelites followed Joshua across the Jordan River to conquer the Land of Israel, they faced challenges like the walled city of Jericho. Thousands of years later, when the Lord began bringing His people back from the four corners of the earth, they faced the challenge of bringing a desolate land back to life. In three stamps reflecting “50 Years of Settling the Golan, Judea/Samaria and the Jordan Valley” we see the fruit of that labor—apples, dates and Jewish youth waving the Israeli flag.



World War II was a somber time for Jews living in British Mandate Palestine. Aware of the tragedy of Jewish lives being snuffed out during Hitler’s Holocaust, many volunteered to go and fight in Europe. A set of six stamps commemorates those volunteers, some of whom parachuted into Occupied Europe and others who fought as partisans or in the Allied Forces.



Remembering the Reunification of Jerusalem

During the Six Day War of 1967, when Lt. Gen. Motta Gur broadcast these now-famous words, “The Temple Mount is in our hands!”, he signaled the return of the Jews to the Old City and the reunification of Jerusalem. The city was once again whole! Fifty years later, a commemorative sheet that reflects Jerusalem—old and new—shows men praying at the Western Wall on the right and a modern skyscraper on the left. Second only to the establishment of the State of Israel, the reunification of Jerusalem is a treasured memory.




So Many Memories

When I set out to write this article, an Israeli friend made my task so much harder by bringing me a box filled to the brim with stamps. As I slowly looked through the contents of the box, I was overwhelmed. The Israel Postal Company has done an outstanding job of documenting the foundations, momentous events and people that make up this incredible Land. I have chosen only a few stamps to highlight in this article. They are only the tip of the iceberg, so to speak.



Janet Aslin, BFP Staff Writer





Entrance to
one of the
bell caves

The Spectacular Caves

of Beit Guvrin

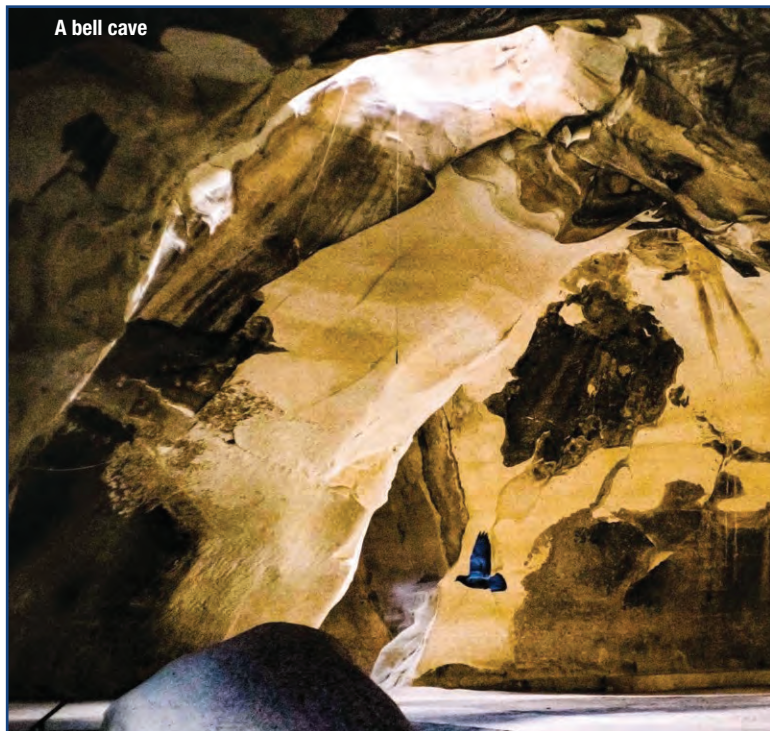
Beneath the picturesque rolling countryside of central Israel, south of Bet Shemesh, lies an impressive underground system of caves and quarries. This unique area of the Judean lowlands stretches out over 1,250-acres in the Beit Guvrin–Maresha National Park. While in the early spring the national park is a feast of flowers, the best-kept secrets are underground.

Ancient History

The national park encompasses a number of smaller sites, ruins and caves from different eras, all of them connected by lovely walking trails. Tel Maresha is the oldest established city on the site. Mentioned in the Bible as a city of Judah given to the clan of Caleb (Josh. 15:44), Maresha also later served as the capital city of the Edomites. In fact, the city passed hands between several people groups: Israelites, Edomites, Sidonians, Greeks and Romans. Maresha was destroyed and rebuilt several times, and after the Parthian invasion in 40 BC, the population center moved two miles (3.2 km.) north to a place called Beit Guvrin.

Historian Flavius Josephus recounts that during the Maccabean revolt, King John Hyrcanus I forced the pagan citizens of Beit Guvrin to convert to Judaism. Josephus recounts that shortly after this, the town was incorporated into the Roman Empire and in fact, Beit Guvrin thrived as a Roman-ruled Jewish city until the destruction of the

Second Temple and the Bar Kochba revolt. In the late Roman period, Beit Guvrin was renamed Eleutheropolis (“City of Freeman”). From this period of Roman rule there remains an amphitheater used for gladiator and animal fights. In the Byzantine period, churches were built in Beit Guvrin, including St. Anne’s Church, and a fortress, the remains of which can still be visited there today.



A bell cave

Underground

While the history and archaeological discoveries in Beit Guvrin are amazing, one of the major attractions is its system of man-made caves. This area of the foothills of the Judean Mountains are made of soft chalk or limestone, surrounded by a hard outer shell. Once this hard shell is penetrated, it is easy to quarry out bricks, even using only rudimentary excavation tools. While historians disagree on whether the excavated stone was strong enough to be used for building, the two main theories for the quarries were to source building materials and then mining the limestone to be burnt for lime (chalk) which was used in mortar, plaster and for laying roads. Whatever the motive, once the limestone had been removed, the cavities that remained could be utilized for a myriad of purposes: water cisterns, storage spaces, dovecotes, tombs and shelter for livestock or people. The underground chambers were perfect for industry, as underground space is cooler in summer and warmer in winter.

In order to maintain the structural integrity of the caves, a small opening of about 3.5 feet (1 m.) wide was made in the hard shell at ground level, then gradually widening to a significantly larger base. This gives the caves a unique dome or bell shape with a small opening in the ceiling. There are over 800 bell caves in the area surrounding Beit Guvrin. Some are linked by extensive networks of tunnels. The largest bell cave is a staggering 60 feet (18 m.) high and due to excellent acoustics has been used as a venue for musical concerts. For an adrenaline rush, visitors can even rappel down the limestone cliffs into some of the caves.

Unique Caves

Among the countless number of caves and underground rooms, there are 85 columbaria. A columbarium, also known as a dovecote, is an installation to raise doves or pigeons. At nearly 100 feet (30 m.) long, the largest dovecote in Beit Guvrin has over 2,000 niches and is shaped like a double cross. Doves were used throughout the region for their meat and their dung, which was used like a fertilizer. Doves were also an accepted ritual sacrifice in the Temple and in other pagan religions. As the once prosperous industry of raising doves faded, so the use of the huge underground structures built for that purpose also changed. In Roman times, columbaria were adapted for the purpose of storing urns of cremated remains of the deceased. However, the prevalent belief about the columbarium at Beit Guvrin is that they were used to raise doves.

A highlight of Beit Guvrin–Maresha are the Sidonian burial caves where the most prominent families of Sidonian, Edomite and Greek communities were buried. Among the hundreds of caves, these are the only ones that are decorated in vibrant colors with frescoes of mythical figures, animals and plants. One can visit the beautifully decorated Apollophanes Cave, the burial cave of the patriarch of the Sidonian settlement, or the Cave of the Musicians, adorned with a man blowing a flute and a woman playing a harp, accompanying the dead with sweet music to their afterlife.

The inhabitants of Beit Guvrin most certainly believed that anything done above ground can be done below, and remarkably, 22 underground olive presses have been discovered. An ancient agricultural installation complex displays an underground olive oil press model that thrived in this area.

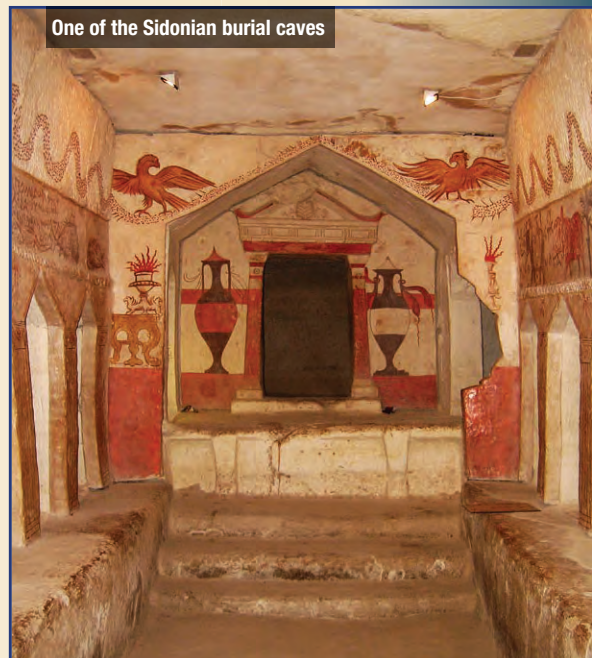


The spectacular Caves of Beit Guvrin are a favorite site to visit, even for seasoned travelers. Be sure to add it to your Israel travel bucket list.

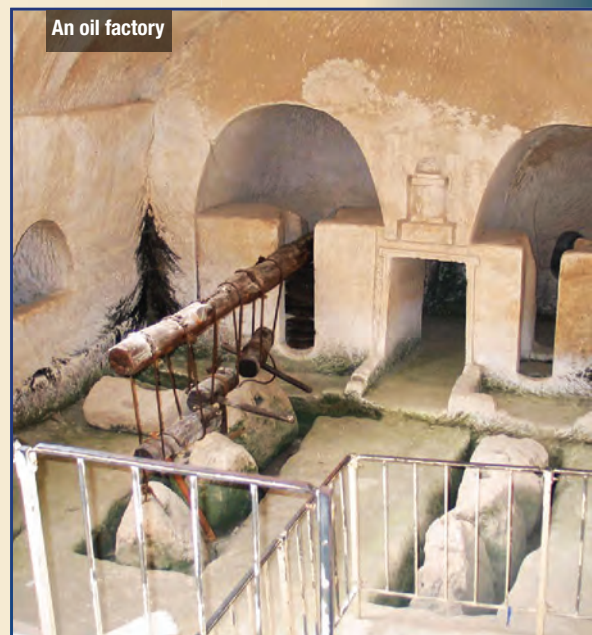
Nathan Williams, *Director of Marketing and Communications*



A dovecote



One of the Sidonian burial caves



An oil factory





EUROPE

for israel

Europe presents Israel with a distinct paradox. There's fierce support and equally fierce opposition; endless prospects alongside endless trials and great opportunities offset by great challenges. Harnessing the potential, promises and pitfalls emanating from the 44 countries comprising the world's second smallest continent to side with Israel is no small feat. Yet the Israel Allies Foundation (IAF) has taken on that task, recently reestablishing its European office to channel the support of Bible-believing Christians to turn Europe for Israel.

TURNING BIBLICAL SUPPORT INTO ACTION

The IAF has a long and fruitful history of garnering global backing for the Jewish state. Founded in 2007, the umbrella organization maintains an unparalleled network of 50 national Israel Allies Parliamentary Caucuses comprising 1,200 leading legislators in their respective national governments on six continents.

What sets the IAF apart from a plethora of others campaigning for the same cause is its use of faith-based diplomacy in the pro-Israel lobby. Josh Reinstein, IAF president, summarizes the approach as "Christians taking their biblical support for Israel and turning it into real political action." It entails leveraging the Christian support within a nation for the legislative efforts of members of the IAF caucuses—elected pro-Israel parliamentarians in their countries—to effect change by ensuring political support for Israel, fighting discriminatory or false legislation and growing the relevant nation's bilateral relationship with Jerusalem.

The results speak for themselves, holds Reinstein. "Today, faith-based diplomacy is the most effective weapon

in Israel's diplomatic arsenal. It's the reason why we have national embassies in Jerusalem, why we have observer status in the African Union and why we have anti-BDS legislation in a number of nations. Faith-based diplomacy is crucial to the State of Israel. And the IAF is the only organization that deals with it."

Moreover, the reestablished IAF European office is the only organization active on the continent that leverages Christian political support to influence Israel-related policy in the individual nations and across the continent as a whole, utilizing faith-based diplomacy as the tool.

SETTING THE STAGE

The European arena is a uniquely charged, challenging one. "Europe is the number one trading partner with Israel and has lots of influence on Israeli policy," says Reinstein. "At the same time, we're seeing tremendous antagonism come out of Europe, more than other parts of the world."

Modern-day Europe's anti-Israel track record is disturbing indeed. The European Union's Middle East policies are advancing its bias against Israel, while the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe habitually includes anti-Israel sentiments in its resolutions. The European Commission pressures its member states to refrain from moving their embassies to Jerusalem and charges Israel with occupying Judea and Samaria, violating international law. Funds from European countries and even the European Union are funneled to Palestinian terror organizations—all while remaining mum about Palestinian indoctrination and incitement to terror. Among the local populations, the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement gains ground with its narrative that pits Israel—the overpowering aggressor that tramples on human



rights and destroys livelihoods—against the hapless Palestinian victims. And in what Reinstein calls a “practice that represents the ugly face of anti-Semitism in Europe today,” legislators are pressured to implement discriminatory labeling policies targeting only Jewish Israelis exporting Israeli goods from Judea and Samaria, Jerusalem and the Golan Heights—while ignoring other disputed territories worldwide.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The IAF is not new to this neighborhood or its challenges. It has existing caucuses in 16 European countries, including the EU, that have scored a number of pro-Israel victories in their respective governments. The reestablished office, headquartered in the Netherlands, has now picked up the baton to advance the effort.

Functioning from a centralized hub, the office will strengthen the current caucuses, form four new caucuses in Bulgaria, Croatia, Moldova and Serbia and develop caucuses in pan-European institutions. This will result in a cohesive network spanning most European countries poised to take coordinated political action and drive campaigns on the national and continental levels.

“What the reestablished office will do is to unite the caucuses and focus on victories in the EU and throughout Europe regarding anti-Israel sentiment,” explains Reinstein. “Instead of just being the finger, we aim to be the fist, bringing all the caucuses together on European-centered initiatives for a stronger impact.”

Addressing the bias of labeling Israeli goods is first on the office’s 2023 agenda. Other topics include turning the tide against BDS, blocking financing to Palestinian terrorist groups, exposing the unjust framing of Israel as an occupying state acting against international law, establishing Jerusalem as its undivided capital and disseminating accurate information to decision makers, especially during times of crisis.

To ensure that the office remains relevant to its target audience, IAF has invited Bridges for Peace and nine other major Christian organizations to serve on its advisory board. “We’ve always worked with grassroots Christians who support Israel,” holds Reinstein. “It is

Christians who put pressure on Christian leaders to put pressure on political leaders to stand with Israel. So, by working with our Christian partners like Bridges for Peace, we’re able to harness these organizations’ support in different countries. Also, because there’s a base of operation for these Christian organizations, we can mobilize faster with the help of our partners. Moreover, it enables us to seek council from organizations who have been involved in pro-Israel activity in real time. That’s why we’ll have quarterly meetings with the Christian advisory board to obtain advice to see how we can do better and be more effective.”

JEWS AND GENTILES TOGETHER

Judging by the impact of IAF’s faith-based diplomatic approach internationally, Europe can look forward to a lot. Reinstein ascribes the success of the approach to two reasons, one practical and the other spiritual.

“On the practical side, as our former President Reuven Rivlin said, there are 15 million Jews and 1 billion Christians, but together we are 1 billion and 15 million. We have the ability to affect change in so many countries because of the unparalleled influence of Bible-believing Christians. We have access to churches, state leaders, country leaders and political leaders because there is such a big Evangelical Christian population in so many countries.”

“We can’t forget the spiritual perspective though. Faith-based diplomacy works because it is biblically correct. I think it’s more important to be biblically correct than politically correct. We believe in the fulfilment of prophecy, and now the time where Jews and Gentiles work together to partner in the fulfilment of prophecy has come upon us.

And whenever Jews and Christians work together on behalf of Israel, we see great success.”



Ilse Strauss, News Bureau Chief



Gastronomic Delights



From the pen of Peter Fast, national director of Bridges for Peace Canada and the future CEO of Bridges for Peace International, comes the fifth installment of the Quirks of Israel. Join Peter on a journey through the wonderfully peculiar culture, traditions, heritage and daily life of this singular nation as he unpacks, introduces and celebrates the quirky aspects that make Israel so wonderfully unique.

Part of the excitement of traveling to a foreign country is tasting the foods of the culture you are visiting. Israel is full of exciting flavors and foods. It is a Middle Eastern country, so demographically and culturally, Israel brings many dishes and flavors from the region of the world in which it exists. Yet Israel is also a nation of immigrants. Jews from over 70 countries have made *aliyah* (immigrated to Israel), and brought their culinary cultures with them. The implication? If you want an authentic Israeli Middle Eastern dish, there's a million different restaurants to choose from. At the same time, if you want authentic Chinese, Korean, French, Italian, Greek, Japanese and so on and so forth, you can also find these foods in abundance. Once I even ate a burger at a Texas Grill in Ariel, the capital city of Samaria.

Let's take a look at some of the gastronomic delights that Israel has to offer.

Food, Glorious Food

If you're in the mood for tender lamb or chicken, your best bet is a *shawarma*. This dish is the perfect marriage of shaved meat, spicy pickles, cabbage, *hummus*, *tahini*, spicy sauce, salad and French fries. All of this is wrapped up in a *laffa* or a flatbread, and devoured.

Then there's the *falafel*, which is basically a pita stuffed with much of the same ingredients as the *schwarma*, except that this is a vegetarian dish. Instead of meat shavings, the star of the show when it comes to a *falafel* is deep fried, mashed chickpeas and fava beans, making for delectable golden brown balls of goodness.



A typical Israeli meal



Shakshuka

You could also eat a traditional *shakshuka*, a skillet dish of spiced tomato sauce with onion, peppers and garlic—with fried eggs nestled in the center. Alternatively, you might opt for a *shish kabab* (ground meat, mixed with herbs and spices, and grilled on a skewer), or for the brave, there's Jerusalem mixed grill. This dish consists of chicken hearts, spleens and liver mixed with bits of lamb cooked on a flat grill, seasoned with onion, garlic, black pepper, cumin, turmeric, olive oil and coriander. It looks tasty, smells good and is very popular, but I've never been able to give it a try.

The Israelis are passionate *hummus* eaters. Made from mashed chickpeas, *hummus* is a very big deal in Israel. It is slathered on everything in abundance. So much so, that if you don't tell the guy making your *falafel* to only use a little *hummus*, your whole meal will be overpowered by this mashed chickpea spread.



For those with a sweet tooth, there's *halva*, a sugary confectionery made from sesame seeds, sugar or honey and flavored with everything from the standard chocolate, vanilla or espresso to the more exotic seasonings like chili and wasabi.

The Israeli breakfast is legendary, especially if you're staying at a hotel. I'm a breakfast man, so I get excited by a good quality breakfast spread. And the Israeli hotels mean to impress. You'll have a dozen or more cheeses, plate after plate of fresh fruit, row after row of fresh vegetables, pastries, four or five different types of bread, chocolate spread, jams, pancakes, a cook standing ready to make you a fresh omelet with an impressive array of fillings, freshly squeezed juice and freshly brewed coffee. Let me tell you, it is an experience!

There are so many other incredible foods in Israel that it is impossible to list them all in this article. Suffice to say that this is a country of gastronomical delights where flavor is king. Walking through any of the markets in Israel, you'll see mountains of spices, meat vendors, fruit vendors and smell wonderful aromas that will blissfully carry you through your day.

Something to Drink

No meal is complete without something to drink. When in Israel, you cannot forget the coffee and tea. Israelis love both these drinks, and the country boasts a plethora of restaurants, coffee shops and tea houses that invite you to choose from an impressive lineup of cappuccino, Turkish coffee, Americano, espresso or latte. Israel is famous for its glorious coffee options, quality roasted beans and wonderful flavors.

As a final point, there's the tea. My mother's side has British roots, and I grew up with an appreciation for a lovely cup of tea. Israel has many exquisite flavors, and I think the one that tops them all is the mint tea. Perhaps it leads my list of favorites because when I drink it, I think of being in Israel. Sometimes they will serve it with the mint leaves right in the hot water and a lump of sugar. Drinking a nice cup of mint tea during the winter months will soothe your bones and take the chill right out of you.

Now picture this: you have your nice cup of mint tea—or cappuccino, latte, Turkish coffee or whatever you like—with a delicious pastry while you sit at a lovely coffee shop in downtown Jerusalem, musing about everything and watching life stream by as you bask in the sunshine. What a perfect way to spend a few hours in the City of Gold!



Peter Fast, National Director,
Bridges for Peace Canada



BOUNCING

BACK



As the sun set on 2021, Israel—along with the rest of the world—was eager to return to a sense of normalcy after nearly two years of lockdown, social distancing and isolation. There were, however, a few nagging questions. Was the fallout of COVID-19 so severe that the repercussions would paralyze us for years to come? What long-term effect did the global pandemic have on economies, societies and the way we had always done things?

Israel looked to 2022 with cautious optimism—vowing to revive the COVID-ravaged economy and resuscitate the tourism industry that had grounded to a halt—but not making any promises. Rebuilding what the pandemic razed would, after all, take time. Yet today, 12 months later, Israel has appeared to bounce back from the domino effect of COVID with remarkable power of endurance.

The Jewish state is no stranger to challenges. This tiny nation continues to face terrorism, war, threats of annihilation, attempts to call its legitimacy into question and accusations of all kinds of evils on a regular basis.

Perhaps these hardships have prepared Israel to take on trials with dogged determination, willing to do what it takes not only to survive but to thrive. And perhaps that is why the Jewish state manages to tackle the post-COVID issues with such confidence.

ECONOMY

“Twelve months ago, Israel’s economists predicted political instability and a sluggish COVID recovery. They were wrong...Economic growth exceeded expectations, logging in at 8.2% last year and is on track to reach 5.5% in 2022. Although some segments are still suffering, the job market bounced back far more quickly than economists



had expected. The jobless rate was 4.1% at the end of December and is due to fall to historic lows this year..."

—David Rosenberg in "The Year Israel Defied All the Economists' Expectations"

"Once again, Israel has proved to be a very resilient economy. As time passes, we are realizing that it is something structural within the economy, which means that each time there is a crisis, Israel manages to survive better than other advanced economies."

—Victor Bahar, chief economist at Bank Hapoalim, a leading Israeli bank

"During the pandemic, the tech sector in Israel and globally became turbocharged, with demand for technologies surging as office workers, fitness classes and schools transitioned to remote mode. Israel, with one of the world's most thriving tech ecosystems and more than 7,000 start-ups, was well positioned to seize this opportunity. Its tech firms helped buffer the economy against the worst of coronavirus's ravages."

—Shoshanna Solomon in "Israel at 74: Economy Shows Resilience, though Clouds Loom Large on the Horizon"

"Israel has been able to do so well because of the strength and diversity of its economy. It is a highly industrialized country mostly based upon a significant amount of research and development in many fields ranging from hi-tech to traditional goods manufacturing. Although Israel lacks raw materials and natural resources, it more than makes up for that with its R&D centers, scientific institutes, and highly educated and qualified labor force."

—Barnea in "2021 Snapshot: The Impact of COVID-19 on the Israeli Economy"

TOURISM

"So many of us are longing to be in Israel where the connection to spirituality is more tangible, more vibrant, more real. I'm struck by how powerful the urge is, how much and how many people want to go. It's truly wonderful. Being deprived of that experience for the past two years has created a void, a space

that seeks filling. Yes, God is available everywhere, but we imperfect and material human beings benefit from having a physical place where connection is more possible, more tangible, more vibrant, more real."

—Emuna Braverman writes in "Yearning for Israel after COVID Kept Us Away"

"Last year, our skies were closed; there were corona restrictions in place with new variants emerging, and serious concerns about incoming tourism. Despite the situation, we did not give up, at any stage. We worked hard to open up the industry and we brought the tourism industry back to life in spite of the challenges. To my joy,

in contrast to all the pessimistic forecasts, we can see today that tourism has returned to Israel. A million tourists inject money into the Israeli economy, create job opportunities throughout the country and provide a livelihood for whole families. Now we look forward to the objective I have set for the industry: 10 million tourists in 2030."

—Yoel Razvozov, Israeli tourism minister welcomes the millionth tourist in 2022 to Israel

"Once the COVID-19 crisis began and lockdowns were imposed, visitor numbers plummeted and businesses were battered. Tour guides struggled and were told to retrain for other professions as recently as six months ago. But inbound tourism has been bouncing back slowly... The overall data supports Tourism Ministry estimates that 2022 may see between 2.2 and 2.5 million tourist visits, an indication that Israel's tourism industry is well into its post-pandemic recovery."

—Danielle Nagler in "Tourism Levels Continue to Climb toward Pre-COVID Records"

"In the year prior to the pandemic, Israel welcomed a record 4.5 million tourists, which contributed more than \$2 billion to its economy. The pandemic took a massive toll on the Israeli tour guides who led pilgrims through the Holy Land. These 2022 numbers show that the world is still eager to see the Holy Land and experience Israel."

—Chris Katulka, Eye on the Middle East

Tours

Canada

EXPERIENCE ISRAEL DISCIPLESHIP TOUR

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Hosted by: **Rev. Don & Victoria James**

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**Special rates for pastors and their spouses.*

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United Kingdom

DISCOVERING ISRAEL

Date: May 2–9, 2023

Hosted by: **Michael Treharne**

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United States

ISRAEL STUDY TOUR

Date: May 15–26, 2023

Hosted by: **Bill & Liz Adams**

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Plain, Sharon, Carmel, Jezreel, Galilee, Golan, Jordan Valley, Negev, Dead Sea and the incomparable Jerusalem.

EXPERIENCE ISRAEL TOUR

Date: June 3–16, 2023

Hosted by: **Bobby Peck**

Come enjoy a historical and archaeological study tour of Israel. Discover the world of the prophets, the disciples and our Jewish Lord. Join us for your trip of a lifetime.

BIBLICAL HOLY LAND TOUR 2023

Date: June 26–July 5, 2023

Hosted by: **Jill Czelusta**

You are invited to join a 12-day, biblical Holy Land tour with Bridges for Peace representative host Jill Czelusta. Journey through the Land of the Bible to experience the Scriptures coming alive for the journey of a lifetime.

PASTOR'S STUDY TOUR

Date: January 23–February 2, 2024

Hosted by: **Randy Alonso & Ron Wexler**

This unique study tour will bring you up close and personal to the Land of the Bible, while introducing you to a wonderful Israel ministry, Bridges for Peace. You will be enriched with knowledge and experience that will broaden the scope of your understanding and ministry.

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



VOLUNTEER

With Us

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Graphic Designer

Creative skills in graphic design and desktop publishing with Adobe InDesign, Photoshop and WordPress experience preferred. Ability to maintain fast-paced deadline schedule to produce quality material. Position also includes administrative and logistical component. (Long-term)

Home Repair Team

Position requires the ability to do general repairs and maintenance in BFP facilities as well as home repairs in the Jewish community. We are looking for people with general handyman skills. (Long-term)



Journalist

Works in our news department, writing both hard and soft news stories for publication on our website as well as feature stories for the *Dispatch from Jerusalem*. English proficiency required. (Long-term)

Proofreader

Position requires excellent command of English grammar and an eye for detail as you correct typographical errors and edit documents. Solid knowledge of Microsoft Word, including track changes, is crucial. (Long-term)

Web Developer

Experienced WordPress web developer to provide front-end and back-end programming concepts and concerns, including security and structure. (Long-term)



Join our team of volunteers in Israel to make a difference in the lives of the Israeli people.

Children from Chad Receive Life-saving Treatment in Israel

Three more children have received the gift of life, the gift of healing in Israel—a nation known around the globe for its willingness to offer assistance to those in need. Two boys and a girl from the African nation of Chad traveled to Israel for life-saving surgeries provided to them free of charge by Save a Child's Heart (SACH).

In the beginning of 2022, Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs inaugurated a new project in honor of the 25th anniversary of SACH. Until then, SACH had saved lives of children in 14 African nations. This new initiative would add 11 more countries to the list, among them the nation of Chad.

In August, a special Israeli delegation—the first to officially visit Chad since diplomatic relations were restored after 50 years—returned to Israel and brought the three children who desperately needed heart surgeries.

Fourteen-year-old Abdraman had been waiting seven years for the opportunity to live a normal, healthy life. As a young boy, he was diagnosed with mitral regurgitation that caused severe and frequent headaches. The surgery he received in Israel will allow him to live pain-free.

When she was just three years old, nine-year-old Bi-ennvenu was diagnosed with a ventricular septal defect. Due to that condition, she experienced chest pain and breathlessness, which meant she couldn't run and play with other children. After the surgery, she will be able to join her fourth grade classmates in gym, when before she sat on the sidelines.

And finally, Akbar, another nine-year-old, was diagnosed with pulmonary stenosis at two years of age. His mother had been seeking help for seven years before Israel and SACH entered the scene. Akbar, who hasn't been able to attend school due to his illness, will now be able to join his siblings and live a normal and healthy life.

These stories are familiar ones—sometimes called *tikkun olam* (repairing the world)—to those who follow Jewish thought. *Tikkun olam* is the reason Israel and SACH are working to save the lives of young children. It is reflected in the attitude of Dr. Amram Cohen, founder of SACH: "If we can, then we should."

This is what motivated Dr. Cohen to say "Yes." In 1995, he learned of two Ethiopian children who were desperately in need of cardiac treatment. Dr. Cohen organized the flights, performed the surgeries and took the children to his own home during their recovery period. This act began the organization we now know as SACH.

To date, SACH (with Israeli government assistance) has saved 6,000 lives—mainly children from third world countries. And now the three children from Chad have brought the number of those countries from 63 to 64.

Janet Aslin, *Bridges for Peace*

A child who received
life-saving treatment
in Israel



Aliyah Jumps by 128% in Jewish Year 5782



The final figures are in. Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) has reported 63,000 new immigrants to Israel over the past twelve months. This figure sets a record for annual immigration over the past twenty years, more than doubling the number of arrivals in 2019, its closest "competitor."

The war in Ukraine along with rising anti-Semitism around the globe are major factors in bringing these *olim* (new immigrants) home to Israel. An astounding 72% of the new immigrants came from the countries of Russia and Ukraine. The United States (6%), France (4%), Latin America (4%), Ethiopia (2%) and various countries (12%) comprised the remaining immigrants.

More than half of these new Israeli citizens will enter the workforce and become contributors to the nation once they have completed the absorption process and become proficient in Hebrew. An article by the *Jewish Press* cited data from the Ministry of Immigration showing that 63% of them are of working age. The article went on to say that

over the past ten years, 14,000 doctors and health care workers along with 11,500 teachers and 25,000 engineers have arrived in Israel.

The situation remains dire for the Jews in Russia. The *Jerusalem Post* reported that 40,000 have already received their immigration visas, with another 15,000 in varying stages of the *aliyah* process. The challenge is how to get these future citizens from Russia to Israel, since there are a limited number of flights between the two countries. Nevertheless, Israel is committed to finding a way to bring them home.

Since its rebirth in 1948, Israel has embraced Jews from around the world. When David Ben Gurion read the proclamation of statehood, these words rang out, "The State of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and for the ingathering of the exiles..."

The State of Israel remains committed to be a "safe haven" for the Jewish population of the world.

Janet Aslin, *Bridges for Peace*

Israel Scores No. 1 in Digital Quality of Life Index

According to the fourth annual edition of the Digital Quality of Life Index, Israel has now placed first, beating out 116 other nations and overtaking Denmark after two years in the top spot.

Five "fundamental well-being pillars"—e-government, e-infrastructure, Internet quality, Internet affordability and e-security—were considered when compiling the report.

The United States is now ranked 12th out of 117, down from fifth last year. Most of the remaining top 10 come from Europe, though Asian powerhouses South Korea (10th) and Japan (eighth) are also there.

The affordability pillar gives Israel an advantage over everyone else due to its high affordability index.

Israel's Internet quality—as seen by speed, stability and growth—ranks 21st globally and is considered 31% better than the norm. Of the five pillars, e-government is where Israel performs the lowest, ranking 33rd. E-infrastructure is ranked 28th and e-security 32nd.

Jewish News Syndicate

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 24,000 needy Israelis in 40 communities every month by supporting our food bank in Jerusalem.

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 23 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 93,000 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 1-volume Hebrew-Russian or 2-volume Hebrew-Spanish edition of the Hebrew Scriptures.

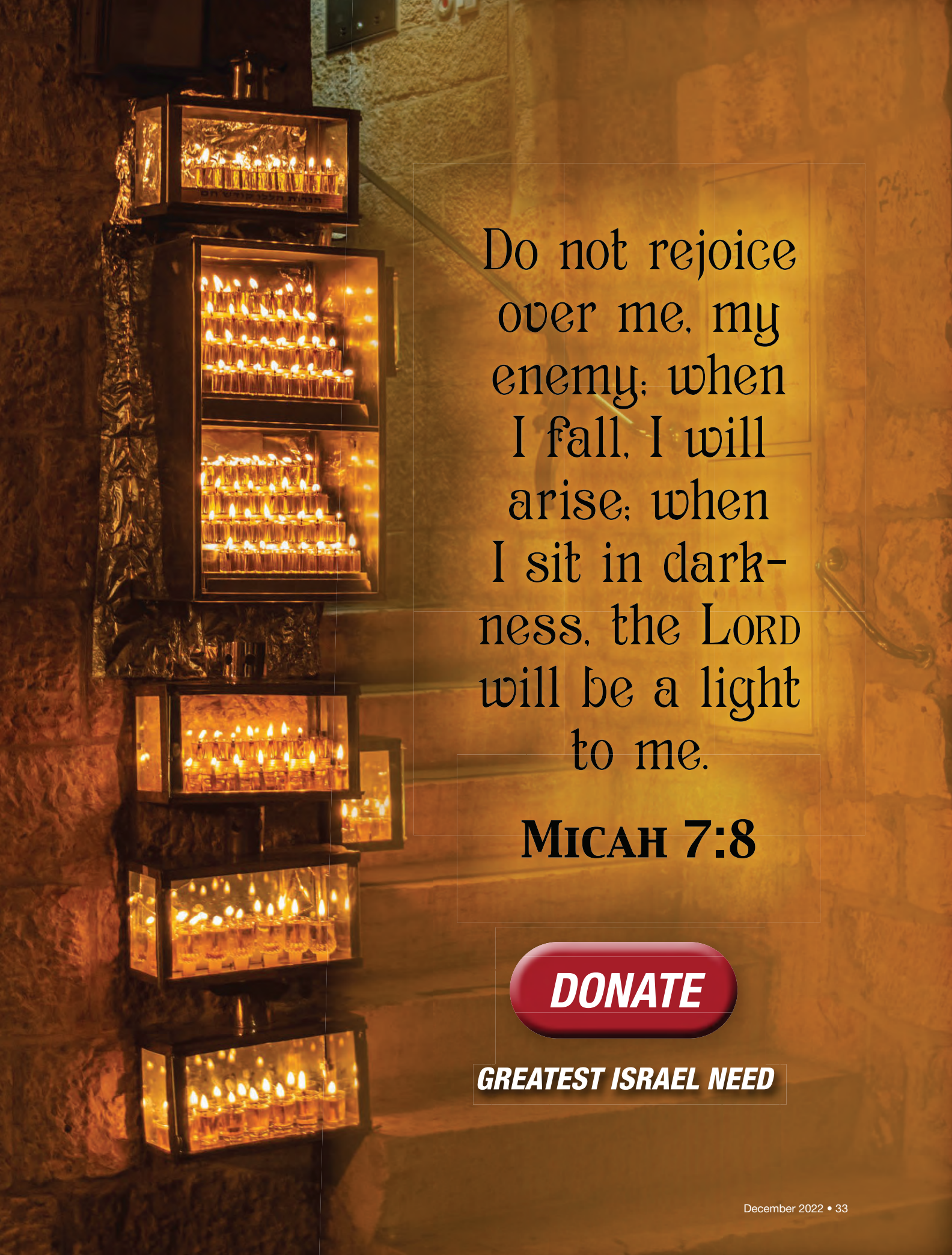
CRISIS ASSISTANCE FUND: Your gifts enable us to respond quickly to crisis situations. These may include critical needs, such as bomb shelters, ambulances or help for emergency situations, such as terror-motivated arson attacks and more.

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.



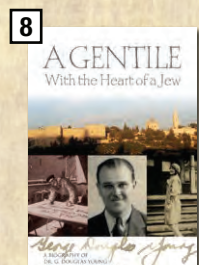
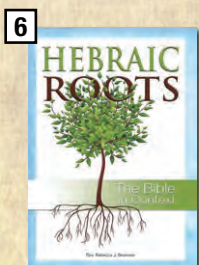
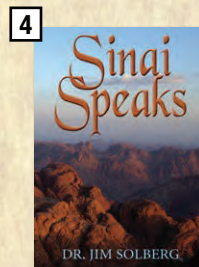
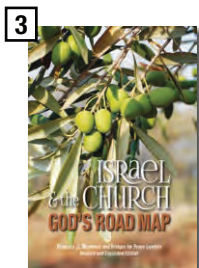
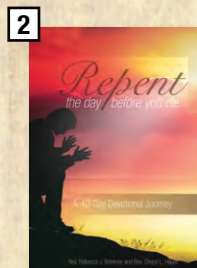
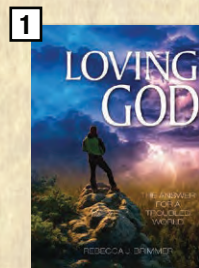


Do not rejoice
over me, my
enemy; when
I fall, I will
arise; when
I sit in dark-
ness, the LORD
will be a light
to me.

MICAH 7:8

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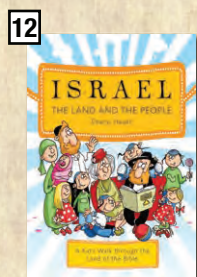
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