

# dispatch from Jerusalem

A Publication of Bridges for Peace

June 2023 • Vol. 48 No. 3  
[www.bridgesforpeace.com](http://www.bridgesforpeace.com) • Your Israel Connection®



**LOVING GOD AND ISRAEL  
IT'S IN OUR DNA**

# 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.

**Editor in Chief** Rebecca J. Brimmer

**Associate Editor** Cheryl L. Hauer

**Assistant Editor** Ilse Strauss

**Graphic Designers** Eddelene Marais, Maddie Hunt  
McCoy Brown, Sarah Flanagan

### Subscription information

Contact your national office at the address listed to the right or refer to page 33 under "Information & Publications" for the subscription fee in your currency. For all other locations, a one-year subscription costs US \$25 and is mailed from Israel. Contact our International Headquarters listed below.



**International Headquarters**  
PO Box 1093  
Jerusalem, Israel 9101001  
Tel: (972) 2-624-5004  
FAX: (972) 2-624-6622  
intl.office@bridgesforpeace.com

[www.bridgesforpeace.com](http://www.bridgesforpeace.com)



BCF-USA  
ECFA Member



**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](http://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](http://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.

## Offices

### Australia

Tel: (61) 7-5479-4229  
[bfp.au@bridgesforpeace.com](mailto:bfp.au@bridgesforpeace.com)

### Canada

Tel: (1) 204-489-3697  
Toll free: (1) 855-489-3697  
[info@bfpcan.org](mailto:info@bfpcan.org)

### Japan

Tel: (81) 3-5969-9656  
[bfp@bfpj.org](mailto:bfp@bfpj.org)

### New Zealand

Tel: (64) 7-855-5262  
[emather.nz@bridgesforpeace.com](mailto:emather.nz@bridgesforpeace.com)

### South Africa

Tel: (27) 21-975-1941  
[info@bridgesforpeace.co.za](mailto:info@bridgesforpeace.co.za)

### South Korea

Tel: (82) 70-8772-2014  
[bfp@bfpkorea.com](mailto:bfp@bfpkorea.com)

### Spanish

Tel: (52) 646-238-7206  
[intl.spanish@bridgesforpeace.com](mailto:intl.spanish@bridgesforpeace.com)

### Russia

Tel: (7) 903-309-1849  
[info.ru@bridgesforpeace.com](mailto:info.ru@bridgesforpeace.com)

### United Kingdom

Tel: (44) 165-673-9494  
[ukoffice@bridgesforpeace.com](mailto:ukoffice@bridgesforpeace.com)

### United States

Tel: (1) 321-361-8887  
(1) 800-566-1998  
[postmaster@bfpusa.org](mailto:postmaster@bfpusa.org)

## 10 Loving God and Israel—It’s in Our DNA

As Rebecca J. Brimmer hands over the baton of Bridges for Peace CEO to Peter Fast this month, we take a look at the past and the future of this organization that has stood as a bastion in support of Israel for nearly 60 years.

*By Rebecca J. Brimmer and Peter Fast*

## 12 The Saudi Slap

Jerusalem hoped Saudi Arabia would be next to sign a peace agreement with Israel. But in March, the kingdom announced it was reestablishing ties with Israel’s arch foe: Iran. What are the implications of a Riyadh–Tehran reconciliation for Jerusalem?

*By Kate Norman*

## 14 The War for the Heart of a Generation

Polls regarding evangelical support for Israel show that the numbers among younger believers are declining. Rather than seeing Israel through the prism of the Bible, they view it as the antithesis of social justice. But who is responsible for this perception?

*By Cheryl Hauer*

## 18 Tower of David Museum—Revealing Ancient Treasures

The revamped and updated Tower of David Museum opened its doors in June after a three-year, US \$50 million upgrade. And with *TIME* magazine naming Jerusalem one of the “World’s Greatest Places,” this landmark in the city is definitely worth a visit.

*By Terry Mason*

## 20 Coming Home, Just Like God Promised

In 2022, a record-breaking number of Jewish people immigrated to Israel. Against the backdrop of the war in Ukraine, the upsurge didn’t come as a surprise. Yet the vast majority of Israel’s new citizens aren’t from Ukraine. They hail from Russia.

*By Ilse Strauss*

## 22 Israel—a News-obsessed Nation

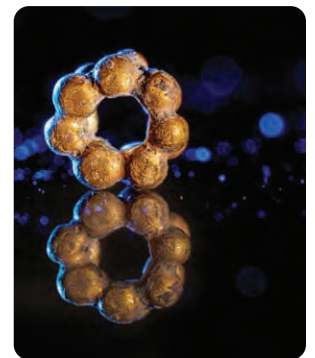
From the first Hebrew newspaper published until today, Israelis have had one of the highest readership rates in the world. Part of this obsession stems from a constant need to know what is happening in the dangerous neighborhood they call home.

*By Janet Aslin*

## 24 Divided Jerusalem

Before Jerusalem was the undivided capital of the Jewish state, it was a city divided. From 1948 to 1967, the city was split into western Jerusalem under Israeli rule and eastern Jerusalem, with the Old City and the Western Wall, under Jordanian occupation.

*By Ilse Strauss*



### REGULAR FEATURES

- 4 BFP In Action
- 6 Signs of the Times
- 8 Archaeology
- 16 Out of Zion
- 26 Quotes
- 28 Volunteer Opportunities
- 29 Recipe
- 30 Good News



PHOTO CREDITS: **Bridgesforpeace.com**: Isaac Gonzalez p. 2, Peter Fast p. 4, 5, Michio Nagata p. 9, 10, 28, 32, Hannah Taylor p. 9, 20, 33, McCoy Brown p. 32; Maddie Hunt p. 29, Jenna Solomon p. 35, Daniel Kirchhevel p. 35; **Facebook**: Yoav Galant p. 27; **flickr.com**: Shealah Craighead/Official White House p. 12, State of Israel p. 24; **IAA**: Koby Harati/City of David p. 8; **IDF**: IDF Spokesperson’s Unit/gov.il p. 31; **JNS**: IDF Spokesperson’s Unit p. 7; **pixabay**: Katya\_Ershove p. 16, Angelo\_Giordano p. 17, Jarmoluk-laboratory p. 17; **shutterstock**: Grebeshkovmaxim p. 10, Anti S p. 26, Pixel-Shot p. 30; **Tower of David**: Ricky Rachman p. 2, Naftali Hilger p. 1, 18, Tower of David p. 18; **unsplash**: Daniel Faz p. 11, Nicolas lobos p. 14, Luke White p. 15; **wikimedia**: Public Domain p. 23, 25, 26, 30, יוניד יוניד/IDF Spokesperson’s Unit p. 22, חובביבידיה/Public domain p. 22, Porat Yosef p. 25, Arielinson p. 27, Redgeographics p. 31.



# Let's Bring Them Home

**I RECENTLY BOARDED A PLANE** to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to represent Bridges for Peace on a visit arranged by Keren Hayesod, an organization that, like us, is dedicated to fulfilling Bible prophecy by aiding in the Jewish return to Israel. Together with the delegation of Keren Hayesod leaders from around the world, we headed to the Gondar region in northwestern Ethiopia. There we traveled from village to village, meeting the final remnants of the Ethiopian Jewish community and bringing them hope.

Traveling through Gondar was like stepping back 2,700 years in time. This is the ancient land of Cush, first mentioned in Genesis 2:13, where tens of thousands of Ethiopian Jews have lived for generations. Scholars believe they originate from the Tribe of Dan, dispersed by the Assyrians and driven there 2,700 years ago.

The level of poverty is atrocious. I saw children drinking water from muddy streams. Electricity, sanitation and plumbing are unheard of and the ravages of disease are evident. Women walk for hours to reach the market or well and men work their fields with yoked oxen and wooden plows. The famine and civil war raging in northern Ethiopia make food insecurity a daily reality. The homes are built from mud and straw, with crude frames fashioned from eucalyptus branches and covered by a corrugated steel roof. Dirt floors stand as an obvious marker of poverty. Each shack measures roughly 10x10 feet (3x3 m.),

with an entire family living inside. As many as 14 of these tiny shacks are clustered together with one communal toilet with no plumbing.

We visited one beautiful Jewish family that is currently preparing to make *aliyah* (immigrate to Israel) after waiting ten years. The outside of their home is adorned with a Star of David. The mother fed her baby while she spoke with us as her husband and seven other children looked on. We listened to their story, encouraged them and gave them a gift. The father kissed my hand to show his gratitude.

Once I overcame my shock at the poverty, the joyful hope on these peoples' faces at their imminent homecoming to Israel left me in awe at the God of the universe, who is faithful to His covenant.

Micha Feldman, who participated in the miraculous rescue of Ethiopian Jews in 1984–1985, told us, "From their mother's breast, they drank the milk of Zionism." This is the only Jewish community in the world that has never needed convincing to make *aliyah*, he said. They have put their faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and after two millennia, He has proven faithful. They are returning home.

Yet the homecoming has historically presented obstacles that have left deep scars of suffering. Between 1977 and 1984, thousands of Ethiopian Jews set their sights on Jerusalem and embarked on foot on the 1,940-mile

We are literally witnessing the conclusion of a chapter of Jewish exile.  
The Tribe of Dan is returning to Israel—and you can be part of that.

*Let's bring them home!*

(3,124-km.) trek to Israel with their young children, pregnant women and elderly in tow. They journeyed over perilous terrain and were perpetually hunted by the authorities.

Adani, who accompanied our delegation, was 15 years old when he was part of the first group of Ethiopian Jews to start the journey in 1977. He told us his modern-day Exodus story. They crossed mountains and valleys at night, hiding from the government soldiers who pursued them during the daylight. Many died along the way. Adani's group eventually reached Sudan, only to face a hostile Sudanese army. They were captured and placed into refugee camps. Nearly 20,000 Ethiopian Jews followed in their footsteps—and met a similar fate. Conditions in the camps were atrocious and thousands perished from disease and starvation, including two of Adani's siblings. Yet the God of Israel had not abandoned them. He heard their cries (Exod. 2:24) and sent deliverance. In a daring covert mission dubbed Operation Moses, Israel rescued these Ethiopian Jews in 1984–1985.

Operation Solomon followed in 1991, with Israel rescuing 14,325 Ethiopian Jews from Addis Ababa during a 36-hour cease-fire between warring factions—a miracle of biblical, prophetic proportion! They came home to Israel on “eagles' wings” (Exod. 19:4). Yet today, 32 years later, there are thousands more Ethiopian Jews who wait to make a similar journey to the home of their hearts.

When our delegation boarded our return flight to Israel, we were not alone. A planeload of Ethiopian Jews making *aliyah* shared the plane with us! When they caught their first glimpse of Israeli soil through the plane windows, they burst into singing, praising God as the wheels of the aircraft touched the ground. They were finally home!

The story isn't over. Last year, 1,500 Ethiopian Jews made *aliyah*. During the recent trip to Ethiopia, we had the honor of visiting the next group of 1,500 waiting to come. There are thousands more. Israel is committed to bringing all the Ethiopian Jews home, but their *aliyah* comes at an enormous cost. That is why we will step into the gap to help.

Bridges for Peace is dedicated to fulfilling the call of God to help bring His people home according to His prophetic word (Jer. 16:14–15). Christians around the world have partnered with us as we come alongside Israel to make this a reality. Jerusalem has pledged to bring the next group of 1,500 home in the coming months, but we need your help to make this happen. We are literally witnessing the conclusion of a chapter of Jewish exile. The Tribe of Dan is returning to Israel—and you can be part of that. We are calling on Bible-believing Christians around the world who love what God loves to take action and rescue the last remnants of Ethiopian Jews in exile. Then we may all praise the Lord that Dan is safely back, once again after 2,700 years, in the Land of Israel! Let's bring them home!

Blessings from Israel,  
Rev. Peter Fast  
CEO-elect



## EU, Biden Administration Embrace Palestinian LIES

**THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY AND ITS LEADER**, Mahmoud Abbas, continue to twist, misrepresent and rewrite the history of the Jews as part of an ongoing campaign to delegitimize the State of Israel and the Jewish people. The campaign aims to negate and reject the connection between the Jews and the Land of Israel and foster hatred for Israel and the Jews.

This campaign—which in Europe, at least, has been going on for decades—is being completely ignored by both the European Union [EU] and the Biden administration. By turning a blind eye to Palestinian lies, fabrications and anti-Semitism, the Biden administration and the EU are sending a message to the Palestinians that it is perfectly fine to continue demonizing Israel and Jews.

Two days after Abbas's latest attempt to rewrite history and deny any Jewish connection to the land of Israel, the Biden administration and some European countries issued a joint statement in which they attacked Israel for advancing plans to build new homes for Jewish families in the West Bank [Judea and Samaria]: "We—the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and Italy, the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, and the Secretary of State of the United States—are deeply troubled by the Israeli government's announcement that it is advancing nearly 10,000 settlement units...We strongly oppose these unilateral actions, which will only serve to exacerbate tensions between Israelis and Palestinians and undermine efforts to achieve a negotiated two-state solution."

For the EU and the Biden administration, building new homes by Jewish families is more dangerous than the anti-Semitic remarks and genocidal rhetoric of Abbas and other Palestinians.

The representatives of France, Germany, Italy, Britain and the US are lying when they claim that the construction of new homes for Jews would exacerbate tensions between Israelis and Palestinians and undermine efforts to achieve a negotiated two-state solution.

They know that the Israeli-Arab conflict started long before the construction of even one house for Jews in the West Bank. It is time for them to wake up to the fact that the Palestinian leaders are not interested in peace with Israel. They are interested in peace without Israel. The Palestinians do not distinguish between a Jew residing in the West Bank and a Jew residing in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem.

The Palestinian leaders are part of the problem, not part of the solution. The EU and the Biden administration's double standards and failure to see reality as it is instead of as they wish it to be are also part of the problem. Only when the EU and the Biden administration take this in will it be possible to start talking about the prospects of a negotiated solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Bassam Tawil, *Gatestone Institute*

# PA CHIEF, SENIOR HAMAS OFFICIALS COZY UP TO SAUDI ARABIA

**PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY [PA] CHIEF** Mahmoud Abbas met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the Red Sea city of Jeddah on Tuesday.

The visit came at the same time that a delegation from rival Palestinian political faction and terrorist group Hamas was also in the country.

According to the PA-controlled *Wafa* news agency, Abbas and the prince discussed “the latest political developments of the Palestinian cause and the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory.”

Abbas arrived in Saudi Arabia in April for the visit where he was also scheduled to meet with King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.



Senior Hamas officials were seen making pilgrimage to Mecca. Video posted to social media shows Hamas political bureau head Ismail Haniyeh, Haniyeh’s predecessor Khaled Mashaal and other officials inside the Great Mosque of Mecca.

The Mecca pilgrimage comes ahead of talks expected in Riyadh between Hamas and Saudi officials aiming at rapprochement.

It is the first visit by an official Hamas delegation to Saudi Arabia since 2015, and the first since the Saudis agreed in March to reestablish diplomatic relations with Iran.

Relations between Riyadh and Hamas were strained after the Saudis blamed the terrorist group for the failure of the 2007 Mecca Agreement, which was a Saudi attempt to facilitate reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah.

*Jewish News Syndicate*



# IRAN SEEKING ADVANCED AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS FROM RUSSIA

**IRAN SEEKS TO ACQUIRE ADVANCED** S-400 air defense systems from Russia, which the top brass in Jerusalem believes will tighten the window to strike the Islamic regime’s nuclear program.

Russia has not yet confirmed whether it will provide the systems to Tehran, but once Iran receives the S-400s, it would only need two years to put the system into operation.

Iran has supplied some 2,400 kamikaze drones to Russia for its invasion of Ukraine, Kyiv claimed in November. In return, it is only natural for Tehran to expect that Moscow would return the favor.

Russia’s S-400 is a mobile surface-to-air defense system that can strike aerial targets as far away as 250 kilometers (155 mi.), which would establish a “red zone for high-altitude aircraft,” Jeremy Binnie, Middle East defense expert at UK-based defense intelligence firm Janes, told *Bloomberg*.

High-altitude aircraft could include Israeli fighter jets targeting Iran’s nuclear sites. “The more air defenses they have, the more difficult it is to hit them,” Yossi Kuperwasser, a former senior Israeli military intelligence official, told *Bloomberg*. “We are analyzing when is the most convenient time to take action.”

But as the West watches the clock tick while Iran continues spinning its centrifuges, enriching uranium to higher and higher levels of purity, the more difficult it will be to rein in Tehran’s nuclear belligerence, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned.

Adding more fuel to the fire is the report by the United Nations’ nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), that its inspectors discovered uranium enriched to 83.7% at Iran’s Fordow nuclear site. This puts Tehran just a small technical step away from the 90% purity necessary to build a nuclear weapon.

Regardless of the status of the nuclear agreement, Iran’s nuclear development program is ramping up—and it is only a matter of time before Tehran crosses a red line that will force Jerusalem, and perhaps Washington, to put aside diplomacy and fire up the fighter jets.

*Kate Norman, Bridges for Peace*

# ANCIENT GOLD BEAD DISCOVERED IN JERUSALEM

**A UNIQUE BEAD** made from pure gold and dated to at least 1,600 years ago was uncovered at the sifting project at the Archaeological Experience in the Emek Tzurim National Park. The bead was found in dirt removed from a grandiose Roman structure discovered in the Pilgrimage Road excavation [in the City of David]. It was created using a unique technique that required delicate workmanship to affix tens of tiny balls together in the shape of a ring in order to create one small bead.

Hallel Feidman, 18, found the gold bead. She is a National Service volunteer who is working at the sifting project. "I poured the pail onto the sieve and began to wash the material that was brought from the excavations in the City of David," Feidman describes the moment she made the discovery. "And then I saw something shiny in the corner of the sieve, different, that I don't normally see. I immediately approached the archaeologist and he confirmed that I found a gold bead. Everyone here was very excited."

According to Dr. Amir Golani, an ancient jewelry expert at the Israel Antiquities Authority [IAA]: "Throughout all my years in archaeology, I have found gold perhaps once or twice, so to find gold jewelry is something very, very special." He points out that the bead, which survived unscathed, is probably only a small part of a necklace or bracelet that included additional beads. "Whoever could afford a piece like this made from gold was an affluent person with means."

According to Shlomo Greenberg and Ari Levy, excavation directors on behalf of the IAA, "The bead originated in a grandiose structure which is at least 25 meters [82 ft.] long. The structure was built on the Pilgrimage Road in the City of David, in a building style that characterizes upscale buildings. The wealth of the building's occupants is evidenced by additional finds that were discovered in it, like imported clay vessels and a decorated mosaic floor."

The researchers point out that it is possible that the bead was created in a period that precedes the period of the structure in which it was

found, however, it is reasonable to assume that the people that lived in the structure used the bead, which may have accidentally been lost when the necklace broke.

The find holds distinctive importance given the lack of gold items found in archaeological excavations. Due to the unique and complex technique used to create them, beads of this style are also not common. The technique most probably originates from the region of Mesopotamia, where it was known from approximately 4,500 years ago.

"The most interesting aspect of the bead is its unique and complex production method," explains Dr. Golani. "A good understanding of the materials and their properties is required as well as control over the heat in order to on the one hand, solder the tiny balls together to create a tiny ring, while also preventing overheating, which may cause all the gold to melt. Only a professional craftsman could produce such a bead, which is another reason that this find holds great value."

The use of the unique technique, which came from outside of Israel, coupled with the use of gold in creating this bead, speaks to the wealth of its owner. It is possible that the bead was created in a different area and made its way to the City of David via the extensive trade relations between Jerusalem and other regions at that time. Another theory is that the bead was gifted to a Jerusalem resident or passed within the family from one generation to another as an inheritance.

Similar beads have been discovered in burial caves from 2,500 years ago (the end of the First Temple period) near the City of David, but even those beads were made from silver. To this day, only a few dozen gold beads have been found in Israel.

According to Eli Escusido, director of the IAA, "Although it is a tiny find, it is precisely the personal, day-to-day items that manage to touch and connect us more than anything else directly to a certain person."

*Israel Antiquities Authority*





# Origins of Sand Farming Uncovered in Caesarea

**RESEARCHERS BELIEVE THAT** agricultural plots found in the sands of Caesarea are the first development of sand farming in human history.

“This agricultural technique was developed on the coastal plain of the Land of Israel during the latter part of the early Islamic period,” claim Prof. Yoel Raskin of the Department of Geography and Environment at Bar-Ilan University and Dr. Itamar Taxel of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

Over the course of three seasons between 2020–2022, Raskin and Taxel led an archaeological expedition that involved excavations in Caesarea’s sand dunes with the primary goal of uncovering revolutionary agricultural systems. During the excavation, the digging plots revealed the presence of ancient refuse, such as pottery and glass fragments, rings and other artifacts dating back to the early Islamic period.

This material was incorporated into the soil to create anthrosol, a dark gray soil resulting from longstanding human activity. The goal was to transform the sandy surface into fertile soil capable of retaining water.

As per the study, the uncovered agricultural system had approximately 370 rectangular boreholes with an average surface area of about 2 dunams [0.49 ac.]. The system also had storage units, temporary housing for workers and observation posts situated near the boreholes.

“Based on the estimation and calculation of the volumes of sand that were mixed, it is estimated that the system was built using approximately one million work-days. It is believed that the government initiated the establishment of this agricultural system,” say Raskin and Taxel. “It’s unlikely that fruit trees and grapevines grew here, rather more seasonal crops such as vegetables.”

*Ynetnews*

# Loving God and Israel—It's in our DNA



**FOR 30 YEARS**, it has been my honor to work with Bridges for Peace, the last 18 of them as the international president and CEO. Throughout these years, even back to 1964 when our founder, Dr. G. Douglas Young, moved to Israel, Bridges for Peace has steadfastly stood with Israel. In 1967, Dr. Young used his school van as an ambulance, while his wife fed soldiers. Neighbors took refuge in the bomb shelter with them and Dr. Young's students filled sandbags. This is in our DNA.

In 1990, we opened the Food Bank (now called the Assistance Center) just in time for thousands of immigrants as they poured in from the former Soviet Union. We stood firm, through two *intifadas* (Arab uprising against Israel) the Gulf War, the Second Lebanon War, suicide bombs, rockets from Gaza and Lebanon as well as many terror attacks.

We never ran away, sent our staff out of the country or stopped delivering food—even to dangerous areas. This is in our DNA.

During the 30 years I've served with Bridges for Peace, Israel had eight different prime ministers from a variety of political persuasions. Some were left leaning and some right. Some were willing to give land for peace and some were not. Regardless of their political stance, Bridges for Peace stood resolutely with Israel. Even when we personally didn't like certain policies, we never considered not supporting the nation and people of Israel.

We remain steadfast through it all because we do not support Israel only when she is perfect or we agree with political actions. We support Israel because we support the God of Israel. We support Him and His plans for this nation. We help the needy because the Bible tells us that God hears their

cries. We help Holocaust survivors because the Bible tells us to comfort His people (Isa. 40:1). We help bring Jewish people home to Israel because this is God's plan. Most of the prophets foretold the return of the Jewish people to their ancient, God-given homeland. We are witnesses to the fact that God is keeping His promises to Israel. When war broke out in 2022 as Russia attacked Ukraine, we reached out a hand to rescue Jewish people at risk—from both Ukraine and Russia. We also helped many of them with basic needs once they arrived.

This is in our DNA: love for the God of Israel and love for the people of Israel. We have stood firm through many difficulties, and I know that we will stand firm into the future, no matter what it holds.

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



# Loving What God Loves as We Look Ahead

**A NEW CHAPTER** has begun for my family and me in Jerusalem. At the end of June 2023, I step into the role as the new CEO after working alongside Rebecca J. Brimmer to ensure a smooth transition of leadership as Bridges for Peace continues from strength to strength.

It has been 22 years since I first connected with Bridges for Peace, and I have experienced the many faces of this incredible organization. I have volunteered in Home Repair and managed Zealous8:2, our young adult program, and Group and Guest Relations. I then worked in the Canadian office for eight years, concluding my time as national director prior to moving to Israel.

Now that I have joined the international team and take the helm, the dedication and passion within me to advance the ministry of Bridges for Peace—both in the nations and in Israel—is stronger than ever. I am eager to reinforce the core values of this amazing organization and lead our national offices around the world with the brilliant team God has assembled.

Over the years, Bridges for Peace has addressed evolving concerns. I plan to find creative ways to strengthen the ministry in the face of these issues in our current climate. Some of the concerns deal with the problem of biblical illiteracy in the Western world, the rise of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism, Holocaust denial, replacement theology in the Church and educating the Church on the importance of God's covenantal faithfulness towards Israel—all while bridging the gap between Christians and Jews.

Bridges for Peace has been dedicated to supporting Israel in extraordinary ways. We help fulfill biblical prophecy by assisting Jewish people who are returning to the Land, care for Holocaust survivors, feed the hungry, repair homes for the elderly, support the brokenhearted and show unconditional Christian love to all we encounter.

Bridges for Peace will continue to be a bulwark of support for Israel. As we have done for the past nearly 60 years, we will continue to step into

the gap time and time again. We will continue to lead and have a powerful influence in the nations, impacting and reaching both the Christian and Jewish communities and bringing them together, despite differences, with respect, trust, cooperation, and our shared love of the Scriptures. Although the horrors and tragedies that have stained the relationship between our communities for more than 17 centuries cannot be erased, Bridges for Peace will strive to forge a new future of uncompromising service, love and support as Christians to the Jewish people.

As the modern State of Israel celebrates the miracle of statehood at 75 years young, Bridges for Peace, representing tens of thousands of Christians around the world, stands shoulder to shoulder with our Jewish brothers and sisters, proclaiming the beacon of Israel's light, telling Israel's story and loving what God loves.

Blessings from Jerusalem,  
Rev. Peter Fast  
CEO-elect



# The Saudi Slap

**ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER BENJAMIN NETANYAHU** stood on the White House lawn on September 15, 2020 with the foreign minister of Bahrain, then-President Donald Trump and the foreign minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Each leader displayed their copy of the Abraham Accords, the peace agreement normalizing ties between Israel and her two new Arab allies.

The deal, brokered by Trump's administration, was a diplomatic victory for the US and Israel. It opened a door for the Jewish state to normalize ties with her Arab neighbors. And Trump and Netanyahu declared in subsequent speeches that more nations were to follow, hinting at Saudi Arabia.



It seemed natural, given Riyadh's search for regional allies against the Iranian threat. But Saudi officials denied the rumors, reiterating the kingdom's policy of turning down Israel's peace overtures pending a conclusion to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Saudi Arabia opened its skies last summer to Israeli civilian flights, a good sign of warming relations. Yet earlier this year, Riyadh refused to issue visas for an Israeli delegation to attend a UN event in the kingdom, ignoring pleas from Israel's foreign ministry and UN officials.

## The Big Slap

Saudi Arabia lowered the boom in March when the kingdom announced it was reestablishing ties with Israel's archenemy: Iran. The deal was brokered by US superpower rival, China.

Riyadh and Tehran signed the Joint Trilateral Agreement to resume diplomatic relations and reopen their mutual embassies on March 11. In contrast to the Abraham Accords, this agreement was finalized in Beijing between Saudi Arabia and the world's leading sponsor of terrorism.

The signing ceremony of the Abraham Accords.

## Saudi Arabia grasping the outstretched hand of its regional rival puts it further out of reach as a potential peace partner for Israel.

However, Saudi Arabia was shopping for allies to shore up against the Iranian threat, and it was known that Riyadh had covert ties with Jerusalem for that reason. So what drove the Sunni kingdom into Shiite Iran's arms?

### The Saudi–Iranian Tug of War

Relations between Riyadh and Tehran had been on ice for years. In January 2016, Saudi Arabia executed 47 people on charges of terrorism, including a prominent Shia cleric, triggering mass protests in Shiite Iran. Protesters stormed Saudi diplomatic posts within Iran, prompting Saudi Arabia to sever ties.

Saudi Arabia and Iran have also been backing separate proxies in regional conflicts. In Syria, Iran has backed the Assad regime, while the Saudis have backed opposition fighters. Iran also backs the Houthi rebels in Yemen, while Saudi Arabia supports the Yemeni governing coalition.

Add to that smaller spats, such as the Saudis accusing Iran of missile and drone attacks in 2019 on the kingdom's oil facilities and similar attacks on Saudi tankers in the Gulf. Iran-backed Houthis have also struck inside the kingdom, launching missiles and attack drones across the border.

### How Did We Get Here?

This rekindled friendship is a sign of China's growing reach in the region as a superpower. It also points to Washington's shrinking influence, as Saudi Arabia had asked the US for security assurances in exchange for normalizing ties with Israel.

The kingdom reportedly presented the US with a list of requests that the Pentagon denied, including loosening restrictions on arms sales and helping the Saudis develop a civilian nuclear program.

Relations between Washington and Riyadh also dwindled under US President Joe Biden, who criticized his predecessor for his friendly ties with the kingdom, given the Saudi's record of human rights violations.

Nonetheless, Biden visited the kingdom last summer to request increased oil production for the US, a request Riyadh denied. Biden also visited Israel on that same trip and signed the "Jerusalem Declaration," reaffirming the US commitment to "deepen the ties between Israel and all of its regional partners" and to "expand the circle of peace to include ever more Arab and Muslim states."

Hopes for that expansion are dimming, as the Saudi–Iranian peace deal points to Riyadh changing direction in regional alliances. As the US is backing off from its traditional role as global mediator, China and Russia are filling the void. And this new deal shows just how effective China—one of Saudi Arabia's top oil customers—is in this arena.

### What Does this Mean for Israel?

This new agreement is a blow to Netanyahu, who has vowed to prevent Iran from achieving a nuclear weapon and in February told a group of Jewish American leaders that a peace agreement with Saudi Arabia is "a goal that we are working on in parallel with the goal of stopping Iran," as quoted by the *Associated Press*.

The deal between Saudi Arabia and Iran is "a blow to Israel's efforts to form an anti-Iran bloc in the region," Yoel Guzansky, a Persian Gulf expert at Israeli think tank the Institute for National Security Studies, told the *AP*. "If you see the Middle East as a zero-sum game, which Israel and Iran do, a diplomatic win for Iran is very bad news for Israel."

It doesn't have to be a zero-sum game, however. The UAE also resumed diplomatic relations with Iran last year, yet Jerusalem and Abu Dhabi remain on good terms.

In fact, a senior Gulf analyst with the International Crisis Group, Anna Jacobs, told the *AP* that she believes this deal is a means of ending the conflict in Yemen. "It is difficult to imagine a Saudi–Iran agreement...without some assurances from Iran to more seriously support conflict resolution efforts in Yemen."

Resumed peace between Saudi Arabia and Iran does not automatically rule out future ties between the kingdom and the Jewish state—but it's not a good sign. Saudi Arabia grasping the outstretched hand of its regional rival puts it further out of reach as a potential peace partner for Israel.



Kate Norman, *BFP Staff Writer*



# THE WAR FOR THE HEART OF A GENERATION

**Recent polls regarding** evangelical support for Israel have some leaders worried. Although the numbers remain high among baby boomers, support among younger evangelicals seems to be declining. Such a trend, were it to continue, could have a profound effect on evangelicalism itself and perhaps more broadly, on Israel's already tenuous relationship with the international community.

Historically, Israel has found some of her greatest friends among Bible-believing Christians. Today, millions of Christians visit Israel every year, returning home as friends and advocates for the Jewish state, willing to dedicate their time, money, prayers and political clout to those issues concerning Israel's security and prosperity.

Until recently, many evangelical Christians and their Jewish counterparts found common ground in their love for the Bible and their shared spiritual heritage through the patriarch Abraham. Christians have seen Israel as the fulfillment of Bible prophecy as millions of Jews returned to their ancient homeland. They have thrilled at the opportunity to "walk where Jesus walked" while getting to know the modern-day residents of His ancient homeland. They have celebrated God's eternal covenant with His people and the fact that the Land He promised was theirs once again. They have taken pride as they watched God's blessing carry a fledgling state with few friends to a major player on the global scene whose flow of innovations make the world a better, safer, healthier and less hungry place. And they have been there in the stands, cheering Israel on as she has been forced to fight to maintain her position as a beacon of democracy in a very unfriendly neighborhood.

But the polls tell us the climate is shifting, and many in both communities fear that evangelical Christianity is an ally Israel simply can't afford to lose. In America, for example, polls from a decade ago indicated that the majority of evangelicals sympathized with Israel and were

committed to ensuring US policy favored her. They were clear that those political beliefs were the result of their interpretation of biblical prophecy and the conviction that, quite simply, God gave Israel to the Jewish people. To be clear, there are still vast numbers of evangelicals about whom all these things remain true, but as a group, they are aging rapidly. By 2030, all baby boomers will be 65 or older, with increasingly waning influence. As such, the concern is for the loss of support among those 18 to 29. Studies done in 2018 and then repeated in 2021 saw that support drop from 69% to 34% in just three years.

## A Shift in Focus

Pastors and Christian leaders who would like nothing better than to see their commitment to Israel passed on to the next generation are baffled by what they see as an inexplicable theological shift. Topics such as eschatology and amillennialism are not as important for today's young believers as they were for their parents. Many young pastors are much less likely to preach on the end times, and prophecy and covenant are deemed irrelevant by many of today's students. Finally, the current focus on the "New Testament" fails to give younger believers a solid biblical foundation and an understanding of Israel's role in God's plan for the ages.

Statistically, however, the most important reason for the waning support for Israel among young believers is their perception that Israel is a colonialist entity that is not a legitimate part of the family of nations. Rather than seeing Israel through the prism of the Bible as their parents did, they view the Jewish state as an oppressor nation, a violator of human rights and the antithesis of social justice. And one of the significant forces behind that perception is the concerted effort on the part of Palestinian leadership to get their narrative inserted into the educational experience of young people.



### Seeds of Hate in Fertile Ground

“Teach Palestine” is an organization dedicated to helping K-12 educators worldwide expand their curricula to include the Palestinian narrative. Beginning in California, they have extended their reach across the US and around the world. As increasingly more countries add “Ethnic Studies” to their curricula, Teach Palestine provides teachers with free resources based on information gleaned from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and B’Tselem, all self-proclaimed haters of the Jewish state.

“Kumi Now,” which means Rise Up Now, purports to connect international activists with those on the ground in “Palestine” to bring a just and lasting peace. In actuality, it is an organization spawned by Sabeel, an Arab Christian virulently anti-Israel organization that attempts to delegitimize Israel and who supported the 2001 effort to designate Israel as an apartheid state. Kumi Now is currently sponsoring a major event for young people in July 2023 and a yearlong young adult discipleship program that will inculcate the anti-Israel Palestinian narrative in impressionable minds.

Israeli Apartheid Week happens annually in March. College campuses around the world hold weeklong events where Israel is demonized and portrayed as a colonialist empire that murders children and oppresses the Palestinian people with impunity. Participants are encouraged to

boycott Israeli products by entering stores and destroying any items made in Israel. These events have tremendous impact on college campuses, intimidating Jewish students and planting seeds of hatred in the minds of young people committed to social justice.

### Where Will Our Help Come From

Prayer for today’s young people is more important than ever as they face a barrage of anti-Israel propaganda for which many are ill prepared. But that’s not the only solution. Bridges for Peace’s Call to Zion tour and year-long Zealous Israel Project have given hundreds of young people a biblical foundation on which to build their support for the nation of Israel. And we are not alone. Dozens of organizations, both Jewish and Christian, are investing in today’s youth, combatting that anti-Zionist narrative with the truth through educational programming and hands-on experiences. Though the battle rages, working together, there is hope that Israel will be able to count on her evangelical allies for generations to come.



Cheryl Hauer,  
*International Vice President*





## Protein-based Biosensor Detects Crop Disease

**RESEARCHERS AT THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY** of Jerusalem have developed a new molecular sensor system that detects harmful diseases in plants and food crops, including potatoes and tomatoes.

Potatoes have become the world's third major food source. Early detection of late blight disease, which gave rise to the Irish potato famine, could help reduce global food insecurity. The disease is a leading cause of potato and tomato crop loss, costing an estimated [US] \$6.5 billion in annual damage worldwide.

In a cover story published in the *Plant Journal*, researchers used genetic engineering methods to produce new potato varieties that produce distinctive proteins. These proteins act as a biological sensor that can be sent to the chloroplasts in the plant's cells, where photosynthesis occurs.

"In its early stages, it is difficult to identify the disease since you can't see external signs on the leaf," says Hebrew University doctoral student Matanel Hipsch, who led the study.

By using sensitive cameras that can pick up signals sent from the sensor, the researchers were able to obtain spatial information about the whole plant. The images helped monitor the plant's physiological state throughout the development of late blight in the potato.

Hipsch conducted the study under the supervision of Shilo Rosenwasser of Hebrew University's Robert H. Smith Institute of Plant Sciences and Genetics in Agriculture. They collaborated with David Helman from the university's Department of Soil and Water Sciences, who developed an artificial intelligence-based algorithm capable of analyzing the fluorescent images, distinguishing between healthy and infected leaves.

The research also revealed that the protein detected diseased areas of the leaves even during the first invisible stages. Another finding suggests that areas infected with late blight are characterized by higher photosynthetic activity compared to the rest of the leaf. This indicates how the pathogen maintains and even improves leaf productivity in the early stages of the disease to "disguise" its development in the plant, according to the researchers.

"The development of advanced biotechnological tools for early plant disease detection can lead to a future research breakthrough in understanding the pathogenicity process and minimize agricultural damage," says Rosenwasser.

*Jewish News Syndicate*





Technology

## Fiber Optics Could Save Lives in Future Earthquakes

**FOR THE FIRST TIME, FIBER OPTICS** could do more than just connect us to the internet. It can also give us advanced warning of an approaching earthquake, according to a study led by Dr. Tzahi Lior of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

This is particularly important news, given the recent earthquake that killed some 56,000 people in Turkey and Syria, which was also felt in Israel.

Trembles that occur at the bottom of the sea often take 30–40 seconds to develop after they begin. This warning time could give people a bit more time to brace for what is to come, even if it is just leaving the house so it will not collapse on them.

Lior's findings, which could bring about a 30-second advanced warning for future quakes, were recently published in the *Scientific Report's* peer-reviewed journal.

"The fact that so many earthquakes these days originate at sea was the catalyst for this study," he said. "Most of our seismic detection equipment is on land, so we only notice the earthquake through the waves crashing on the beach. That difference can be what helps us prevent damage to critical infrastructure. More importantly, it can mean the difference between life and death."

Tens of thousands of earthquakes occur worldwide each year, most of them harmless. But sometimes, they cause immeasurable damage, like the one on February 6. "Some happen beneath the ocean floor, so it takes a while until they come to our attention because of the limitation of current technology. But with fiber optics, we now have the capability of measuring them sooner."

The research was conducted by placing fiber optics opposite the beaches of Greece and France, as well as those stretched along the length of the country of Chile. "In some cases, we'll gain more than 20 seconds of advanced warning, compared to current technology," Lior said.

"Using fiber optics belonging to commercial companies could mean a significant advantage in areas prone to such events, such as Chile, Japan, America's Pacific coast and also Israel."

Ilana Curiel, *Ynetnews*

## Israeli Research Finds Treatment for Pancreatic Cancer

Medicine

**IN A NEW STUDY PUBLISHED** in the prestigious journal *Nature*, Israeli researchers identified possible new ways to treat the often lethal pancreatic cancer.

Researchers compared approximately 400 non-metastatic pancreatic tumor growths to metastatic growth cells, and found that changes in RNA molecule processing within the cell, rather than genetic changes in the DNA, were responsible for the growths becoming metastatic.

Metastatic growths are the main cause of death from pancreatic cancer, which has very few ways of treatment and is therefore considered the most lethal form of cancer.

The study was led by doctoral student Amina Jabara from the research team of Prof. Rotem Karni, an expert in molecular cancer biology at the Faculty of Medicine at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The researchers found that a central protein that controls RNA processing called RBFOX2 undergoes degradation and disappears in metastatic cells. The disappearance of RBFOX2 causes hundreds of genes to produce RNA and proteins in a different manner, contributing to the invasiveness of the cells.

Researchers showed that reintroducing RBFOX2 to metastatic cells inhibits the formation of metastases, while its suppression stimulates the formation of pancreatic cancer metastases.

The disappearance of RBFOX2 specifically affects a group of genes that control the organization of the cell cytoskeleton, which is important for the mobility and invasive ability of the cells.

The researchers demonstrated that by using a drug that inhibits the activity of this group of genes, which is currently used to treat organ transplant patients, the formation of pancreatic cancer metastases can be delayed.

Additionally, by genetically intervening in the processing of RNA in the RBFOX2's target cells, researchers were able to eliminate the cancer cells' invasive ability. When such cells were taken from the bodies of patients and translated into mice, no metastases occurred.

Nina Fox, *Ynetnews*





# TOWER OF DAVID MUSEUM



## Revealing Ancient Treasures

**IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR** a dynamic experience on your next visit to Jerusalem, I highly recommend a visit to the Tower of David Museum. Even if you've visited before, the revamped and updated museum opened its doors in June to the public after a three-year, US \$50 million renewal and conservation upgrade. Many who have visited Jerusalem in the past will know the Tower of David Museum from attending the Night Spectacular light show, an extravaganza of sight and sound projected on the ancient stone walls that recounts the history of Jerusalem. However, there is so much more to this fascinating, expansive museum complex—and now it is even better than ever.

The new upgrades make the archeological park and all of the museum's exhibit halls accessible to everyone thanks to the addition of ramps, a chair lift and two new elevators. Cutting-edge technology integrates seamlessly with the 3,000-year-old edifice. Visitors learn about Jerusalem's colorful history through state-of-the-art technology and ancient artifacts.

The Tower of David Citadel, located next to the Jaffa Gate in the Old City, is one of the iconic scenes of Jerusalem. Its Phasael Tower, built by King Herod some 2,000 years ago, provides panoramic, 360-degree views from the meeting point between ancient and modern parts of the city.





## Background

The Tower of David Museum first opened in 1989 as a center of culture, the initiative of Jerusalem's famed mayor, Teddy Kollek. Archaeological excavations were extended and both the Guard Rooms and Crusader Halls were renovated to create exhibition spaces. Today, the ten Guard Rooms house the permanent museum collections while the latter host temporary exhibits. The citadel complex continues to serve as a stunning backdrop for cultural events and performances.

## History

The museum's website recounts the history surrounding this strategic site going back to at least the First Temple period. During the excavations, a fortification wall was found. It is believed to have been built by King Hezekiah roughly 2,700 years ago. Hundreds of years later, as the city expanded, the Hasmoneans built a large wall with towers on the site. Next, King Herod built three towers and a royal palace complex atop the Hasmonean fortifications. During the Roman siege and destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, only one of the towers survived, namely the Phasael Tower, which can still be visited today.

The name "Tower of David" actually comes from the Byzantine Period (AD 324–638), when monks came to live at the base of the tower. They mistakenly believed that King David built the structure. Despite the inaccuracy, the name stuck and is still used today. The Crusaders put the current dimensions and scope of the main complex in place around AD 1150. They greatly improved the fortifications and surrounded the citadel with a moat. A number of mighty empires that sought to conquer and control Jerusalem over the centuries found this location at the top of the Hinnom Valley to be of strategic importance. Evidence of Jewish, Roman, Muslim, Crusader, Mameluke, Ottoman and British conquests are all found within this historical wonder.

## Restoration and Expansion

While the Tower of David Museum has always been one of Jerusalem's foremost tourist attractions, the newly upgraded space promises an experience second to none. According to the museum's website, a contemporary, subterranean entrance

pavilion makes the museum accessible from additional parking garages and a new light rail stop set to open in the future. Visitors can also look forward to modern amenities, including a coffee shop and covered seating. The lower level boasts an innovative educational space, which is expected to triple the learning opportunities the museum offers. Then there is a gallery for contemporary art and design alongside a 200-seat auditorium for concerts and conferences.

Another major addition to the museum complex is the new Herodian Wing, an enclosed archaeological excavation descending 10 meters (32 ft.) underground. A multi-sensory experience showcasing remains from the eighth century BC up to the present brings the entire area to life.

Atop the main tower is an iconic minaret from 1635. It was built by the Ottoman Turks, who ruled the city at that time. The ravages of time and weather had weakened the stones, and the minaret had several major cracks. In order to preserve this symbol of the city, the museum undertook a major conservation project to take the minaret apart and rebuild it stone by stone.

The permanent exhibition halls have been renovated to incorporate new technologies that highlight the authentic artifacts telling the full history of the city. Jerusalem's story is presented both chronologically and thematically and will inspire and arouse the curiosity of its millions of visitors, the website promises.

The museum's vastly expanded, multi-dimensional facilities have the potential to become a cultural and educational powerhouse in the city center, benefitting both local residents and tourists alike. Why not come experience the profound transformation of the Tower of David Museum for yourself? You won't be disappointed!



Terry Mason,  
*Director of International Development*



# Coming Home, Just Like God Promised

**IN 2022, A RECORD-BREAKING NUMBER** of Jewish people made the decision to bid the country of their birth farewell and return to the country God covenanted to their ancestor Abraham. In fact, Israel has not seen such an influx of new *olim* (immigrants) coming home since the Iron Curtain fell in 1989 and the borders of former communist nations swung open.

Not everyone who arrived last year had originally planned to come. One of the ripple effects of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, was a colossal upsurge in *aliyah* (immigration to Israel) as the nation became a safe haven for Jewish people who never considered immigration before the fighting started.

Yet the overwhelming majority of Israel's newest citizens are not from war-torn Ukraine. They hail from Russia. And as uncertainty, fear and instability continue to shake the world's largest country, the number of Russian *olim* coming home to Israel in 2023 is expected to outstrip the 2022 figure by far. In fact, during the first months of 2023, Russian *aliyah* has spiked by nearly 300% over the 2022 figures—and it continues to climb.

While the account of the homecoming Ukrainian refugees is well publicized, Russian *aliyah* occurs mainly behind the scenes. It has to. As with so many times in history, Jewish lives are at stake.

## Winds of War

“Last year, we welcomed 75,000 new immigrants from around the world to Israel,” says Shmulik Fried, director of Keren Hayesod's Friends of Israel, the Jewish state's preeminent international fundraising organization that plays a leading role in supporting and enhancing *aliyah* as well as absorption post-immigration into Israeli society.

Of course, 75,000 prophetic homecomings are something to be celebrated, but the context makes them truly significant. According to Fried, between 28,000 and 30,000 people immigrate to Israel in an average year. “That makes the 75,000 in 2022 more than double. It's a number that Israel has not seen in over 30 years since the early 90s after the Soviet Union collapsed.”

The upsurge in *aliyah* figures is not unexpected, of course. The war in Ukraine unleashed the worst refugee crisis in Europe since World War II. And with Israel opening its doors to Jewish refugees, everyone expected the numbers to go up.

In the immediate aftermath of the Russian invasion, between 3,000 to 4,000 Ukrainian Jews streamed to Israel every month. Yet toward the end of 2022, those numbers had dropped to between 300 and 400.

Russian *aliyah* had a slower start. “Unlike the Ukrainians, the Russians didn't really feel the war in the beginning,” Fried explained. With the media largely acting as a mouthpiece for the powers-that-be and the frontlines located beyond the borders, Russians initially remained largely untouched. And even if they did condemn the war,

it didn't invade their homes, their day-to-day existence, Fried continued. "Russian immigration did rise, but not dramatically. We had an average of between 500 and 800 people coming monthly."

Then Russian President Vladimir Putin called up 300,000 Russian civilians to bolster the war effort. Suddenly, fathers, husbands, sons and brothers marched off to war. Overnight, panic struck and Russian men of fighting age desperately sought a way out. And for Russian Jews, Israel beckoned.

The result? "Over the past five months, we've welcomed exponentially more Russian *olim* every month," Fried said. "This is a massive wave of *aliyah* happening as we speak. And it is happening under the radar—for a specific reason."

## Out of the Spotlight

Under Soviet rule, Russian Jews were prohibited from immigrating, leaving them trapped in a society where they were persecuted, maligned and victimized to such an extent that many chose to hide their Jewish identity. Now, in a chilling throwback to those terrible times, Russian leaders once again wield the power to slam shut the skies over Russia at a whim, leaving the Jewish population trapped inside—just like under Soviet rule.

"Up until this point, we've been blessed," Fried held. "Putin allows Russians to leave, but he's keeping a close eye on things." The mass exodus is bad for morale, drains the economy and delivers a blow to the public image, Fried argued. And the moment may come when Putin has had enough and decides to close the borders without a moment's notice, leaving Russia's Jewish population of roughly 600,000 people virtually imprisoned.

According to Fried, "That's why we're keeping a low profile. We don't want to poke the bear. But we're very concerned."

## "Behold, How Good it Is"

Despite the tensions, Fried sees the homecoming as a prophetic fulfillment of God's promises delivered by biblical prophets to regather the Children of Israel to their ancient homeland. And Bridges for Peace, working actively alongside its Jewish partner to bring the return about, forms part of the fulfillment.

"It means Jews and Christians are committed to one another to fulfill Bible prophecy," says Fried. "It's not only our mission as the Jewish people. The Bible says He will raise a banner for the nations (Isa. 11:12). It says the nations will carry our sons and our daughters home (Isa. 49:22). So working together, we are actually fulfilling prophecy given 3,000 years ago."

According to Fried, the partnership also means that Christians are physically involved in rescuing Jewish lives, something that was not always the case. "I am the grandson of a Holocaust survivor. My grandfather used to say, 'I didn't know what to do or where to go. Nobody cared about us.' I know that is not the case anymore. Today, you have millions of Christians who will be there if, God forbid, the Jewish people face danger. It means we are not alone."

The unexpected number of Jewish people coming home also means unprecedented financial, logistical, spatial and physical challenges for Israel. But Fried is right. Israel is not alone. God has indeed raised up a banner, and we have responded. Bridges for Peace will continue to help carry the Jewish people home on our shoulders, just like God said.

Ilse Strauss, *News Bureau Chief*



# ISRAEL—A NEWS-OBSSESSED NATION

**ONE MORNING, AS I WALKED UP** HaRav Kook Street in downtown Jerusalem, I paused to read a plaque on one of the buildings. I learned that this location was the site where Jerusalem's first printing press, owned by the Salomon family, had operated from 1939–1992. I'm not sure why it piqued my interest, but I started thinking about newspapers. These days, printed papers are becoming a thing of the past. But it was not always so. Let's delve into a brief look at the history and development of news and Hebrew papers in Israel.



THEN

## Under Ottoman Rule

Near the end of the 400-year rule of the Ottoman Empire (1517–1917), the Jewish people began returning to the Land of Israel. Of course there had always been a *yishuv*—Jews who remained in the Land even after the Roman conquest in AD 70—but the mid-1800s signaled a shift in the Jewish world in preparation for the waves of *aliyah* (immigration to Israel) which would begin in the 1880s.

*HaLevanon*, the first Hebrew-language newspaper published in Israel, was one piece of evidence of the coming changes. The paper made its debut in 1863 and was followed six months later by a second named *HaHavatselet*. The papers presented two sides of the argument that was emerging. The editor of *HaLevanon* believed the *yishuv* should continue to study *Torah* (Gen.–Deut.), supported by donations from the Jewish community abroad, while *HaHavatselet* advocated for the development of self-supporting agricultural communities.

Both ran afoul of the Turkish censors and were closed the same year they began publication. *HaLevanon* moved its operations to Europe but still focused on bringing news of the Jewish *yishuv* in the Holy Land to the world until the paper permanently closed in 1886. *HaHavatselet* remained silent until 1870, when it reopened and published a regular weekly paper in Jerusalem until 1911.

Jerusalem treasures its past, so both papers are memorialized by street names in the city center. Though often referred to as the “umbrella street” for its colorful summertime décor, the correct name is Yoel Moshe Salomon Street, named for one of *HaLevanon's* founders. And as BFP volunteers, we often walked up *HaHavatselet* Street on our way to work.



## British Mandate Period

Looking at the press situation during the Mandate Period (1917–1948), Leslie John Martin wrote, “Palestine was a special case in journalism. No other area with a population of two million, of whom at least 30% are illiterate, could boast of 18 morning dailies, three evening papers, and a host of weeklies, biweeklies and monthlies.”

While there were obviously many Hebrew language newspapers available, there was also a local English language paper. The *Jerusalem Post*, Israel's premier English newspaper today, can trace its roots to the *Palestine Bulletin*, which originated in 1925. In 1932, under the headship of Gershon Agron, the *Bulletin* became the *Palestine*

*Post*. It was a strong Jewish voice as it openly opposed the British White Paper, which restricted Jewish immigration. “Zionist organizations considered the newspaper one of the most effective means of exerting influence on British authorities,” Wikipedia argues. After the modern State of Israel was born, the name was changed to the *Jerusalem Post*.

## Statehood

Political parties owned most of the newspapers that existed at the founding of the State of Israel. It is interesting to note that there were two independent papers, *Ha’Aretz* (1919) and *Yediot Aharonot* (1939), and they alone have survived until today. Those associated with political parties have gone by the wayside. *Ha’Aretz* holds a 4.7% market share, while *Yediot Aharonot*’s is much larger at 23.9%.

Until 1960, the primary source of news was the print media. Israel had only one radio station, *Kol Israel*, and there were just a few newscasts each day. As the young country grew stronger economically and there were more advertisers, the independent papers became stronger.

## Israeli Fascination with the News

If Martin were to do his analysis of the press situation in Israel today, he would not find much changed since the British Mandate Period. “In 2015, *Reuters* correspondent Tova Cohen described Israeli society in 2012 as ‘news-obsessed’.” Although much of today’s news comes via an online platform and “recent years have seen the increased place of radio and television, Israel still boasts one of the world’s highest rates of newspaper readers among its adult population,” the *Jewish Virtual Library* says.

Israelis’ news obsession is due, in part, to the precariousness of the world in which they live. Since its establishment 75 years ago, the young country has been forced to defend itself in seven wars—approximately one per decade. In that kind of environment, it is critically important to be as prepared as possible for any situation.

So, six days a week, on the streets of Jerusalem, you will see men in red coveralls with stacks of newspapers to hand to automobile drivers and passersby alike. *Israel HaYom*, a free paper with a circulation of 275,000, is only one of the means by which Israelis get their daily news-fix.

## As the Rest of the World Looks On

Israel is a country roughly the size of the US state of New Jersey with a total population of 9.026 million—approximately 0.11% of the world’s population. When you consider its size, it is surprising that tiny Israel is in the global news spotlight so much of the time. At any given moment, Israel may be the largest single source of news events reported around the world. And that’s something to ponder.

Janet Aslin, *BFP Staff Writer*



# DIVIDED JERUSALEM



**JERUSALEM TODAY** is an explorer's paradise. You can watch the sun rise from the Mount of Olives before taking the pilgrims' path down the slopes to Gethsemane, where Christian tradition says Jesus (Yeshua) prayed before His crucifixion. From there, you can slip through the Lion's Gate to marvel at the Western Wall that has stood as the heart of Judaism for nearly 2,000 years—all before heading back to a bustling metropolis where high-speed trains and belching busses snake through streets lined with high rises and chic cafes.

It wasn't always like that though. Fifty-six years ago, Jerusalem was a city divided. From 1948 to 1967, the City Line—a 4.3-mile (7-km.) stretch of barbed wire, concrete barriers, No Man's Land and military posts—split the city into western Jerusalem under Israeli rule and eastern Jerusalem, including the Old City and the Western Wall, under Jordanian occupation. Hashemite snipers stationed along the barbed wire used Israeli citizens for target practice, landmines dotted No Man's Land and the City Line lay like a jagged tear through the heart of the city, separating, segregating and restricting.

## *A Tale of West and East*

The State of Israel was a day old when the army of Jordan joined four other Arab countries to annihilate the reborn nation. Against all odds, Israel triumphed. Yet Jordan's Arab Legion managed to overrun and occupy a patch of the Promised Land, annexing Jericho, Bethlehem, Hebron and finally, the eastern part of Jerusalem.

On November 30, 1948, Israeli and Jordanian commanders huddled over a map in an abandoned house in

Jerusalem to draw the armistice lines of the ceasefire that would carve up the city. Once they were finished, the eastern part of the city—with the Old City, Western Wall, Mount of Olives and its ancient Jewish graves, Gethsemane and the Garden Tomb—fell under Hashemite rule.

The Red Cross immediately ushered the remaining 1,300 plus Jewish residents of the Old City out the Zion Gate. And for the first time since King David chose Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, the spot where God pledged His lingering presence perpetually (1 Chron. 7:16) was *judenrein* (a term of Nazi origin, indicating an area "cleansed" of Jews). The Hashemite forces proceeded to destroy the Jewish Quarter, decimating schools, synagogues and tombstones.

A year later, Jordan formally annexed the portion of the occupied Promised Land, including eastern Jerusalem, a move that only Iraq, Pakistan and the United Kingdom recognized.

The boundary lines scribbled in an abandoned home in a war-torn city became a barbed-wire border dividing that city between occupier to the east and rightful owner to the west for nearly two decades.

In 1950, Israel declared Jerusalem its capital. The government invested in education, infrastructure and housing. The city and her people flourished. Jordan retained Amman as its capital, reducing eastern Jerusalem to a squalid backwater with substandard education, infrastructure and housing. Yet instead of seeking an independent Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital, the Arab residents of the now *judenrein* part of Jerusalem opted instead to swear fealty to the Hashemite king.



## *In Her Midst, a Wall*

Jerusalem is home to 30 holy places important in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Three of these lie in the western part of the city. The remaining 27—including the Western Wall, the holiest spot in Judaism, the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest spot in Islam, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—nestle in eastern Jerusalem.

The 1949 Armistice Agreements guaranteed Israelis access to the holy places now under Hashemite rule and called for a special committee to put the necessary plans in place. Yet for the next 19 years, neither Jewish nor Muslim Israelis were allowed to set foot in eastern Jerusalem.

And so it happened that for the first time since the destruction of the Second Temple made the Western Wall the holiest spot in Judaism, Jewish prayer and worship in the shadow of the ancient structure fell silent.

## *“In Our Hands”*

On the eve of the 1967 Six Day War, reunifying divided Jerusalem was not on Israel’s radar. The war to come was about survival, striking Egypt and Syria before they could attack first. Israel dispatched a message to the Hashemites, urging them to stay out of the fight. Yet roused by false reports from Cairo and Damascus boasting about a “glorious victory against the Zionists,” Jordan jumped into the fray. Less than 48 hours later, the Israeli flag unfurled over the Old City. Israeli Jerusalem tripled in size and Jordanian Jerusalem was no more. And for the first time since the city fell to the Romans in AD 70, it was wholly back in the hands of the descendants of King David.

The City Line, barbed wire and No Man’s Land disappeared. Religious groups were granted free access to the sites prominent to their faiths. Eastern Jerusalem was integrated and placed under the law, jurisdiction and administration of Israel. Overnight, Israel became responsible for an additional hundreds of thousands of people and assumed responsibility for their infrastructure and public services. Israel even offered them a path to Israeli citizenship, which few accepted.

## *In the Eternal Council of God*

Jerusalem stood as the capital of the Jewish people 1,000 years before it became sacred to Christianity and roughly 1,700 years before Islam staked its claim. Yet in the 56 years since Jerusalem was returned to its rightful owners, world bodies, international leaders

and foreign governments have urged Israel to undo the reunification. Few countries recognize Israel’s jurisdiction over the western part of the city, let alone the eastern part, referring to Jerusalem as “occupied territory,” which Israel annexed illegally.

The fierce opposition to a Jewish Jerusalem shouldn’t surprise us. Scripture teaches that the piercing eyes of the world will continually be drawn to this city, with Jerusalem becoming a “cup of drunkenness” and a “very heavy stone for all peoples” (Zech. 12:2, 3).

Perhaps Bible teacher Derek Prince said it best, “In the eternal counsel of God, He has determined to make Jerusalem the decisive issue by which He will deal with the nations. Those nations who align themselves with God’s purposes for Jerusalem will receive His blessing. But those who follow a policy in opposition to God’s purposes will be severely dealt with.”



Ilse Strauss,  
News Bureau Chief



# IRAN'S TIGHTENING NOOSE

**IN APRIL, THE HEBREW DAILY** *Makor Rishon* ran a chilling op-ed entitled “Death to Israel: The Iranian Plan to Attack Israel.” The piece was penned by Lt. Col. (res.) Dr. Mordechai Kedar, a well-respected Arab scholar with 25 years of service in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) military intelligence under his belt. According to Kedar, Iran is planning a “staged, comprehensive, integrated and coordinated attack on Israel.”

The multi-pronged strike will start with a rain of missiles and UAVs from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Gaza, incapacitating the Iron Dome and grounding the air force. A full-scale cyberattack aimed at devastating vital Israeli infrastructure will accompany the shower of death.

Iran calculates that the ferocity of the initial attack will cause a delay in the mobilization of reserve forces, leaving only the regular army to defend the borders and creating the ideal environment for stage two of the attack. Thousands of terrorists on dirt bikes and ATVs will pour into Israel from Lebanon, Syria and Gaza, decimating the thinly-spread Israeli troops and heading straight for Jewish border communities.

However, according to Kedar, Iran itself will conveniently stay out of the fray, thus keeping its hands clean and claiming plausible deniability. Instead, it will mobilize its proxies—Hezbollah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the Houthis and pro-Iranian militias in Iraq—to accomplish their dirty work.

And judging by what these proxies have to say, the scenario is not farfetched.

Left: Lt. Col. (res.) Dr. Mordechai Kedar  
Right: Yoav Gallant, Israeli defense minister



## The Head of the Snake

*“The slightest mistake against our country will be responded [to] with a harsh response and will be accompanied by the destruction of Haifa and Tel Aviv. The enemies of the Islamic Revolution, especially the Zionist Regime, have received the message of the power of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.”*

—Ebrahim Raisi, president of Iran

*“The Zionist regime is a deadly, cancerous growth and a detriment to this region. It will undoubtedly be uprooted and destroyed.”*

—Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, supreme leader of Iran

*“Khomeini used the word bayad, which means ‘must,’ giving the sentences a clear and commanding ethos. The quote contained no conditionality, and...it was used to draw a sharp contrast between the policy of the new revolutionary government in Iran toward Israel and those of Muslim nations who sought normalization with the Jewish state.”*

— Behnam Ben Taleblu, in “When Iran Says ‘Death to Israel’, It Means It,” published in the *Atlantic*

*“This is the end of the era of limited conflicts. We are facing a new security era in which there may be a real threat to all arenas at the same time. We operated for years under the assumption that limited conflicts could be managed, but that is a phenomenon that is disappearing. Today, there is a noticeable phenomenon of the convergence of the arenas...Iran is the driving force in the convergence of the arenas. It transfers resources, ideology, knowledge and training to its proxies. The increasing dependence [of the proxies] on Iran leads them to step over the boundaries and become more brazen.”*

—Yoav Gallant, Israeli defense minister

## Iran’s Terror Puppets

*“Senior Hamas and Islamic Jihad officials met in Beirut with Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah to coordinate their moves against Israel.”*

—Ben Caspit in “Israeli Fears Grow of United Hezbollah–Hamas–Iran Front,” published by *AI-Monitor*

*“This position is that Palestine from river to sea must be liberated. Israel has no legitimacy to exist at all and must be destroyed.”*

—Hassan Nasrallah, secretary-general of Hezbollah

*“We say that we are in an advanced position and that Israel will depart from all of Palestine...”*

—Ismail Haniyeh, head of the Hamas Political Bureau

*“Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.”*

—Hamas Charter

*“We are creating might in Lebanon because we want to fight our enemy from there with all our strength. Hezbollah today has tremendous might on the ground that can on its own break the Zionist regime...Today an international Islamic army has been formed in Syria, and the voices of the Muslims are heard near the Golan. Orders are awaited so that...the eradication of the evil regime [Israel] will land and the life of this regime will be ended for good. The life of the Zionist regime was never in danger as it is now.”*

—Hossein Salami, commander-in-chief of the Iran Revolutionary Guards

*“What the Zionist enemy must know is that peace and security will not come as long as Palestine is occupied, and that compromise agreements lead to nothing but defeat and despair.”*

—A statement published by the Houthis following a deadly terror attack in Israel

## How Serious is the Threat?

*“Iran feels increasing self-confidence. In its view, the West is deterred and lacks effective tools against it. While Israel is busy dealing with Iran’s proxies, Iran is getting stronger economically and militarily and this gives it room for action. This is something that should keep the whole world, and Israel, awake at night.”*

—Yoav Gallant, Israeli defense minister

# Tours

## CANADA

### EXPERIENCE ISRAEL DISCIPLESHIP TOUR

Date: October 8–19, 2023

Hosted by: **Real Bois**

Join us as we travel through Israel and experience first-hand the wonder and beauty of the Land of the Bible.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### ISRAEL TOURS

Date: Dates available throughout 2024

Hosted by: **Michael and Sian Treharne**

Throughout 2024, we will host eight-day tours for small groups in Israel. We will also host a special walking tour in Israel and a visit to Poland in 2024. Contact the office for more information.

## UNITED STATES

### BIBLICAL HOLY LAND TOUR 2023

Date: June 24–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.

### ISRAEL TOUR

Date: January 29–February 7, 2024

Hosted by: **Pastor Ken and Dawn Goodban, Pastor Randy Alonso**

In conjunction with the Heritage Study Programs, we will head an incredible mission to Israel. The mission will include an on-location advanced Bible study program and a fact-finding expedition that will focus on and offer unique insights into the region's current events. We heartily invite you to what will be a most informative study program and an exciting expedition.

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



# Volunteer With Us

**Administrative Assistant**

**Bilingual Administrative Assistant**  
(Fluent in English and Russian)

**Graphic Designer**

**Home Repair Manager**

**Home Repair Team**

**Journalist**

**Proofreader**

**Web Developer**

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

# “Squeeze-the-day” **Limonana**

**PICTURE YOURSELF ON A** scorching day in Israel, yearning for a refreshing, tangy and sweet drink to quench your thirst. Enter *limonana*, a beloved beverage among locals and tourists alike. Its name is derived from the Hebrew words for lemon (*limon*) and mint (*nana*). As you take the first sip, the combination of the lemon’s tanginess, the mint’s freshness and the ice work in perfect harmony to provide an instant cooling sensation.

In Israel, *limonana* is more than just a drink; it’s a representation of culture and hospitality to help you feel renewed and ready to continue with your day—even in the heat of summer. With this recipe, you can enjoy the refreshing taste of Israel in your own home this summer!



## **Ingredients**

- 4 large lemons
- 1/3 cup fresh mint leaves
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 cup water
- 3 cups ice
- Mint leaves and/or lemon slices (optional, for garnish)

## **Directions**

1. Make a simple syrup by boiling the water and sugar together in a small saucepan over medium heat until the sugar is completely dissolved.
2. Remove the syrup from the heat and set aside until completely cool.
3. Juice the lemons, removing the pips.
4. Remove the mint leaves from the stalk and rinse well.
5. Combine the lemon juice, syrup, mint leaves and ice in a blender and run on high for a minute or two until slushy.
6. Serve in glasses garnished with mint leaves or lemon slices.

Serves 4

## TIME Names Jerusalem One of World's Greatest Places

**JERUSALEM WAS NAMED** one of *TIME* magazine's 50 most extraordinary travel destinations, as part of the publication's third annual list of the World's Greatest Places.

*TIME* solicited nominations for the list—including countries, regions, cities and towns—from its international network of correspondents and contributors.

"The locations must be enthralling, exciting, and offer new or advanced experiences to meet the criteria for *TIME*," according to the outlet.

Jerusalem is listed among the other destinations, including Kyoto in Japan, Musanze in Rwanda, Giza and Saqqara in Egypt, Ladakh in India and Aqaba in Jordan.

The Tower of David Museum's 360° view of Jerusalem was featured by *TIME* as one of the must-see attractions in the city. The other sites mentioned in the Israeli capital were the Biblical Zoo, Jaffa Gate, Kerem Tunnel and the Mahane Yehudah market.

*Jewish News Syndicate*



## Israel Working to Expand Abraham Accords



**ISRAEL IS WORKING TO EXPAND** the Abraham Accords with four other nations, according to *Israel Hayom*.

Foreign Minister Eli Cohen is working to normalize ties with Mauritania, Somalia, Niger and Indonesia.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is, of course, also involved in efforts behind the scenes, as are the US's Secretary of State Antony Blinken, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and Senior Adviser for Energy Security Amos Hochstein, who mediated the Israel–Lebanon maritime deal during the Bennett–Lapid government.

Negotiations with Mauritania are in an advanced phase. Cohen hinted as much in a meeting with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, during which he officially asked her to help Israel with the breakthrough vis-à-vis Mauritania and Niger.

Israel and Mauritania established diplomatic relations in 1999, but Mauritania cut ties in 2008 due to that year's Gaza war.

Israel and Somalia have never had diplomatic ties, but over the past year, reports have emerged that the country's

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud is interested in establishing them. Jerusalem is particularly interested due to Somalia's strategic location between the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean at the entrance to the Red Sea.

Israel has never had official diplomatic relations with Niger either, and those that did exist unofficially suffered during the 1973 Yom Kippur War and the 2000–2005 Second *Intifada* [uprising].

Niger is a global supplier of uranium, and ties to Israel might prevent the sale of the material to hostile countries and reduce the number of nations voting against Israel in international forums.

Cohen is also working to normalize ties with Indonesia, which with a population of around 280 million, is the most populous Muslim country in the world. Although Jakarta does not have official diplomatic ties with Jerusalem, there have been unofficial connections in trade, technology and tourism.

Shirit Avitan Cohen,  
*Jewish News Syndicate via Israel Hayom*

# Israel Improves Earthquake Preparedness

**ISRAEL CONDUCTED A FOUR-DAY** international exercise simulating the reception of foreign aid in the event of a major earthquake.

The drill simulated all necessary emergency procedures, including the initial decision to request international assistance, integrating foreign rescue teams, receiving the aid and distributing it.

The exercise was led by the Israeli Defense Ministry's National Emergency Management Authority in cooperation with local emergency and rescue services. Some 120 people from 18 countries participated.

"The National Emergency Management Authority designated 2023 as the year to focus on improving national earthquake preparedness," said IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Brig. Gen. (res.) Yoram Laredo, director of the National Emergency Management Authority.

"The highly esteemed cooperation with our partners abroad is a crucial element in achieving this and enhances the State of Israel's capacity to receive extensive humanitarian aid in emergency situations," he added.

Turkey was struck by a pair of massive earthquakes on February 6 that, together with hundreds of aftershocks, left more than 50,000 people dead in what the World Health Organization has called the region's worst natural disaster in a century.

Israel has scrambled to improve its earthquake preparedness in the wake of the Turkey disaster, with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu directing National Security Council head Tzachi Hanegbi to "update and reiterate the steps we need to take."

Experts have stressed that Israel's current state of earthquake readiness is concerning. A 2018 report by the previous comptroller estimated that a major earthquake could result in 7,000 casualties and leave 170,000 people homeless. A report from last year found that 600,000 buildings in the country do not meet the standard for earthquake resistance.

Israel is located along the Great Rift Valley, an active geological fault line presenting several significant hazards for the area, including frequent minor earthquakes and the potential for more serious seismic events.

Israel [has] had a long history of earthquakes, with a major one occurring approximately every 100 years. The last major earthquake to hit the country was in 1927. That quake, which had a magnitude of 6.2, claimed 284 lives and injured 940.

*Jewish News Agency*





# 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 100,000 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.





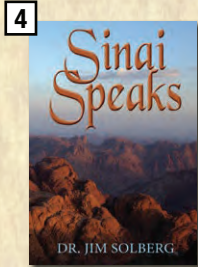
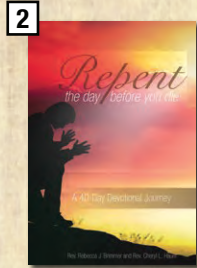
A photograph of two hikers on a trail. The hiker in the foreground is wearing a white t-shirt, a dark bucket hat, and sunglasses, blowing on a dandelion seed head. The hiker behind him is wearing a purple t-shirt, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses, also blowing on the dandelion. Both are wearing backpacks with hydration bladders. Dandelion seeds are floating in the air around them. The background shows a dirt path and green foliage.

*“Therefore humble yourselves  
under the mighty hand of God,  
that He may ex-  
alt you in due  
time, casting all  
your care upon  
Him, for  
He cares  
for you.”*

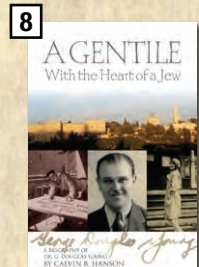
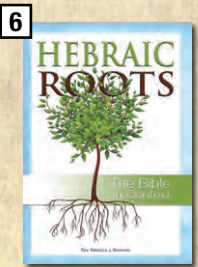
*1 Peter 5:6–7*

***DONATE***

***GREATEST ISRAEL NEED***



**NOW IN SPANISH,**  
both on Kindle  
and hard copy



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

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

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

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

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

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

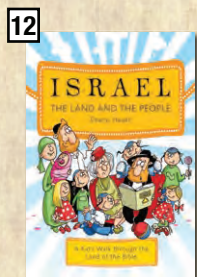
**7 JOSEPH & MARY: A MODEL FOR TODAY'S FAMILY**  
Cheryl Hauer  
A fresh look at the lives of Mary and Joseph, gleaned from what history tells us of first-century family life—a desperately needed model for families today. **Also on Kindle**

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

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

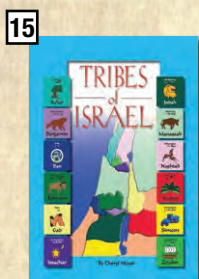
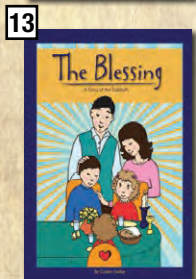
**10 FORGOTTEN PATRIOT**  
THE STORY OF HAYM SALOMON  
David Allen Lewis  
Perhaps no one did as much to help establish the United States as Haym Salomon—a forgotten hero who gave everything for the cause of freedom.

## Children's Books



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

**ORDER ONLINE**  
Visit [bridgesforpeace.com](http://bridgesforpeace.com)



**12 ISRAEL: THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE**  
Cheryl Hauer  
Through puzzles, games, crafts and other activities, children will learn about Israel's land, people, food and language...and have fun doing it! (Ages 7–12) **32 pages**

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

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

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



A record number of Jewish people immigrated to Israel in 2022—and the figures for 2023 may be even higher. Israel's new citizens often arrive with almost nothing.

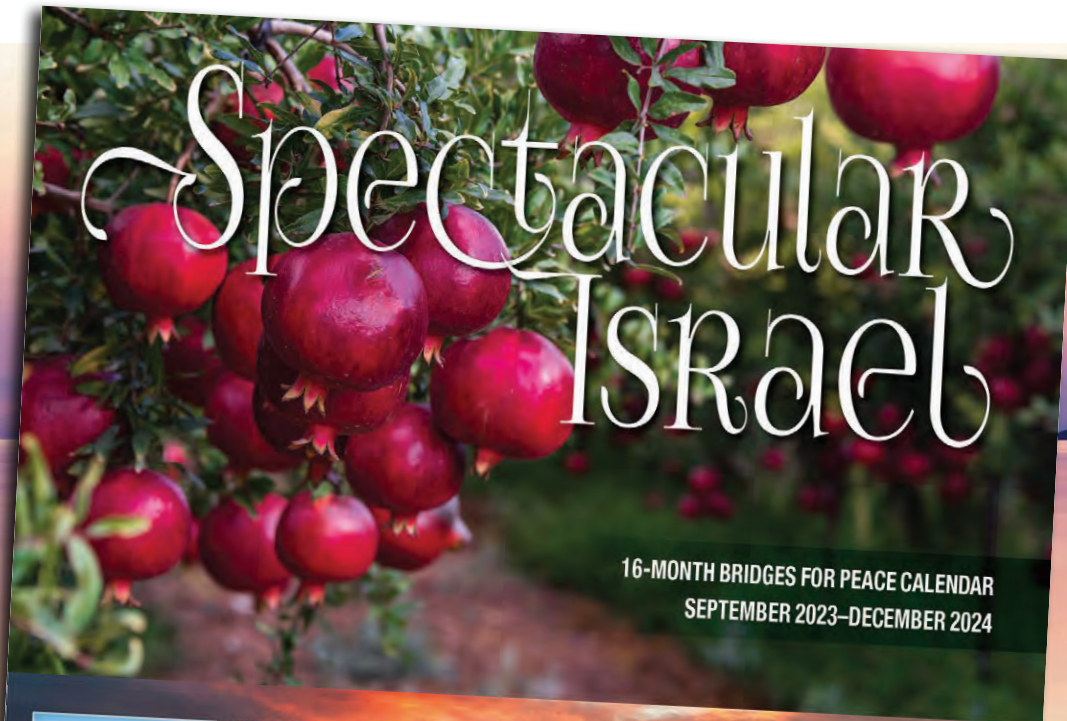
Will you help us bless them with a gift to welcome them home? The staples they receive through our New Immigrant Welcome Gift program help them to start rebuilding their lives in their new homeland.



### הוראות שימוש

לפני השימוש הראשוני יש לשטוף במים וסבון.  
יש להמנע מהנחת הסירים והמחבת על להבה  
לזמן ממושך כשהם ריקים.  
בכדי לשמור על אריכות חיי הסירים והמחבת יש  
בכלי עץ/סיליקון פלסטיק לשם ערבוב.  
יש להימנע משימוש בכלים חדים בסירים ובמחבת.

Get our  
new  
spectacular  
16-month  
calendar  
today!



13 colorful pictures of Israel  
Each page suitable for framing  
Notation area for each day  
All Jewish holidays marked  
Weekly Torah, Haftarah and  
New Testament readings  
Hebrew calendar explanations

# Buy Now!

16-Month • Bridges for Peace Calendar • September 2023–December 2024

Turn to page 33  
to order today!