On Foot Through Israel
BRIDGES FOR PEACE

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

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

We are committed to the following goals:

To 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.

Dispach 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
Peter Fast
Associate Editor
Cheryl L. Hauer
Assistant Editor
Ilse Strauss
Graphic Designers
Ededile 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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Offices

Australia
Tel: (61) 7-5479-4229
bfp.au@bridgesforpeace.com

South Korea
Tel: (82) 70-8772-2014
bfp@bfpkorea.com

Canada
Tel: (1) 204-489-3697
Toll free: (1) 855-489-3697
info@bfpca.org

Spain
Tel: (34) 903-309-1849
info.es@bridgesforpeace.com

Japan
Tel: (81) 3-5969-9656
bfp@bfpj.org

Russia
Tel: (7) 903-309-1849
info.ru@bridgesforpeace.com

New Zealand
Tel: (64) 7-855-5262
emathe nz@bridgesforpeace.com

United Kingdom
Tel: (44) 165-673-9494
ukoffice@bridgesforpeace.com

South Africa
Tel: (27) 21-975-1941
info@bridgesforpeace.co.za

Tel: (64) 7-855-5262
bfp@bfpca.org

Tel: (64) 7-855-5262
emathe nz@bridgesforpeace.com

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

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.
10  **How the Media Frames It**
When it comes to Israel and the Palestinians, many international news outlets have abandoned the mandate of impartial observers. They’ve morphed into active participants with a preferred side, waging an information war on that side’s behalf.

*By Ilse Strauss*

12  **Two Ways to Fight: One Way to Win**
Since its rebirth 75 years ago, the tiny Jewish state has developed and implemented a successful defense strategy that is best defined by the saying: “The best defense is offense.”

*By Kate Norman*

14  **To Israel with Love**
According to Maimonides, the highest level of giving “supports a fellow Jew by endowing him with a gift or loan…to strengthen his hand…” Examples abound of gifts made to the citizens and State of Israel that support and strengthen the nation.

*By Janet Aslin*

18  **On Foot Through Israel**
Any tour through the Land of the Bible can be considered an epic quest. But if you want to experience Israel in a more intimate, boots-on-the-ground way, only hiking the Israel National Trail will suffice.

*By Terry Mason*

20  **To Life!**
Accusations that Israel slaughters innocent Palestinians come regularly during every round of fighting. And with tragic images and stories flashing across screens, who could blame millions for believing Israel guilty of war crimes?

*By Ilse Strauss*

22  **Missing: A Palestinian Partner for Peace**
People often talk about the two-state solution. Divide up the land, give one portion to Israel and the other to the Palestinians. There is one obvious problem to this supposed solution: who would be Israel’s partner for peace?

*By Kate Norman*

24  **The Quirks of Israel—Riding the Bus**
From the pen of Peter Fast, the new CEO of Bridges for Peace International, comes the eighth installment in this series. Join Peter on a journey through the wonderfully peculiar culture, traditions and daily life of this singular nation.

*By Peter Fast*
YEARS AGO, while volunteering with Bridges for Peace’s Home Repair team, I found myself in the home of a Jewish man named Mordechai. His apartment was dilapidated, with black mold covering the walls and a few pieces of old, rickety furniture. Mordechai and his family had fled to Israel from Iran after the violent takeover of the ayatollah (honorary title bestowed on high-ranking Shiite Muslim clerics in Iran) regime in 1979. Two of his siblings were murdered during the journey, and Mordechai arrived in Israel with only his mother and younger brother.

He told our team his story as tears streamed down his face. Then he threw his arms in the air and thanked God for two things. The first item of praise was that God had preserved his life and brought him and the surviving members of his family to Israel. The second was that Christians from Bridges for Peace had come to paint his home, but more importantly, had brought him bags of desperately-needed food.

Through tears and hugs, Mordechai explained that he cared for his infirmed mother and was therefore unable to work fulltime. As a result, there was never enough food to feed the two of them. Never in his wildest dreams did he imagine that Christians would feed them. To Mordechai, such love was a miracle of God.

Fast forward a decade or so. After Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, tens of thousands of Ukrainian and Russian Jews have fled to Israel. Many of these refugees now needed our help in a myriad of ways, with food being a major priority.

One Russian Jewish family with two young children told us about the agony of losing everything and trying to start a new life in Israel. They fled for their lives and arrived with no paperwork, which made renting an apartment and finding a job to feed their children very difficult. Kind Israelis tried to assist where possible, but how would they afford food?

The family settled in Karmiel in northern Israel, where a landlord agreed to provide an apartment without the necessary documents. However, the landlord needed the first month’s rent paid in cash, and the desperate family spent everything they had on securing a roof over their heads. This left them with nothing left over to buy food and no prospects of finding a job to raise money.

In those dark moments of desperation, hope shone into their lives as Bridges for Peace learned of their plight and stepped into the gap, providing bags of food and other necessary items to dramatically change their lives. In an instant, this family went from despair to experiencing the love of God, all because Christians cared to demonstrate such love.
Now this Russian Jewish refugee family can focus on learning Hebrew so that they can find work, earn a salary and build a future. They will never forget how Christians rescued them in their darkest hour.

There are endless such stories of how Christians through Bridges for Peace have stepped into the gap to demonstrate the love and hope of God to the people of Israel, whether refugees fleeing war or Israelis trapped in the cycle of poverty. God has tugged at hearts and rallied believers from around the world to take action and provide the life-saving resource of food.

We’ve heard stories of children not eating enough and struggling to concentrate in school as their empty tummies rumble. We’ve heard of parents having to decide between purchasing food or clothing for their little ones. Thanks to the love of incredible Christians like you, these Israelis no longer have to make such a terrible choice.

Bridges for Peace feeds more than 24,000 needy Israelis every month. We cannot do that without you. We need your support and prayers to provide for the impoverished and desperate Israelis we assist. When you give to our Food Program, you are lifting up the poor and struggling of Israel and placing them on a firm foundation so that future generations can flourish. You are partnering with God in His prophetic action to strengthen this nation by empowering these precious people with dignity as they are enveloped in God’s love demonstrated by Christians like you.

Blessings from Jerusalem,
Peter Fast
CEO

This family was blessed because Christians through Bridges for Peace stepped into the gap to demonstrate the love and hope of God to the people of Israel.
WHILE THE UNITED STATES and Iran have denied ongoing negotiations for a temporary nuclear agreement, Jerusalem refuses to accept these denials. It is believed that two Arab countries are mediating between the US and Iran. Israel is deeply concerned about the potential outcome of these negotiations, even if they take a long time to materialize.

Israeli sources claim that the secret negotiations between the US and Iran are based on the principle of “less for less.” This means reaching a temporary agreement on only specific issues that both parties can agree upon. In this case, the focus is on Iran halting uranium enrichment in exchange for releasing its frozen funds in the West, which amount to several hundred billion dollars.

Senior officials in Jerusalem are concerned about Israel’s inability to influence the Biden administration and Congress regarding the Iranian nuclear threat. Additionally, European countries such as Germany, France and Great Britain are not likely to oppose such an agreement.

A new interim nuclear agreement between Iran and the world powers poses several dangers to Israel.

• The agreement is expected to lift the West’s sanctions against Iran.

• While the agreement may temporarily halt uranium enrichment, Iran is already on the verge of becoming a nuclear-capable nation. During this period, Iran will likely continue its development of nuclear weapons technology and ballistic missile programs.

• Iran may also complete the process of burying its nuclear facilities deep underground to protect them from potential airstrikes.

• The agreement would provide US $20 billion to Iran, with several hundred billion dollars to follow. With this influx of funds, Iran could strengthen its military capabilities and those of its Middle East proxies.

• It would be challenging for Israel to attack Iran’s nuclear facilities while Iran is engaged in a new international nuclear agreement with the world powers.

Some senior Israeli security officials believe that a new temporary nuclear agreement might be the lesser of two evils compared to the current situation, where Iran continues to pursue its nuclear ambitions unchecked.

Yoni Ben Menachem,
Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs
MAJOR-GENERAL AHARON HALIVA, head of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Military Intelligence Directorate, assessed that Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah was “close to making a mistake that could plunge the region into a big war.”

Haliva added: “We need to be prepared that our enemies won’t understand the message we’re sending. Let them not be mistaken; we’re ready to use force and will do whatever is possible and necessary to bring calm.”

Haliva’s remarks were not accidental or unintentional. Israel has been following Nasrallah’s hardline and fierce rhetoric, which has grown to new levels of provocation and audacity in the last year.

Nasrallah said that recent events in Israel indicated Israel was nearing its end. He added that it was the threat of Hezbollah’s military might backing up the Lebanese army that enabled the latter to stand up to the IDF on the border, and claimed that in recent weeks, Israel has been trying to move the border by seizing [miles] of Lebanese territory, but has been repelled.

Nasrallah seems convinced he has the upper hand in his fight against Israel. He has presented himself as the patron of the Palestinian cause. Displaying his most recent arrogance, Nasrallah ordered war exercises on May 21, 2023, adjacent to Israel’s border.

Nasrallah’s vision of Israel is not the first time an Arab leader has misconstrued Israeli reality. Many Arab leaders before Nasrallah had the same dream, and their failure to read and analyze the Israeli politics and society proved to be their end. Haliva is giving Nasrallah “free advice” and recommends listening to it carefully.

Col. (ret.) Dr. Jacques Neriah, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs

THE ISRAELI SECURITY establishment has begun intensive discussions on the possibility of conducting a widespread military operation in Judea and Samaria against Palestinian terror groups.

The Israeli security establishment is concerned about the spread of armed terrorist groups throughout Judea and Samaria equipped with large stockpiles of weapons and ammunition. There are about 20 armed terrorist groups carrying out attacks. The weapons flow through the border with Jordan, with the purchases financed by Iran.

The strategy of the armed terrorist groups is to conduct a war of attrition against the IDF in all of Judea and Samaria and to draw in as many soldiers as possible. Iran sees Judea and Samaria as another front against Israel as part of its strategy of “uniting the fronts.”

The Israel Security Agency reportedly supports conducting an extensive military operation in Judea and Samaria against the terrorist infrastructure. Security sources say it is an inevitable process to stop the expanding terrorist infrastructure from growing daily and pushing the failed Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces out of large areas in Judea and Samaria.

PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas has a Palestinian security force numbering 30,000 armed men under his command. But Abbas continues the policy he started in 2021 of avoiding conflict with the armed terrorist groups as long as they do not directly threaten his headquarters in Ramallah.

A senior Israeli political official said that the Israeli security establishment is preparing for an escalation on the ground: “If, God forbid, there is an attack with many casualties in Judea and Samaria, the Israeli government will have no choice but to launch a major military operation despite the pressures of the Biden administration, which has so far succeeded in delaying the launch of the operation.”

Yoni Ben Menachem, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs
WHO WAS SHIMON? His name appears on a 2,000-year-old Hebrew inscription.

In excavations carried out on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority [IAA] in the City of David, a small fragment of a stone tablet was discovered, bearing an inscription that was produced for financial purposes.

The seven partially preserved lines of the inscription include fragmentary Hebrew names with letters and numbers written beside them. For example, one line includes the end of the name Shimon, followed by the Hebrew letter mem. In the other lines are symbols representing numbers. Some of the numbers are preceded by their economic value, marked with the Hebrew letter mem, an abbreviation for ma’ot (Hebrew for money), or with the letter resh, an abbreviation for reva’im (Hebrew for quarters).

In a recent article published in the archaeological journal Atiqot by Nahshon Szanton, excavation director on behalf of the IAA and Prof. Esther Eshel, an epigraphist from Bar Ilan University, it is noted that four other similar Hebrew inscriptions have been documented so far in Jerusalem and Bet Shemesh, all bearing names and numbers carved on similar stone slabs and dating to the Early Roman period. This, however, is the first inscription to be revealed to date within the boundaries of the city of Jerusalem.

According to the researchers, the inscription was carved with a sharp tool onto a chalkstone slab. The stone slab was apparently originally used as an ossuary (burial chest), commonly used in Jerusalem and Judea during the Early Roman period (37 BC to AD 70). Ossuaries are generally found in graves outside the city, but their presence has also been documented inside the city, perhaps as a commodity sold in a local artisan’s workshop or store.

The intriguing find was discovered in the lower city square, located along the Pilgrimage Road. This road, extending some 600 meters [1.9 ft.], connected the city gate and the area of the Siloam Pool in the south of the City of David to the gates of the Temple Mount and the Second Temple. It essentially served as the main thoroughfare of Jerusalem at the time. This unique discovery joins similar findings uncovered in the area, attesting to the commercial nature of the area.

According to the researchers, “The everyday life of the inhabitants of Jerusalem who resided here 2,000 years ago is expressed in this simple object. At first glance, the list of names and numbers may not seem exciting, but to think that, just like today, receipts were also used in the past for commercial purposes, and that such a receipt has reached us. It is a rare and gratifying find that allows a glimpse into everyday life in the holy city of Jerusalem.”

According to Szanton and Prof. Eshel, “The combination of the architectural and tangible space of the huge paved stones of the square that were preserved at the site, and the discovery of small finds in this area—such as the measuring table and the new inscription—allow us to reconstruct parts of the incredibly unique archaeological puzzle in one of the vibrant centers that existed in ancient Jerusalem. Each piece of information, and certainly an ancient inscription, adds a new and fascinating dimension to the history of the city.”

Israel Antiquities Authority
AN ENORMOUS CARGO of 1,800-year-old marble artifacts—borne in a merchant ship that was shipwrecked in a storm—was uncovered in the coastal waters north of Netanya.

This is the first and oldest sea cargo of its kind from the Eastern Mediterranean. The cargo, weighing about 44 tons, includes Corinthian capitals adorned with vegetal patterns, partially carved capitals and marble columns up to 6 meters [19 ft.] long. It seems that these valuable architectural elements were intended to adorn a magnificently elaborate public building, possibly a temple or a theater.

In March, Gideon Harris, an experienced sea swimmer, contacted the Israel Antiquities Authority [IAA] and reported ancient columns that he observed while swimming in the sea. Koby Sharvit, director of the IAA’s underwater archaeology unit received the call gratefully. “We have been aware of the existence of this shipwrecked cargo for a long time,” he says, “but we didn’t know its exact whereabouts as it was covered by sand. We therefore could not investigate it. Storms must have exposed the cargo, and thanks to Gideon’s important report, we have been able to register its location and carry out preliminary archaeological investigations, which will lead to a more in-depth research project.”

From the position, site formation and angle of the cargo on the seabed, it is evident that the ship bearing the cargo was wrecked after the ship’s crew encountered a storm in the shallow waters and dropped anchor in a desperate effort to prevent the ship from grounding. “Such storms often blow up suddenly along the country’s coast,” says Sharvit, “and due to the ships’ limited maneuvering potential, they are often dragged into the shallow waters and shipwrecked.”

“From the size of the architectural elements, we can calculate the dimensions of the ship,” adds Sharvit. “We are talking about a merchant ship that could bear a cargo of at least 200 tons. These fine pieces are characteristic of large-scale, majestic public buildings. Even in Roman Caesarea, such architectural elements were made of local stone covered with white plaster to appear like marble. Here we are talking about genuine marble.”

“Since it is probable that this marble cargo came from the Aegean or Black Sea region in Turkey or Greece, and since it was discovered south of the port of Caesarea, it seems that it was destined for one of the ports along the southern Levantine coast, Ashkelon or Gaza, or possibly even Alexandria in Egypt.”

Israel Antiquities Authority
In September 2000, the New York Times published an Associated Press picture to give readers a peak at the horrors of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. They chose well. The picture spoke the proverbial thousand words.

The image portrayed a dark-haired youth—rivulets of blood from multiple head wounds staining his white shirt crimson; his face a mask of fear and horror—cowering in front of a baton-wielding Israeli police officer. The caption identified the petrified young man as a Palestinian. And the Israeli police officer? The caption didn’t say. The implication was clear though. The Israeli was obviously responsible for the youth’s wounds, and the picture was undoubtedly taken as he crouched in pain and terror, awaiting the next blow. What else could the reader possibly infer?

In truth, the picture was not of a Palestinian but of Tuvia Grossman, a Jewish American studying in Jerusalem. It was taken after a Palestinian mob pulled Grossman from a taxi, severely beating and stabbing him. And the Israeli police officer? Turns out he was protecting Grossman, wielding his baton as he warned the mob to stay back.

Although the incident sparked largescale outrage among the Jewish community in the US and in Israel, nobody was overly surprised. It wasn’t the first incident of anti-Israel bias in the mainstream media and it definitely wasn’t the last. In fact, the Associated Press picture in the New York Times was but one example of a chilling phenomenon that now virtually stands as a hallmark of the way Israel is portrayed in the media.

Objectivity is often hailed as the holy grail of journalism. Correspondents and news anchors are urged to pick up their pens or take their place in front of the camera to present the facts free from opinion, influence, belief or persuasion. It is then up to the audience to interpret those facts, identify the bad guy and assign blame.

Yet when it comes to Israel and the Palestinians, it seems that the majority of international news outlets have abandoned the mandate of impartial observers reporting on what they witness. Instead, they have morphed into active participants with a preferred side that now wage an information war on their chosen side’s behalf, touting an ideology instead of relaying facts.

It’s all about semantics

Some outlets are overtly anti-Israel. They make no attempt to sugarcoat their stance and season their prose with phrases like “illegal outposts,” “occupied territories” and even “occupied Jerusalem.” Instead of the Israel Defense Forces, they use “occupation army,” and refer to Israel as a “settler colonial project.”

Yet this glaring bias and open hostility actually render such outlets the lesser of two evils. Once a source openly shuns objectivity, audiences view the “news” it produces with suspicion, as opinion and ideology rather than fact. The result? These are the resources that those with a similar opinion and ideology consume to affirm their opinion and avow their ideology, not the outlets the ordinary reader turns to for information.

Far more destructive are sources that attempt to conceal their seeming anti-Israel bias. Claiming objectivity, they steer clear of openly hostile terms and instead use techniques like selection, omission, leading and framing to shape the perception of its audience—and in this particular case, paint a picture about Israel that is far more damaging and far more dangerous than any openly hostile source.

Sadly, examples abound. In October 2015, a BBC headline announced “Palestinian Shot Dead after Jerusalem Attack Kills Two.” Reporting on the same attack, Al Jazeera headlined its article, “Palestinian shot dead after fatal stabbing in Jerusalem; 2 Israeli victims also killed.”
Technically, both headlines were correct. A Palestinian had been shot to death in Israel’s capital. Yet what the headlines failed to mention was that said Palestinian was the perpetrator of the Jerusalem attack in which he murdered two Israelis.

Through a nifty choice of information to select and omit, the BBC and Al Jazeera led with the details they deemed important and framed the events to victimize the terrorist—and by unspoken implication, vilified or at least dismissed Israel.

Two years later, the BBC was at it again with a headline announcing, “Three Palestinians Killed After Deadly Stabbing in Jerusalem.” Again, nobody could fault the technical accuracy. Yet what the headline again failed to mention was that the three Palestinians committed a combined terror attack in which a 19-year-old Israeli Border Policewoman was murdered.

Then there was the Associated Press informing its readers that “Israeli Police Shoot Man in East Jerusalem,” conveniently omitting that the man ploughed his car into a crowded bus stop, killing a three-month-old baby and injuring 15 people.

Without stating it explicitly, these headlines communicated a clear message. The fate of the Palestinians matter and is worthy of attention, empathy and outrage. The Israelis are mere afterthoughts, referred to in passive voice, if at all.

Granted, the BBC, Al Jazeera and the AP explained somewhere in the article following the shameful headlines that Israeli police shot the Palestinians for a specific reason: to put a halt to the terror attack, to prevent further loss of life and keep innocent bystanders safe. But that was a little too late.

Studies show that nearly 60% of readers skim the headlines without reading the accompanying article. This means that casual readers with no vested interest in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict base their stance purely on the headlines they scan. The headlines are crucial for the remaining 40% of active readers too. Headlines and the first sentence of a news article apparently set the scene and frame the way stories are read, interpreted and remembered. The take-away? Stating the facts, in this instance, that the Palestinian murdered two civilians—which is why the police shot him—in the second half of the first paragraph matters little. By that time, the die has been cast.

NOW WHAT?

If the past is a pretext for the future, the media coverage of Israel will become more biased, more slanted and more focused on communicating a pro-Palestinian victim narrative as opposed to relaying the facts. As Christians who love Israel and the God of Israel, this puts us in a critical position. Isaiah 62:6 calls us the watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem who speak out day and night. And in a “post-truth” society where news outlets have abandoned the mandate of impartial observers and morphed into active participants waging an information war on their chosen side’s behalf, our voices on Israel’s behalf have never been needed more.

Ilse Strauss, News Bureau Chief
ISRAEL IS A TINY COUNTRY in a tough neighborhood, surrounded by Muslim-majority states, several of whom would love to wipe the Jewish state off the map. But the tiny Jewish nation in its short 75 years has developed a defense strategy that is defined by the saying: “The best defense is offense.”

Deterrence and Anticipatory Attacks

On May 9, 2023, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) launched the surprise Operation Shield and Arrow, eliminating in surgical strikes three top commanders of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in the Gaza Strip.

But it wasn’t aggression that fueled the operation, which sparked five days of back-and-forth fighting between the IDF and the PIJ. In less than a week, the terror group launched nearly 1,500 rockets toward Israel, prompting retaliatory strikes against more than 700 terror targets. The IDF announced that the PIJ commanders it targeted were behind recent rocket and terror attacks against Israel and that more attacks were imminent.

In the book “Striking First: Preemptive and Preemptive Attack in US National Security Policy,” California-based think tank the RAND Corporation noted that Israel opts for anticipatory attacks against impending threats, which allows it to “control the location, speed and duration of operations. It also enables Israel to fight on enemy territory rather than in its own backyard and allows the IDF to mobilize reserve units in advance and achieve its objectives before outside parties interfere, according to the think tank.

Taking the fight to enemy territory before the fight comes to Israel implies that the Jewish state needs to go on the offense to defend itself.

Take Syria, for example. In sporadic (alleged) Israeli air strikes in the war-torn country, the Israeli military targets advanced weapons shipments from Iran bound for its terror puppets perched on Israel’s doorstep—particularly Lebanon-based Hezbollah—as well as weapons manufacturing sites and other terror targets. Israel will not allow Iran to entrench itself on the Jewish state’s doorstep or to arm its terror proxies.

This policy is not new. It has served the Jewish state well throughout its history.

Israel’s War for Independence

Just a day after the modern state of Israel was born on May 14, 1948, five Arab armies invaded, intending to wipe it off the map.

The Arab coalition had been threatening war since November 1947, when the United Nations announced its plan to partition the land and establish side-by-side Jewish and Arab states in the Land of Israel. Almost immediately, Arabs living in Israel and volunteers from neighboring states launched attacks against Jews in the land.

The Haganah, the underground Jewish fighting force that preceded the IDF, was comprised of just 60,000 trained fighters sparsely armed with one gun for every three troops. But once the British blockade was lifted, the Haganah quickly armed itself by smuggling, buying and producing heavy weaponry.

After less than a year of fighting, the Israeli military miraculously fought off the invading Arab coalition—thanks largely to switching its fighting tactics from defense to offense. By so doing, the newly formed IDF succeeded in preserving itself and captured additional land.
The Six Day War

In the weeks preceding the Six Day War, Israel knew that a threat was building on the border with Egypt. Cairo had been spewing threats and followed through by amassing 465,000 troops, 800 aircraft and 2,800 tanks along the Jewish state’s border.

Jordanian King Hassan II had attended a meeting of Arab leaders in Morocco in 1965 to decide whether to attack Israel, and the king had secretly recorded the meeting for the Israelis. The recordings instilled confidence in the Israeli military leaders that the Arabs were planning war, but were unprepared, disorganized and divided.

Thus, the Israelis decided to launch a preemptive strike. On June 5, 1967, the Israeli Air Force deployed nearly its entire fleet of planes to strike Egyptian airfields as the Egyptians were enjoying breakfast.

The initial strike decimated most of the Egyptian fleet and half the Syrian air force, surprising the Arabs and crippling their fighting force before they knew what hit them.

Within six days of fighting on three fronts—Egypt in the south, Syria in the east and Lebanon in the north Israelis won a stunning defeat. The IDF recaptured eastern Jerusalem and gained control over the Golan Heights, Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria and the Sinai Peninsula.

Yom Kippur War

In 1973, Israel missed an opportunity to preempt an imminent Arab attack, RAND noted, because the state leaders feared the international response to a preemptive strike.

Egyptian President Anwar Sadat had been threatening to attack Israel for over a year, and multiple IDF chiefs called to mobilize and prepare for war. But Israeli officials did not take the threats seriously.

The Jewish state was taken aback when Egypt invaded from the south and Syria from the Golan Heights on October 6, 1973—on Yom Kippur, the holiest day on the Hebrew calendar.

The Israeli military was woefully outnumbered and out-armed. But after taking a beating during the first two days, the Israeli forces turned the tide and went on the offensive.

Replenished by some 200,000 tons of weapons, tanks and aircraft from the US, the Israelis soon enough drove the invading Arabs out of Israel and even marched toward Cairo in the south and Damascus in the north. But Israel was not interested in invading or capturing foreign territory, and only retained the Golan Heights from Syria.

Though Israel was able to regroup and bounce back from the surprise attack, the Israeli military suffered nearly 2,800 casualties—a heavy price to pay for failure to go on the initial offensive.

Current Preemptive Strategy

The IDF no longer passively waits for its enemies to bring the battle to the Jewish state. The Israeli military keeps constant eyes on enemy powers and often acts preemptively to keep them at bay. The Jewish state maintains the strike first strategy to this day, whether it is fighter jets striking Iranian weapons shipments in Syria or striking terror targets in Gaza to thwart imminent attacks. There are two ways to fight a war: wait for the fight to come to you, or take the fight to the enemy first.
JUDAISM IS RICH with examples of giving and the act itself is taught from a very early age. In a blog entry entitled “What is the Jewish Tradition of Giving?” author Jacquelyn DeGroot defines the motivation for giving in this way: “To sustain the Jewish people, to enhance the Jewish life and to strengthen the Jewish community for today and the future.”

Maimonides, also known as the Rambam, was a Jewish scholar in the Middle Ages who developed eight levels of giving. The highest level is “to support a fellow Jew by endowing him with a gift or loan...in order to strengthen his hand so that he will not need to be dependent upon others.”

There are many examples of gifts that have been made to the citizens and State of Israel. I have chosen to highlight just four of these gifts that I believe serve to support and strengthen their recipients.

Chagall Windows

The synagogue at Hadassah University Hospital–Ein Kerem contains a treasure known the world over simply as the “Chagall Windows.” Twelve in all, each vibrantly colored stained glass window represents one of the twelve sons of the biblical patriarch Jacob.

Marc Chagall, the son of Orthodox Jewish parents, grew up in a Russian shtetl (Yiddish for small town with a large Jewish population). Although he spent most of his life in France and did not practice Judaism, he did not forget his origins and identified with Jewish history.

Barbara Goldstein, Hadassah’s deputy executive director and the ambassador for Large in Israel, told Israel21c the following story. In the late 1950s, while the hospital's synagogue was still being planned, Hadassah representatives went to Paris to meet with Chagall to ask if he would design the synagogue’s stained-glass windows. The artist met their request with these words, “What took you so long? I’ve been waiting my whole life to serve the Jewish people,” Goldstein relayed.

Upon their completion Chagall said, “This is my modest gift to the Jewish people who have always dreamt of biblical love, friendship and of peace among all peoples. This is my gift to that people which lived here thousands of years ago among the other Semitic people.”

“All the time I was working, I felt my mother and father looking over my shoulder; and behind them were Jews, millions of other vanished Jews—of yesterday and a thousand years ago,” Chagall explained.

In my humble opinion, no trip to Jerusalem is complete without a visit to the Chagall Windows at Hadassah University Hospital–Ein Kerem.

Homage to Jerusalem

While the Chagall Windows draw visitors with their sheer beauty and vibrancy, not everyone is a fan of the massive Alexander Calder sculpture that sits on Mount Herzl near the road leading to Yad Vashem (Israel’s Holocaust museum).

Calder was not Jewish but he was a Zionist. In 1975, he visited Israel as a demonstration of support after yet another UN resolution condemning the Jewish state
had been passed. Jerusalem’s mayor at that time, Teddy Kollek, asked the world-renowned sculptor if he would donate a piece to the city. He agreed. The site was chosen and the work begun.

Overlooking the Jerusalem Forest, the bright red sculpture is constructed of bolted steel that was fabricated according to the artist’s design in the Loire Valley. Its fire-engine red arches against the blue sky and green of the forest are eye-catching and very striking. Sadly, Calder died before his work was installed, making the Homage to Jerusalem his last sculpture.

A Gift of Music

Harpo Marx, one of the five Marx Brothers, was part of a highly successful American comedy family. The family’s career spanned nearly 50 years, beginning in Vaudeville and ending with motion pictures. Each of the brothers had a stage persona and you can probably guess that Harpo played the harp. The silent character in their routine, Harpo taught himself to play the instrument, developing his own unique style. Upon his death in 1964, this son of Jewish immigrants bequeathed his harp to the State of Israel.

There are differing accounts of how the harp came to Israel but what is not disputed is the fact that it did come. Several sources verified that Israeli students at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance are currently using Harpo’s famous instrument. And it is possible that a second harp belonging to the comedian also found its way to Israel and now resides at an unnamed Israeli orchestra.

Yair’s Garden

I discovered this relatively unknown gift on my way home one evening. As I walked up the hill toward the Central Bus Station in Jerusalem, I noticed a tiny park and decided it was time to take a rest. In the center of the park was a piece of Jerusalem stone perhaps no more than 3 feet high by 2 feet wide (0.9 m. x 0.6 m.) with the following words: “Gan Yair—In memory of Yair Landau who fell during Operation Peace for Galilee on June 11, 1982 at age 23.”

Donated by his family and friends, this park has helped keep the memory of a very special young man alive for more than 40 years. Yair’s parents made aliya (immigrated to Israel) when he was 10 years old and he grew up in Jerusalem. Yair loved to study Torah (Gen.–Deut.) and he loved Israel. A corporal in an elite unit of the Israel Defense Forces, Yair was killed in the defense of his country. There is no greater gift than this.
Israel Discovers Method to Regulate Autism Symptoms

A significant scientific breakthrough in autism research has emerged in Israel. Researchers from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem have discovered a new mechanism that seems to characterize the brains of individuals with autism. Building upon this finding, the researchers are experimenting to develop a new medication that could potentially lead to innovative treatment for autism.

The researchers, led by Dr. Haitham Amal from the School of Pharmacy in the Institute for Drug Research in the Faculty of Medicine, found a significant correlation between levels of nitric oxide (NO) in the brain and autism. The study revealed that an increase in NO levels in the brains of laboratory animals with autism-like characteristics is associated with increased expression of autism traits.

The experiment was conducted in two parts. First, laboratory animals exhibiting autism-like genes were examined and their NO levels tested. Afterward, the findings were compared with blood test results of severely autistic children to confirm the correlation between NO levels and symptoms. The findings indeed confirmed that the NO levels in the laboratory animals corresponded to the existing NO levels in humans with autism.

The researchers examined the NO levels alongside behavioral parameters, including social communication difficulties, repetitive behaviors, lack of interest in new objects and anxiety. Meanwhile, the researchers examined human stem cells and blood samples from 20 low-functioning autistic children.

“Our research showed that inhibiting NO production in neuronal cells in the brain leads to a reduction in autistic-like symptoms,” said Amal. “The laboratory animals we tested became more sociable, exhibited less repetitive behavior and showed an interest in new objects. We also observed a decrease in anxiety.”

Based on the findings, the researchers began developing a new medication that reduces NO levels in the brain. Details regarding the drug are currently confidential, but it has already attracted interest from a global pharmaceutical company.

“Our discovery may shed light on the connection between NO levels and other neurological disorders or psychiatric disorders,” said Amal. “I hope that this new finding and understanding of the mechanism will lead to the development of a medicine for autism. Such a drug would serve millions of children and adults worldwide.”

Dr. Itay Gal, Ynetnews
New Israeli Cannon Set to Revolutionize Field Combat

ALTHOUGH STILL BEING integrated into the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], the new Israeli cannon, Roem (meaning “thunderous”), is already getting some European fanfare. Last month, it was unveiled to representatives of armies from Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands and Hungary.

Developed by the Defense Ministry and defense manufacturer Elbit, the new Israeli cannon is already considered to be one of Israel’s premier security projects. Most of its internal components remain classified. Only a handful of prototypes exist.

Its capabilities were tested last month with dozens of rounds fired in daylight, simulating different kinds of shells. The demonstration was a success in terms of the targets and autonomatical capabilities.

While tests demonstrated fire at targets at a distance of 20 kilometers (12 mi.), in real-world use, it would have a longer range. Its European variant will have shells of a different kind and would be able to shoot targets that are 80 kilometers (50 mi.) away.

The cannon itself will be mobilized by mechanical wheels, making it more agile in the field. The IDF tested its tactical mobility in arduous terrain and said the weapon could constitute a battlefield revolution, with increased precision during live fire as well as greater customization among different types of combat applications, such as unmanned drones.

Elbit already signed dozens of purchasing agreements with European customers to the tune of billions of dollars. With the conflict between Russia and Ukraine raging on, this matter is viewed with a renewed sense of urgency.

Yoav Zitun, Ynetnews

Israel Develops Tool to Predict Extreme Rainfall

HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM researchers have identified factors influencing the likelihood of extreme rainfall events and have developed a tool that can improve the forecasting of such events. Extreme rainfall events, especially those that cause flash floods, are particularly difficult to forecast, even a short while in advance.

Led by Dr. Assaf Hochman and doctoral student Tair Plotnik at the Institute of Earth Sciences, the research determined the factors that impact our ability to predict extreme rainfall events.

The research team used an extensive database belonging to the European Center for Medium-range Weather Forecasts to examine all extreme rainfall events since 1979 and to sort them into hard-to-forecast and easy-to-forecast categories.

They found that one of the factors preventing optimal forecasting is the simultaneous entry into Israel of air masses from the south and from the north, due to the significantly different characteristics of each.

A mathematical tool developed by the research team can improve forecasting even in difficult cases, so that in the near future, it will be possible to predict the extremity of rainfall events in Israel with a high degree of accuracy, and subsequently also in other parts of the world.

This capability will enable decision-makers to prepare for such events, thus saving lives as well as significantly reducing associated damages.

“The study, and the tool we subsequently developed, allow us to examine the factors that create extreme rainfall and thus to forecast the conditions in which extreme rainfall events will develop. Using this kind of tool will likely save lives, as in the future it will allow the authorities to predict extreme rainfall events and to prepare for them properly,” said Hochman.

“We plan to collaborate with the Israel Meteorological Service and other large forecasting institutions around the world in order to operationalize our unique new approach,” he added.

Jewish News Syndicate
Have you ever longed to take on an epic quest? Perhaps visiting the Land of Israel on a tour would fulfill such a pursuit for you. But there are also those who long to experience the Land in a more intimate and epic way. For those people—both Israelis and visitors alike—only hiking the Israel National Trail (INT) will suffice.

There are remnants of Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman and British civilization. In one spot on the trail near Modi’in, hikers can stop at a 1,800-year-old rest stop when they need a break. The ancient stop has a mosaic depicting anemones (*kalaniot*), which still grow wild on the hillside each spring.

Before Setting Out

As is true for any epic quest, the INT takes planning and preparation. Only four out of every 10 people who begin the hike actually complete it. On average, a through-hike takes between 45 to 60 days to complete. One can hike the INT in either direction, from north to south or south to north. Many people prefer to tackle the INT in smaller sections over the course of several years. And in the desolate Negev region, it is necessary to cache water supplies ahead of time as there are no natural water sources to draw from.

The INT is clearly marked with three striped trail markers, combining blue, white and orange. On any given day, hikers may follow dirt roads, camel paths or narrow ledges along canyons with iron handholds bolted into the wall. The elevation gains and steep descents pose a true challenge, but the expansive views from many parts of the trail make all the effort more than worth it.

In Hebrew, the INT is called *Shvil Yisrael*. It runs the entire length of Israel, from the Lebanese border in the north to Eilat and the Gulf of Aqaba on the Red Sea in the south. Although Israel is only around 290 miles (470 km.) long, the INT stretches over approximately 683 miles (1,100 km.).

There are over 9,320 miles (15,000 km.) of well-maintained and marked hiking trails in Israel, but the INT is the Holy Grail. In fact, *National Geographic* named it as one of the 20 most epic hiking trails in the world. Young Israelis may hike the trail to get in shape just before joining the Israel Defense Force for their compulsory service. For others, it is a way to celebrate major life events, such as a *bar* or *bat mitzvah* (religious coming-of-age ceremony), getting married or milestone birthdays. Regardless, it is a badge of honor to complete this impressive journey.

The INT traverses a wide diversity of habitats and landscapes, from stark, barren desert to forested mountains with waterfalls. However, the diversity encountered on the INT is not limited to habitat and geography. The rich assortment of flora and fauna that hikers can marvel at varies depending on the season. Another surprise to some hikers is the richness of both ancient and modern cultures along the trail. Hikers also have the opportunity to enjoy the rich history of this Land. At nearly every turn, there are remnants of Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman and British civilization. In one spot on the trail near Modi’in, hikers can stop at a 1,800-year-old rest stop when they need a break. The ancient stop has a mosaic depicting anemones (*kalaniot*), which still grow wild on the hillside each spring.

Before Setting Out

As is true for any epic quest, the INT takes planning and preparation. Only four out of every 10 people who begin the hike actually complete it. On average, a through-hike takes between 45 to 60 days to complete. One can hike the INT in either direction, from north to south or south to north. Many people prefer to tackle the INT in smaller sections over the course of several years. And in the desolate Negev region, it is necessary to cache water supplies ahead of time as there are no natural water sources to draw from.

The INT is clearly marked with three striped trail markers, combining blue, white and orange. On any given day, hikers may follow dirt roads, camel paths or narrow ledges along canyons with iron handholds bolted into the wall. The elevation gains and steep descents pose a true challenge, but the expansive views from many parts of the trail make all the effort more than worth it.
**Back to the Beginning**

The brainchild of avid hikers Avraham Tamir and Ori Dvir, the INT was officially inaugurated in 1994 by then Israeli President Ezer Weizmann to offer adventurers a way to experience the length and breadth of the Land firsthand. Tamir hiked the famed Appalachian Trail in the US in the late 1970s, where the idea for something similar in Israel was born. Dvir was one of the original founders of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel.

Originally, existing sections of current trails were combined to make up the INT. Then some new sections were added to complete the full length. Today, it is divided into 53 sections with designated camping sites between each. The trail planners ensured that the route only traverses areas generally considered under Israeli sovereignty. As such, the INT does not pass through Judea, Samaria or the Golan Heights. It winds through the Negev Desert, the central hill country near Jerusalem, the coastal plain and the northern Galilee. In the desert areas of the south in particular, the trail diverts around extensive army training areas.

**Assistance Along the Way**

“Trail Angels” are a unique part of hiking the INT. Since the trail runs through the Holy Land, you may think that this phrase refers to actual angelic beings. But Trail Angels are mere mortals with big hearts and helpful dispositions who provide practical assistance to those doing a through-hike. And after a grueling day in the dust and heat, these caring individuals seem like angels. There are over 120 officially registered Trail Angels. Most live in close proximity to the trail in small towns and villages along the way. The assistance they provide is often free and varies from a lean-to in the backyard with a hot shower and toilet to a full guest room and a hot breakfast in the morning. Trail Angels come from all sectors of Israeli society and add to the joy of experiencing Israel up close and personal during this epic adventure.

Many sections of the INT can be completed in one day. Some are spectacularly beautiful, offering places to cool off in springs or streams along the way. Next time you are in Israel, why not look for those blue, white and orange trail markers and get to know the Land in a more intimate way…off the well-beaten tourist track on the Israel National Trail.
TO LIFE!

THE IMAGES GRIP your heart. A broken father—grief streaming in rivulets down his cheeks—rocking the lifeless body of his two-year-old daughter after the toddler and her pregnant mother were supposedly killed in an Israeli airstrike. A mother’s tears pooling on the picture of a beaming preschooler—riotous curls framing an angelic face—as she cradles the bloodstained clothing her son wore when he was caught in the crossfire between Israeli and Palestinian militants. Two women holding onto each other as they shriek their sorrow skyward over a line of shroud-covered loved ones who allegedly perished in an Israeli bombing.

The accusations that Israel slaughters innocent Palestinian women and children are not new. They resound with unwavering predictability during every round of back-and-forth fighting between the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and Palestinian terror groups. And with tragic images like these flashing across screens, who could blame millions around the world for believing Israel guilty of war crimes?

First, let’s be clear. There should be a roar of outrage over these deaths. But it shouldn’t be directed at Israel.

Fighting for Death

Colonel Richard Kemp is often one of the only pro-Israel voices amid a crushing chorus of condemnation. Yet his experience and expertise make him hard to ignore.

A 30-year British army combat veteran with 14 operational tours in some of the world’s flashpoints. Former commander of the British forces in Afghanistan who subsequently worked in the British Cabinet office on defense and intelligence issues. Recipient of the Queen's Commendation for Bravery and Commander of the Order of the British Empire. The list goes on. Bottom line? When Kemp speaks on military and intelligence matters, the powers-that-be listen.

Kemp has been in Israel for every major conflict since 2018 and observed the battles unfold from the boundaries of the frontlines. So what’s his take on the claims that Israel targets innocent Palestinians?

Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and Hezbollah have no illusions of winning a military victory against the IDF, Kemp explains. “They attack for one reason: forcing the IDF to counter their aggression, knowing that in doing so, Israel will inflict civilian casualties, which they’ll use to vilify Israel. Their aim is international condemnation, and they’re very successful.”

Achieving this aim requires fighting in a way that maximizes the probability of civilian casualties, Kemp says. “They deliberately place their weapons and munitions among the population. Fighters and commanders surround themselves with their families, so that if they’re targeted, the families die too. They position themselves in civilian areas like apartment buildings, schools, hospitals, shops and mosques. So when the IDF attacks to protect its people, striking weapon systems, munitions or terrorists, it’s inevitable that civilians will die. That’s reality. That’s why civilian casualties are inflicted.”
Moreover, a percentage of the missiles and mortars that Gazan terror groups launch at Israel misfires or falls short, slamming into densely populated areas and killing their own people. Often, the “friendly fire” comes from civilian centers, like the home of the two-year-old toddler and her pregnant mother, who actually perished when a rocket launched from their apartment misfired, not in an Israeli strike.

This wasn’t an isolated incident. According to the IDF, out of the 1,100 rockets fired at Israel in August 2022, 200 misfired or fell short inside Gaza, killing more civilians than Israeli strikes. In fact, rockets fired from Gaza reportedly killed 12 of the 15 children who died over the three days of fighting.

This makes the terror groups—not Israel—guilty of a double war crime: firing on a civilian population from among a civilian population from buildings dedicated to civilian use, thus turning civilians into human shields.

Still, civilians often refuse to leave. “Hamas threatens people to stay put. ‘If the Israelis attack, you might die,’ they say. ‘But if you leave, you’ll definitely die, because we’ll kill you.’ That’s what the IDF contends with.”

Where’s the Proportion?

Despite the barrages of rockets, the casualty figures in Israel remain low. Does that mean the missiles are actually harmless? That the terrorists aren’t really trying? And perhaps more importantly, does it mean Israel shouldn’t respond as forcefully?

“Israel has spent millions on defense,” Kemp counters. “There’s a comprehensive system of detection, an alarm system and the shelter system. Then there’s the Iron Dome and other anti-missile systems, which is perhaps the primary reason why the casualty figures are low. The Israelis are committed to saving their people’s lives. The people on the other side do the opposite.”

Kemp adds that anybody who argues that Israel should turn a blind eye to the bombardments needs a “reality check.”

“Any country must respond to attacks. It’s negligent if the government doesn’t. National sovereignty means the right to defend. Also, regardless of how good Israel’s defensive systems are, they’re not foolproof. Israel has no choice but to respond.”

The Bottom Line

Israel goes further than many other countries and further than the law requires to keep the enemy population safe, Kemp says. Doing so often means endangering the lives of its own soldiers.

That level of morality, Kemp holds, is embedded in the core of the Jewish state. “The IDF fights with the level of morality that their people expect of them. The IDF has high moral standards because Israel has high moral standards. Although many Israelis are secular, Judaism still permeates the Israeli society to an extent that Christianity doesn’t permeate British and American societies. That influence enhances the moral behavior.”

How then do Christians explain the harrowing images of tiny shroud-covered bodies and grieving parents? “Israel is not at fault,” Kemp concludes. “It’s Hamas, it’s PIJ and ultimately Iran...They deliberately try to get their people killed, making it almost impossible for Israel not to kill them.”

Ilse Strauss, News Bureau Chief
PEOPLE OFTEN TALK about the two-state solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. It’s simple, they argue. Divide up the land. Allow Israel to keep a portion of it, and give the other portion to the Palestinians—including eastern Jerusalem, Gaza and a large parcel of Judea and Samaria.

These are actually the terms the Jewish leaders agreed to before the Jewish state declared independence on May 14, 1948. The Arabs, however, rejected the United Nations resolution that sparked Israel’s rebirth, and on May 15, 1948, armies from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria invaded the newborn state, opening the defensive War of Independence—which Israel miraculously won.

Yet 75 years later, world leaders continue to tout the two-state solution, arguing that it will bring the elusive peace to the Middle East.

There is one obvious problem to this supposed solution that gets overlooked: who would be Israel’s partner in the two-state solution? There is no sole leader or representative of the Palestinian people who can step into the role as ruler of the Palestinian state—and Israel’s partner for peace.

In fact, there are several players vying for the Palestinian throne, including the Palestinian Authority (PA), Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ).

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

The Oslo Accords, signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in the 1990s, gave birth to the PA, the “temporary” government of the Palestinian people until the conclusion of the two-state solution.

Ruling from Ramallah in Judea and Samaria, the PA is struggling to hold onto its power as PA President Mahmoud Abbas serves out the 18th year of his four-year term. Dominated by the secular Fatah political party, the PA has marked its years with mismanagement and corruption—as well as inciting the Palestinian people to violence by painting Israel as the true villain and source of their problems. But after inciting the Palestinians against Israel, the PA coordinates with Israel on certain things, particularly security, leaving a bad taste in the mouth of the Palestinian people and driving them into the arms of other entities who take a more hardline stance against the Jewish state, particularly Hamas.
HAMAS

The PA’s main rival for power, Hamas is the terror organization in control of the Gaza Strip, although its influence is spreading into the biblical heartland of Israel as more young Palestinians are abandoning the PA and pledging their allegiance to Hamas.

In fact, when the PA held its last election in 2006, Hamas won the majority of seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council, the PA’s legislature. The two factions were unable to maintain a unity government, and by 2007, Hamas instituted a coup d’état in the Gaza Strip, violently expelling Fatah members.

Hamas was born in 1987 out of the Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood. Though it is a Sunni Islamist organization, it is backed, funded and armed by Shia Iran. The goal of Hamas, as stated in its charter, is to “raise the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine.”

The charter’s preamble states that “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.” Hamas also refuses any peaceful agreements or negotiations with Israel, which the group’s charter calls a “contradiction to the principles of the Islamic Resistance Movement...There is no solution for the Palestinian problem except by jihad [holy war].” This does not make for a two-state peace partner with Israel.

Hamas takes its mandate of jihad seriously, plotting terror attacks against Israeli soldiers and civilians as well as launching barrages of rockets toward Israel, most recently in Operation Guardian of the Walls in May 2021. Hamas partnered with the PIJ to fire more than 4,400 rockets toward Israel over the course of 11 days, prompting retaliatory Israeli strikes.

PALESTINIAN ISLAMIC JIHAD

The PIJ is one of the relatively new power players on the scene. It is the second largest terror group operating in the Gaza Strip behind Hamas—and like Hamas, is funded, backed and armed by Iran.

The group was established in 1981 in Gaza—also as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood—with the goal to destroy Israel and establish an Islamist Palestinian state. As the group refuses to negotiate with Israel and resorts to only terrorist means, the PIJ is also an unlikely partner in a potential two-state solutions.

After partnering with Hamas in Guardian of the Walls, the PIJ proved itself a standalone threat to Israel during Operation Breaking Dawn in August 2022. Claiming an imminent attack against the Jewish state, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) launched preemptive strikes against PIJ commanders and terror targets in the Gaza Strip. Over the three-day operation, the IDF eliminated three top PIJ commanders and the PIJ launched over 1,100 rockets toward Israel.

Then, on May 2, 2023, the PIJ launched over 21 rockets toward Israel in response to the death of a PIJ commander who had been on a hunger strike while in Israeli custody. A week later, the IDF responded by launching Operation Shield and Arrow, eliminating three more PIJ commanders in surgical strikes in Gaza. The operation lasted five days, in which the PIJ launched nearly 1,500 rockets into Israel, prompting retaliatory strikes on PIJ terror and military targets in the Strip. Hamas notably did not participate in either conflict.

THE UNSOLVED SOLUTION

With three such parties vying for the Palestinian throne, who is supposed to sit across the negotiating table with Israel for a two-state solution? The PA is slowly losing its grip on the Palestinian people, and Hamas and the PIJ refuse any sort of peace agreement with the Jewish state, seeking instead to wipe it off the map and replace it with an Islamist state. As the situation currently stands, there is no possibility of a simple two-state solution.

Kate Norman,
BFP Staff Writer
WHEN IT COMES TO ISRAEL, life is green, Egged green to be exact. I’m not talking about Dr. Seuss here, but about Egged, Israel’s official bus company. Egged [pronounced Eh-gehd] has both charter buses for the highways and city buses for urban areas.

If you crave the experience of a lifetime, simply take your nearest Egged bus to the destination of your choice. Egged bus drivers are just like NASA astronauts—with a few notable exceptions. Of course there’s no anti-gravity, breaking through the atmosphere, going on a spacewalk, working in a space station, walking on the moon and operating a US $450-million-dollar spaceship on a crucial mission. But apart from these differences, Egged bus drivers are just as experienced, professional and daring as Buzz Aldrin or Neil Armstrong. Why, you may wonder. Because these bus drivers are the heroes that help Israeli life continue and flourish.

Egged bus drivers drive like their bus is a Formula 1 racecar and they are seconds away from making a record lap. The agility and ability to catapult a 40-foot-long (12-m.-long) city bus—and sometimes an extended one—through the busy streets of Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Eilat or Tiberius is amazing. Superman, Batman, Thor or the Hulk has nothing on these drivers. Let me paint you a picture.

At any given moment, you will find your average bus driver dodging a scooter, honking at a car, picking up passengers, taking a sip from an energy drink and ordering a slice of pizza—all at the same time. Then there are also opening the exit doors without pinning an old lady between the door and the inside of the bus, closing the door without incident, checking the rearview mirrors, changing the radio station and carrying on a conversation with a regular passenger lingering by the

From the pen of CEO Peter Fast comes the eighth installment of the Quirks of Israel. Join Peter on a journey through the wonderfully peculiar culture, traditions, heritage and daily life of this singular nation as he unpacks, introduces and celebrates the quirky aspects that make Israel so wonderfully unique.
front door and another regular passenger seated behind him. Any driver worth his salt will also throw into the mix calling his mother to say hello and then switch to speaking with their spouse to take down a mental grocery shopping list—all while careening down the street like an asteroid.

These unsung heroes go to war everyday against the traffic of Israel and the elderly ladies shouting, “Regah nahag!“ (wait, driver!) while pounding the ringer button for their stop. It’s impressive. The concentration. The focus of a sniper. The hands of a surgeon. These drivers keep the bus speeding down the street as the entire vehicle shifts and lurches, packed with passengers sleeping, reading, gazing out a window or chattering happily like a little bird in a fountain. It is almost like going on a rollercoaster to the grocery store to pick up milk. Of course, I may exaggerate a bit. But for you to discern what’s truth and what’s exaggeration, you’ll have to come to Israel and find out for yourself.

Israeli bus drivers also are kindhearted people. A friend and I once missed our stop and then got confused about where we were. Slightly embarrassed, we made the decision to remain silently in our seats riding the bus until we recognized something. Our bluff continued for about 20 minutes as passenger after passenger disembarked. Eventually, we were the only ones on the bus. The next thing we knew, we had reached the outskirts of the city. Worried that we were being taken to some deserted spot to be abandoned, I gulped, shook off my embarrassment and told my friend that I was going to have a word with the driver. As I made my way from my seat to the front to explain our predicament, I saw the driver’s dark eyes wander my way in the rearview mirror.

“You’re lost, aren’t you, my friend?” he asked, flashing me a brilliant smile.

I sighed and answered, “Yes. We missed our stop and now we have no idea where we are.”

“Where are you going?” he asked, a little too cheerful for my taste.

I gave him the address, upon which he nodded dutifully, made a surprise U-turn and started heading back in the direction we had come. I made my way back to my friend’s side and together we waited. As we began to see civilization again, our hearts were filled with hope. He wasn’t going to abandon us. We weren’t getting murdered tonight. He was helping us, we realized. More than that, he wanted to help us, no, enjoyed helping us!

Moments later, we arrived at the city bus depot, where our friendly driver parked the bus, motioned to us to disembark and then told us to follow him. It soon became clear that our driver was escorting the bus, motioned to us to disembark and then told us to follow him. It soon became clear that our driver was escorting us to where we wanted to go! We were thankful for the help and he was thankful for the opportunity to practice his English. Our Egged saint walked us all the way to the front door. Then, with a final smile and a wave of his hand, he turned around and left. What a noble soul, my friend and I thought, a hero in shining armor doing his bit to make society a better place. He was probably thinking to himself, “Oy vey, how are these two poor souls ever going to survive in Israel? These tourists need to learn the streets, to know where they’re going. How hard can it be? My abba taught me, ‘Eli, Hebron Street is not Bethlehem Street, is not King George and is certainly not Emek Rafaim.’ Simple as that!”

Israel is quirky indeed.

Peter Fast, CEO
In 2022, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) condemned Israel more times than it did all the other countries in the world combined. UNGA passed a total of 28 resolutions rapping a specific nation across the knuckles. Fifteen of these resolutions criticized Israel, while 13 condemned various other countries, like Russia, Afghanistan, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea, Syria and the United States.

Let’s put matters into perspective. In 2022, Russia invaded a sovereign neighbor, resulting in thousands of civilian deaths and the worst refugee crisis in Europe since World War II. Iran cracked down on innocent civilians protesting inhumane treatment by the regime, imprisoning, torturing and executing its own people. Women in Afghanistan continue to be subjected to a future without education, worth or a voice. And in Syria, the Butcher of Damascus, President Bashar al-Assad, continues to slaughter his people with impunity. Then there are human rights violations in countries like Algeria, China, Cuba, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Venezuela and Vietnam.

Despite these atrocities, UNGA felt that Israel was the main perpetrator of evil over the course of 2022 and thus focused its full attention on vilifying the only democracy in the Middle East.

Preposterous? Indeed. But sadly, not surprising. In fact, the UN and its various committees, assemblies and councils are notorious for its overt anti-Israel probes, resolutions and rhetoric.

With such a track record, is it any wonder that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu calls the UN a “circus of the absurd?”

From the Horse’s Mouth

“We are very disheartened by the social media that is controlled largely by—whether it is the Jewish lobby or specific NGOs…I would go as far as to raise the question of why are they [Israel] even a member of the UN…We want to continue to expose [Israel’s actions]. You cannot allow a country in the world to get away with this kind of [activity]. Israel has no intention of ending the occupation, and the persistent discrimination against the Palestinians lies at the heart of the systematic recurrence of violations.”

—Miloon Kothari, one of three members of the UN Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and in Israel. The UN Human Rights Council created this commission in 2021 in the aftermath of Operation Guardian of the Walls. The COI is unique in that it is an open-ended investigation and the only one of its kind set up to investigate a UN member state with no end date.

“I hope that the Palestinian struggle to end colonization gains this kind of momentum, especially in the civilian campaign of BDS, Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions...
The Other Side Weighs In

“Unfortunately, because of the [Israeli–Palestinian] conflict, Israel’s been weighed down by criticism and suffered from bias—and sometimes even discrimination...It’s an unfortunate situation.”

—Ban Ki-moon, former secretary-general of the UN, admits the world body’s attitude toward Israel in answer to an Israeli student’s claim that the UN discriminates against Israel

“When the Human Rights Council treats Israel worse than North Korea, Iran, and Syria, it is the Council itself that is foolish and unworthy of its name. When that happens...the Council fails to fulfill its duty to uphold human rights around the world.”

—Nikki Haley, former US ambassador to the UN

“The UN’s assault on Israel with a torrent of one-sided resolutions is surreal. Israel is the Middle East’s only democracy, yet instead the UN is empowering the region’s despots. It’s absurd that out of a total of 28 UN General Assembly resolutions that criticize countries this year, more than half are focused on one single nation—Israel. Make no mistake: the purpose of these lopsided texts is not to promote human rights, but to demonize the Jewish state.”

—Hillel Neuer, executive director of UN Watch, a Geneva-based non-governmental watchdog organization

“@UNHumanRights Council is a sham, a mockery of the noble purposes it pretends to represent. It is an exclusively anti-Israel platform, manipulated by bloodthirsty dictatorships hiding their own massive human rights violations by attacking Israel.”

—Emmanuel Nahshon, deputy director general for Public Diplomacy at Israel’s Foreign Ministry

“More decisions disconnected from reality by the circus of the absurd...The time has come to change the name to ‘the Council for Decisions against the Only Democracy in the Middle East.’”

—Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu
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.

TOUR OF KRAKOW, INCLUDING THE AUSCHWITZ–BIRKENAU MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM
Date: To be announced
Hosted by: Michael Treharne
Join us in Krakow, visiting the Old City, Schindler’s Factory Museum, synagogues, Auschwitz–Birkenau and the Wieliczka Salt Mine.

UNITED STATES
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

Don’t just read about biblical prophecy, join our team of volunteers in Israel to live it out. Grow in your relationship with God while making a difference in the lives of the people of Israel.

- Administrative Assistant
- Bilingual Administrative Assistant
  (Fluent in English and Russian)
- Graphic Designer
- Home Repair Manager
- Home Repair Team
- Journalist
- Proofreader
- Web Developer
DIRECTIONS

1. Fry the brisket in a large skillet or pot over medium-high heat until browned on all sides.

2. Combine the water, ketchup, vinegar, onions, garlic, brown sugar, cinnamon and cumin, and add the mixture to the skillet or pot.

3. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer on low heat for 2 to 3 hours, turning occasionally until brisket is tender.

4. Remove the brisket and place into an oven-safe dish and allow to cool.

5. Preheat the oven to 325°F (165°C) while preparing the glaze.

6. Combine the apple jelly, honey and salt together until it forms a smooth paste.

7. Brush generously over the brisket.

8. Bake the glazed brisket for 45 minutes or until the glaze turns a dark caramel.

9. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

10. Serve immediately after slicing with a side of baked potatoes, green seasonable vegetables and a crisp salad.

INGREDIENTS

For the brisket:
- 2.5 pounds (1.1 kg.) beef brisket
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup ketchup
- ½ cup white vinegar
- 2 white onions, sliced
- 1 clove of garlic, minced
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. salt
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- 2 tsp. cumin

For the glaze:
- 4 Tbsp. apple jelly
- 4 tsp. honey
- A pinch of salt

SERVES 6

Rosh HaShanah or the Jewish New Year is a two-day holiday celebrating the start of a new year on the biblical calendar. The festival falls on the first day of Tishrei, the seventh biblical month, which is usually in September or October on the Gregorian calendar. It is the first of the High Holidays and marks the beginning of a ten-day period of reflection and repentance culminating in Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement.

During Rosh HaShanah, it is customary to blow the shofar (ram’s horn), wish family and friends a sweet new year and enjoy festive meals together. Traditional Rosh HaShanah staples typically include apples and honey, which are used to signify a sweet new year. This recipe pairs these two festive treats with brisket, another firm holiday favorite, making it perfect for any Rosh HaShanah table.
Israel Recognizes New Natural-gas Field, its Fourth-largest

ISRAEL’S ENERGY MINISTRY has officially certified the discovery of a new maritime natural gas deposit, the country’s fourth-largest to date.

British–Greek energy company Energean can now begin drawing up plans to develop the field, named Katlan, which is entirely inside Israeli territorial waters.

Israeli Energy and Infrastructure Minister Israel Katz said in a statement that there were potentially more reserves yet to be discovered.

“The office under my leadership will continue to develop the natural gas reserves that are in our territory and to promote the exploration and discovery of additional natural gas reserves for the sake of the energy security of the State of Israel and for ensuring a reliable, clean and affordable Israeli energy economy,” said Katz.

Katlan is Israel’s fourth largest gas reserve. Energean is already developing the Karish, Karish North and Tanin offshore reserves, as well as several blocks in the larger Tamar gas field.

“Katlan boasts approximately 68 BCM [billion cubic meters] of natural gas, and we are working diligently to develop it as efficiently as possible to create sustainable value for all our stakeholders. We believe this discovery will open new opportunities for Israeli gas supplies in both local and regional markets,” said Energean CEO Mathios Rigas.

The Israeli ministry had not certified any offshore gas discoveries since 2015.

Earlier this month, the Israeli Cabinet approved a NIS 900-million (US $246-million) project to expand natural gas exports to Egypt.

A 65-kilometer (40-mi.) pipeline will be constructed along a route between Ramat Hovav, south of Beersheva, and Nitzana, near the Sinai border via Ashalim, allowing for an additional 6 billion BCM of natural gas to be exported to Egypt each year.

The sale of the additional gas is expected to generate NIS 200 million (US $55 million) in annual revenue for Israel Natural Gas Lines and hundreds of millions of shekels each year for the government in royalties and taxes.

It will be built by Nativ, a state-owned company that is responsible for the gas system throughout Israel.

Jewish News Agency
EU to Fine Social Media Platforms over Anti-Semitic Content

THE EUROPEAN UNION [EU] will impose fines on social media and internet companies that fail to remove anti-Semitic and defamatory content, according to the new EU Digital Services Act.

The law will require internet companies in Europe to be more transparent and would oblige them to submit a risk assessment report detailing how they are working to neutralize such content. Europeans are discussing 19 digital players who are expected to adhere to these standards, including Facebook and Twitter.

Platforms that fail to meet these standards may face fines and legal action. As part of the law, all EU member states will need to appoint digital coordinators to ensure that companies comply with the established principles.

The law also mandates countries to provide training for law enforcement so that they understand what would constitute a hate crime, how to investigate such a crime and how to support victims. The law does not abolish the fundamental right of freedom of expression but addresses the fine line between freedom of expression and hate speech online. This law is significantly more advanced than in the United States, where there is no legislation against defamation and anti-Semitic hatred on social networks.

Itamar Eichner, Ynetnews

Israel Marks Record in Defense Exports

ISRAEL HAS BECOME a world weapons power and has broken the record for defense exports.

The Defense Ministry announced that the scope of defense exports of Israeli industries to the countries of the world reached about [US] $12.5 billion (about NIS 45 billion) in 2022. According to the ministry, exports have more than doubled since 2014, and jumped by 50% in just the last three years.

About a quarter of the contracts signed with foreign armies are for reconnaissance and attack drones. The demand is so great that the defense establishment says that if there were additional production lines in Israel, the numbers would be even higher.

The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, but also the Abraham Accords with the Gulf countries, continue to bear fruit as the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco continue to be interested in and purchase weapons systems manufactured by Israel, and the purchase of them increased threefold last year.

According to the Defense Ministry, these are the highest figures ever, and the second year in a row that the record for defense exports from Israel was broken. In the past year, about 120 Israeli companies signed hundreds of new sales contracts with countries on all continents, some of them also “mega deals” worth hundreds of millions of dollars, such as the sale of the Arrow 3 system to Germany.

“We expanded the new markets and removed bureaucratic barriers that reduced regulation,” the Defense Ministry said in a statement, adding that “all of this is under the rules of the control of defense exports and international treaties.”

According to the data from the ministry’s International Defense Cooperation Directorate, about half of the new deals are worth more than [US] $100 million each, and the scope of defense exports to the Arab countries within the framework of the Abraham agreements reached about [US] $3 billion.

Some 30% of the transactions were made with Asian and Pacific countries, such as India and Singapore; 29% to European countries; 24% to Arab countries from the Abraham Accords; 11% to the USA and Canada; 3% to Africa; and 3% to South America.

The head of the International Defense Cooperation Directorate (SIBAT) at the Defense Ministry, Brig.-Gen. Yair Kulas, said that “defense exports have increased by 65% in five years, first and foremost thanks to the technologies of Israeli companies. There has been a jump in the number of transactions between defense ministries.”

Yoav Zitun, Ynetnews
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.

INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC PROJECTS FUND: The Strategic Development Fund makes it possible for Bridges For Peace to invest in projects which will significantly improve our ability to fulfill our mission.

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.
You will arise and have mercy on Zion; for the time to favor her, yes, the set time, has come.

Psalm 102:13
Bookstore

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 Hebraic roots of Christianity and tells the story of God’s covenant relationship with Israel. Includes study questions. Excellent for small group or personal study. Also on Kindle in Eng. or Span.

4. 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.

5. 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

6. 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

7. 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)

8. 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. (Ages 7–12) 32 pages

9. 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)

10. 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)
Invest in Israel’s Future!

Comfort Israel

ONE IN THREE ISRAELI CHILDREN WILL START THE SCHOOL YEAR AT A DISADVANTAGE. They’ll go to class hungry and without the educational tools their peers have. You can give them the gift of hope for the future. Your donation to our Feed a Child program means textbooks, school supplies, backpacks, hot lunches every school day and computers or tablets for these children.

WHY NOT HELP BREAK THE CYCLE OF POVERTY AND SET THESE CHILDREN ON A PATH TO PROSPERITY?
Get our new spectacular 16-month calendar today!

Buy Now!

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

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