

Did You Know?



...more than one million notes are stuck in the cracks of the Western Wall every year? They are removed and buried twice a year, at Rosh Hashanah and before Passover.

Jewish people believe that a divine presence rests within the Western Wall, so they leave hand-written prayers on scraps of paper (*kvitlachim*) and insert them in cracks in the Wall in the hope they will be answered. The Wall has been a place of worship for Jews for centuries, and now it is a must-see for most visitors to Israel as well as a popular destination for Israelis. Diplomats and foreign officials come to the Wall when they visit Israel in a symbol of unity and solidarity with the Jewish people, and the Wall has become an international symbol of peace and hope.

Though the Wall is considered the holiest place in Judaism; people of all faiths, including Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, place notes in the Western Wall when they visit Israel.

Editorial

By Bryce Turner, NZ National Executive Director

Our Tour to Israel Departs

Kia ora koutou, thank you all for joining us in this edition of RelectionNZ, the newsletter of Christians for Israel New Zealand. As I write this, we are frantically engaged in final preparations for the Christians for Israel (supported by Rhema Media) Study Tour of Israel 2019. 37 New Zealanders and two leaders will fly out on 9 March for Tel Aviv. We will then embark on what we know will be an incredible tour, absorbing the amazing and unique experiences that are Israel. While planning and preparing for such a tour has been considerable, there is nothing like seeing people set foot in the Holy Land. In this era, when one of Christians for Israel's main roles is trying to inform people with a true, accurate and Biblical perspective, nothing cuts through the misinformation and propaganda quite as effectively as actually visiting Israel yourself. I really believe that every Christian, if they have the means to do so, should try and visit Israel sometime.

The Christians for Israel NZ team has launched straight into 2019, looking forward to another great year. Our paper subscriptions have continued to increase steadily, and we are about to increase the print numbers yet again. Over seven thousand copies now go out across the country, as well as those who read it online. Keep an eye out for our exciting, 'new-look', updated format in the next (April) edition. Our newsletter also continues to grow. Cathy is kept extremely busy in the office processing the huge volume of mail coming in, and a steady stream of books, DVD's and other materials going out. Our new office systems are now starting to streamline these tasks for us – thank you for your patience as we have worked through the installation process – we hope to be able to handle our mail, banking and orders much more efficiently now.

One thing, however, not so positive, is the continually increasing costs. While it is fantastic to see the newspaper subscriptions increasing, at the same time printing and postage have all increased dramatically over the last year. It is inevitable I guess, but nevertheless frustrating, as we try to stretch our finances as far as possible.

Please continue to pray for this work, in particular for those who may be able to contribute to our general administration costs. This support allows us not only to continue the wider work of Christians for Israel NZ but to continue to produce and offer the 'Israel and Christians Today' paper free of charge to supporters and interested people right across New Zealand.

Looking to Israel at the moment, and the upcoming elections, I have been trying to make sense of what still seems a very complicated party system. In amongst the usual chaos of democracy in action, there has been an increasing celebration from the science and technology sector. The wonders of modern technology allow us to keep track – in real time – of the Israel Lunar mission taking place right now. As the spacecraft completes each stage of what is a very complex and spectacular series of manoeuvres, ultimately taking it – hopefully – to land on the surface of the moon, people just like me, all around the world, celebrate. We will continue to watch closely as the journey unfolds, and celebrate together with our Israeli brothers and sisters, proudly recognising this great achievement. This is, if nothing else, a timely reminder of the incredible developments in science and technology that continue to come from this little country of Israel. Immediately prior to the Israel tour, I will be attending a week of meetings at the biennial C4I Forum in Jerusalem gaining fresh insight into issues facing Israel today. One such issue is the rise of anti-Semitism around the world. One British MP has recently resigned, citing anti-Semitism in the party as a major factor in his departure. There seems to be a very deep-rooted anti-Semitism gripping aspects of the British parliament. Over the channel, France too is reeling from the news that there was a 74% increase in anti-Semitic incidents during 2018. Home to the largest Jewish community in Europe, French leaders are gathering to find solutions to this escalation.

Sadly, all these events remind us of the importance of doing what is right; of standing up for those oppressed, and in particular of our calling to stand with Israel. May you be truly blessed as you take the time to read with us. Thank you for your continued support.

Jewish Kitchen

Classic Challah



Challah is a traditional braided bread that is usually baked by Jewish women. The first recipe every Jewish grandmother teaches her granddaughter is her family's challah recipe, and this recipe keeps going from generation to generation.

Ingredients

1½ cups lukewarm water
 1 Tbs dry yeast
 1 tsp sugar
 4 ½ cups all-purpose flour
 2 eggs, beaten, plus 1 egg for glazing
 ½ Tbs salt
 ¼ cup sugar
 ¼ cup vegetable oil
 Poppy or sesame seeds (*optional*)

Preparation

Preheat oven 180C. Dissolve yeast in the water and 1 tsp sugar. Beat well, leave 10 minutes until it froths. In a large bowl, lightly beat eggs. Add salt, sugar, and oil, beat again. Add frothy yeast mixture and beat well. Gradually add flour, just enough to make a soft dough that holds together, mixing well, first with a large spoon, then work it with your hands. Knead vigorously for about 15 minutes, until it's smooth and elastic, adding flour if dough is too sticky. Pour a little oil in the bowl and turn the dough, so that it is greased all over. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap, put in a warm place to rise for 2-3 hours, or until doubled in bulk. Punch the dough down and knead again, divide into 2 pieces to make 2 loaves. Braid the challah into desired shape and place on a lined baking tray, leaving room for them to expand. Allow them to rise for 1 hour, or until doubled in bulk. Gently brush with beaten egg, and sprinkle with poppy or sesame seeds. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until the loaves are golden brown. They are done if they sound hollow when you tap the bottoms.

Politics

Courtesy of shalom.kiwi

It is Anti-semitic to Oppose Israel's Right to Exist

Criticism of Israeli government policy and actions is not only legitimate but is a vital and important aspect of any democracy. Israel should be challenged and scrutinised in the same way as any other country, yet too often this is not the case. Other countries, no matter how they came into being or how they behave, do not have their legitimacy or right to exist questioned or their outright destruction called for.

Anti-Zionism should not be conflated with mere criticism of Israeli policy. Anti-Zionism rejects the very idea of a Jewish state.

Zionism is the belief in the right to self-determination of the Jewish people (a right guaranteed to them by international law) in their historical and spiritual homeland, Israel. It acknowledges the Jewish people as indigenous to the land and Israel as the nation state of the Jewish people, although all citizens, including Israel's 20% Arab population, have equal civil rights. There are some people who identify as Jews who are anti-Zionist, but they are a tiny fringe. For most Jews, Zionism is core to their identity.

Zionism is often deliberately and falsely labeled by its opponents as a colonialist, racist ideology. Had a Jewish homeland been set up anywhere else, for example in Uganda which was 'offered' to the Jewish people, then the accusation of colonialism would have legitimacy. But in the land of Israel, where Jewish people are the Tangata Whenua, accusations of colonialism are made to delegitimise the Jewish presence in their ancestral homeland.

Anti-Zionism has become the new form of antisemitism. The state of the Jews has become the Jew of the states. The same canards and conspiracy theories are applied to the Jewish state and Zionists, as have been applied to Jews for millennia. Accusations are plenty, such as controlling governments, global banks and media; harvesting organs for sale on the blackmarket – the equivalent of a modern day blood libel; creating world wars; and controlling ISIS. The Jewish State (instead of the Jewish people) is blamed for all the world's ills and must be eliminated for the good of humanity.

Yet Zionism is not just an idea, but a reality whose elimination would mean 6.5 million Jews facing the prospect of ethnic cleansing and a return to homelessness, unless the Palestinian leadership and other Arabs states suddenly decide to embrace the legitimacy of a Jewish presence in their midst and democratic ideals.

Antisemitism under cover of anti-Zionism can be illustrated by responses to two New Zealand politicians' interaction with the Jewish Community. The first example was when Hon Andrew Little, then leader of the Opposition, visited the Auckland Hebrew Congregation. When Mr Little posted about it on his Facebook page, the level of antisemitism was so intense his office had to delete many comments, including accusations that Israel was responsible for 9-11, and a call for the death of all Jews, due to "the way they [are] treating Palestinians".

The second example was in January this year, when the Hon Alfred Ngaro changed his Facebook profile photo to show him standing near the Menorah (candelabra used during the Jewish Festival of Hanukkah) at a public event to celebrate the festival. The negative comments came flooding in quickly, accusing Israel of genocide, ethnic cleansing, apartheid, and paying off New Zealand politicians, as well as praising Hamas.

So how is it possible to distinguish legitimate criticism of Israel from antisemitism? One simple way is 'Sharanski's 3D Test'. If Israel is delegitimised, demonised or double standards applied to it, then antisemitism is at play.

When Jewish peoplehood and their historic connection to Israel is erased, that's delegitimation. When the patently absurd accusation that Israelis are the new Nazis is made, that's demonisation. And when the UN General Assembly passes 21 resolutions condemning Israel, and 6 against the entire rest of the world, and none against China (which occupies Tibet and has imprisoned 1,000,000 Uyghurs in concentration camps) or Turkey (which occupies Northern Cyprus and persecutes Kurds), as it did in 2018, that's double standards. All these three elements are present in the boycott divestment and sanction campaign (BDS) against Israel, which, if it achieves its three stated goals, will see the replacement of the world's one Jewish state with another Muslim state.

Understanding the difference between antisemitism disguised as anti-Zionism as opposed to legitimate criticism of Israel, and not giving the former legitimacy, is key to finding a peaceful resolution to the current situation, and in doing so improving the futures for both Israelis and Palestinians.

This article was written by Rob Berg, president of the Zionist Federation of New Zealand and president of the Jewish National Fund NZ.

Jews Who Shaped the World

Siegmond Loewe Pioneer of radio technology



Siegmond Loewe was a pioneer of radio technology and co-founder of Loewe Technologies, still a leader in consumer and communication technology. His brother, David, with whom he founded the company Radiofrequenz in 1923, was his long-time partner.

Loewe grew up in a Judeo-Christian family. His father Ludwig, a doctor, was Jewish. His mother Emilie was a Protestant Christian. The first-born son, David, was baptised, but Siegmund remained a member of the Jewish community. His two younger siblings were also educated Jewish and married Jewish spouses.

Siegmond Loewe studied physics and electrical engineering, specialising in high-frequency technology. Siegmund and his brother developed and produced electronic tubes, loudspeakers and resistors, establishing several companies to manufacture and market their inventions. Together with physicist Manfred von Ardenne, Loewe developed one of the first multi-tubes, recognised today as the world's first integrated circuit, which led to the construction of

the most successful radio unit in Germany before the Second World War. At the 8th Berlin Radio Show in 1931, Von Ardenne, manning the Loewe company stand, presented to the world the first fully electronic television.

After the Nazis came to power, the company came under pressure. David Loewe was the first victim of the attacks, so he resigned in April 1933 and left Germany. Siegmund Loewe was initially tolerated. For security reasons, he cut off ties to the Jewish community in early 1934. He tried to save his patents for the American market, and while travelling abroad in 1936, he founded *Loewe Radio, Inc.* in the United States. To further frustrate the nationalisation of his company by the Nazi regime, Loewe transferred its shares for foreign subsidiaries in Switzerland and England.

Loewe Technologies was 'Aryanized' by the Nazis in 1938 and reorganised to serve the German air force. Siegmund's efforts to distance himself from the local Jewish community had failed, and he was compelled to remain in the US during one of his business trips. Since a Nazi law forbade any but 'Aryan' companies from producing communications technology, the company was renamed *Opta Technologies* in 1942. Following the war, Siegmund Loewe was compensated, and the company was rebranded *Loewe Opta, Inc.*

Loewe died in 1962 during a stay in the US, but his advancements in circuitry, radio and television continue to shape the world around us today.

Photo: Siegmund Loewe (1885-1962) and Manfred von Ardenne (1907-1997)

News

Young Israeli's Olympic Dream



Noga Barkan (above) was 16 and had been preparing to compete in the Rio Olympics as a rhythm gymnast. But the young Israeli awoke one morning with a swollen neck and knew something was wrong. She was later diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

"My life was turned upside down in every way possible. My family and I were in a whirlwind of emotions, getting treatment at the hospital, studying as best as I could to complete the 11th grade and take my final exams while feeling mentally and physically sick," remembered Barkan.

It was then that Make-A-Wish entered her life. "I was lying in the hospital, all I could think about was my teammates who were going to compete in the Olympics, and I wanted to be with them," she said ahead of her visit to Melbourne for the Make-A-Wish Australia and Israel Shared Appeal.

Three years later, Barkan (19) is now in remission, and recently visited Australia and New Zealand to share her story about how she not only survived cancer – but has flourished.

Noga Barkan visited Auckland with Denise Bar-Aharon, the CEO and Founder of Make-A-Wish Israel. Denise Bar-Aharon spoke at a number of events, one of which was at Beth Shalom on Saturday 23 February.

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Archeology

Courtesy of Israel Today

Sodom and Gomorrah Part I

Tour guides like to tell their groups about Sodom and Gomorrah when traveling near the Dead Sea, noting that visible desolation of the region today illustrates what we read in *Genesis 19:24*: "Then the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah - from the Lord out of the heavens." But what does modern archaeology tell us about these places?

We first read about these cities in *Genesis 14*, which records a rebellion in which Sodom and Gomorra took part against larger regional powers: "At the time when Amraphel was king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goyim, these kings went to war against Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboyim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). All these latter kings joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Dead Sea Valley). For twelve years they had been subject to Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled."

Archaeologist Paul Lapp was the first to discover remnants of a city on the Dead Sea in the 1960s, and in the 1970s four more urban sites were found in the area. Since then, no additional remains have been uncovered, backing up the biblical account that suggests there were ever only five cities



This was once a fertile and densely populated area | Photo: Flashgo

on the Dead Sea. All five sites are located in present-day Jordan, where they go by the names Bab edh-Dhra, Numeira, Safi, Feifa and Khanazir.

Interestingly, traces of food found in the ruins are suggestive of a healthy, almost luxurious diet of wheat, barley, dates, plums, peaches, grapes, figs, pistachios, almonds, olives, pine nuts, lentils, peas, pumpkin, flaxseed, and watermelon. This gourmet menu fits with another biblical description of Sodom and Gomorrah: "Lot looked around and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt. (This was before the

Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)" (*Genesis 13:10*) The area around Sodom and Gomorrah is described in the Bible as being bountiful prior to God's judgement.

In the five cities, which were situated in close proximity to one another, archaeologists also found many well preserved graves. These were constructed vertically so that a relatively large number of bodies could be buried in a confined area. It is estimated that about 1.5 million bodies are buried in these ruins. This enormous number is another indication of a prosperous, densely-populated region.

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