

ISRAEL

& Christians Today

NEW ZEALAND

April 2016

www.c4israel.org.nz
info@c4israel.org.nz

CHRISTIANS FOR
ISRAEL
INTERNATIONAL

Exciting Day

as five young Kaifeng Jewish
women arrive in Israel

Aliyah group arrives with
the help of Shavei Israel
and Christians for Israel
on February 29, 2016

Photo credit: Laura Ben-David



Highlights...

Editorial	2	True Reality	6
New Chairman, Leon Meijer	3	Propaganda - Christ at Checkpoint	7
Leaders Meeting in Jerusalem	4	Our World - Caroline Glick	9
PM Netanyahu Statements	5	Aliyah	12



Israel & Christians Today is the premier publication of Christians for Israel

Born to Suffer

By Andrew Tucker, International Editor & Executive Director, Christians for Israel International



>> As I write this editorial it is the week before Good Friday and Easter, also known as Holy Week. I am reflecting on the holiness of Jesus, and His suffering in the days leading up to His death and crucifixion.

In *Luke 19* we read that when Jesus approached Jerusalem for the last time, He wept bitterly over the city. Although greeted by an exuberant crowd, He knew that just days later He would be rejected even by His friends, and die on the cross. I try to enter into His spirit of pain and loneliness. What was He thinking? What did He feel? What prayers did He offer up?

During our weekly prayers in Nijkerk, my brother-in-law Roger recounts his recent visit to Ukraine together with the Chief Rabbi of the Netherlands Benjamin Jacobs. For six days, this Orthodox Rabbi and Gentile Christian travelled hundreds of kilometers and worked together with the Christians for Israel team led by Koen Carlier. They visited and brought food parcels to survivors of the horrors of World War II, and their families, many of whom are living in desperate poverty.

Rabbi Jacobs wrote in his blog at the end of the second day of their trip:

"I have been asked to write an encouraging word about the second day of our trip here in Ukraine. I don't know if I can or if I even want to. On Yom Kippur in 1941, 33,714 Jews were herded outside Kiev. They had to carry warm clothes, travel documents and their valuables. They were slaughtered like animals. And then there were the 250 orphans in Breslau who, one by one, were pushed through a hole in the ice and never reappeared. And more recently a new mass grave has been found. How many are still unknown? And what is the situation now? A well-known saying in Ukraine today is: 'If there is no water in the tap, then the Jews

have drunk all the water.' In the meantime, ten volunteers have arrived from the Netherlands and Belgium. They are going to hand out food parcels, and I am allowed to welcome them. Christians who voluntarily pay their own way to Kiev to help Jews whom they do not know. Yes, I am convinced that there are many differences between us Jews and Christians, but it is what we both inwardly feel that binds us. And there I am, a traditional Rabbi with orthodox Christians, together in friendship. On the very modest monuments that remind us of the dark grey past, are texts in a language I do not understand. I cannot distract my thoughts from the stories I have heard from the very few remaining survivors we have been able to meet. But nowhere have I seen a recognition by the Ukrainian people themselves of their own guilt. It was always the fault of the fascists. We drive on towards Vinnitsa, over roads that are full of pot-holes. Then there is a phone call. In the opposite direction, a mini-bus is coming en route to Kiev with nine Jewish persons who have decided to leave the Ukraine and emigrate today to Israel. We meet them at a car park. I rush out of the bus and run towards these nine people who have decided to leave this nasty country. Next to the driver in the front of the bus is an elderly couple who will live their remaining years in Be'er Sheva. In the back a family with a small boy, and in the middle another family with two children. They look at me, and I greet them. I recognise their uncertainties. They are leaving everything behind, and their future seems far away and unknown. I bless them and wish them well. I am allowed to encourage them in their decision. In my head the images swirl around of the two hundred and fifty orphans. I cry from sadness, but also joy".

>> These words by an Orthodox Rabbi touch me deeply.

On my desk is a large, heavy book entitled "Born to suffer? The catastrophe in Ukraine 1941-1944." It contains the stories of survivors of the horrific years in Ukraine from 1941-1944, when the Germans, Romanians and Russians systematically slaughtered over one million Jews in Ukraine. In Odessa alone, 200,000 Jews were killed. In the 1930's, Odessa was a bustling city with an international atmosphere. Many people of various nationalities lived there amongst the native inhabitants of Odessa – Jews, Russians, Germans, Ukrainians, Greeks, Bulgarians

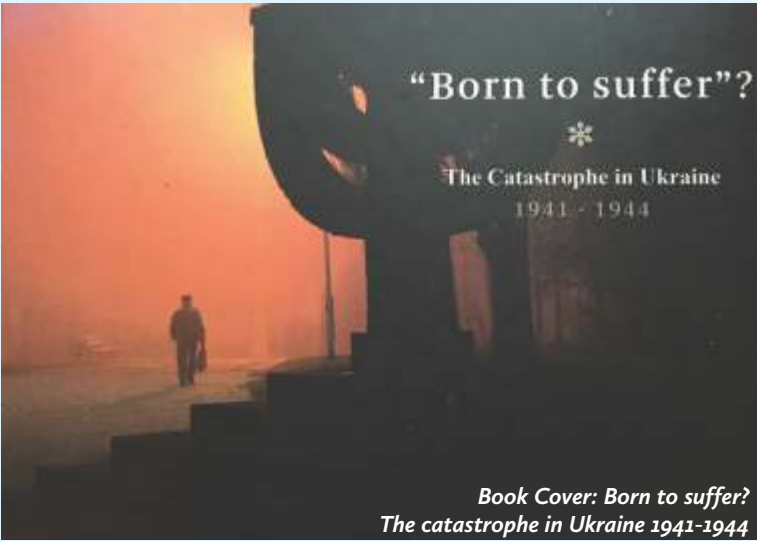
and Armenians. Christians, Buddhists, atheists, Jews. The town was a centre of Yiddish culture, and about 33% of the population was Jewish. Life changed for the Jews of Odessa in 1939 when the Russians signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact with Germany. The Jews became the target of discrimination. All hell broke loose in June 1941, Germany and Romania attacked the Soviet Union in "Operation Barbarossa", and war was declared. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were massacred in the southern part of Ukraine alone. Only a few survive, some of whom are still alive today to tell their story.

>> How are we to reconcile their stories with the account of Good Friday and Easter? Is it possible to enter into the suffering of Jesus, without remembering also the suffering of the Jewish people? Does the history of the Jewish people help us to understand who Jesus is?

The Bible teaches us that the suffering of Jesus was necessary, and that it was the path towards the resurrection. I would not dare to say that the suffering of the Jewish people is "necessary". But it would seem that their difficult path is part of God's mysterious dealings with all the nations, and that it will end in the total restoration of the Jews as a people in the land God has promised them. As Paul says in *Romans 11*: "if their rejection [of Jesus] is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?" (See also *Psalm 44:10, 21-25*)

Psalm 126 reminds us that "those who sow with tears shall reap with songs of joy". The Lord has also promised that He will "swallow up death in victory, wipe tears from off all faces, and take away the rebuke of his people from off all the earth" (*Isaiah 25:8*).

Is it possible that, when Jesus saw in His



mind's eye the future destruction of Jerusalem (*Luke 19*), He also saw the yet more future suffering of the Jewish people in Europe? Is it possible that He somehow carried the future sufferings of His own people with Him as He walked through the streets of Jerusalem and ultimately to Golgotha? Is it possible that His resurrection is also a guarantee of the future resurrection of the Jewish people?

I hope so. And I hope and pray that the Lord Himself (Yahweh) will comfort the hearts of the survivors (and their families) of those terrible events that took place on European soil only seventy years ago.

We must learn from the past. "Never again" must be our motto. I am convinced more than ever how important it is to make sure that the Jewish people today are not again marginalised, that we protect their right to live in safety in Israel and that we recognize their right to exist as a nation amongst the nations. No, more than that, that we honor them as if we see Jesus in our midst. Their suffering is His suffering. And His suffering is our suffering.

>> We as Christians for Israel support the work of Koen Carlier and his team in Ukraine, who are laboring day and night to honor and serve the remaining Jewish survivors in Ukraine, and help them, their families and friends to come home.

You can read more about this work in this edition of Israel & Christians Today. I invite you to partner with us in this ministry to serve the Jewish people.

Important Announcement from the Publisher

Firstly John Gummer, Production Manager for the Israel & Christians Today is retiring from Christians for Israel NZ and therefore his role in the production of the paper. We will miss John greatly. I am sure that will be the same for all John's email colleagues around the world. John is known for his cheery and humorous emails. John leaves to provide more home care to his wonderful wife Carolyn who served me with excellence as a PA for many years.

You will note in the panel below that Cathy Eksteen has replaced John as Production Manager and Lauris Lee will provide General administration help. Cathy Coldicutt continues her role as graphic designer and will now work more closely with me.

We are delighted and honoured to serve our Chief International Editor, Andrew Tucker and the Affiliates of Christians for Israel worldwide

in the publishing of this English brand publication.

The second announcement is two months late! You will have noted that changes occurred in the February edition of the paper. Most important is the new logo (right) on the masthead. This will be widely used by Christians for Israel. The logo depicts the Mediterranean coast (the concave line) and the

dot is Jerusalem. Also the new use of print colours (different shades of blue) and change of font for article headings. This will provide a synergy with the Dutch and German language editions of this publication.

We have also included side columns for "short news". We trust this will all add to your reading pleasure and knowledge.

INTERNATIONAL EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Andrew Tucker
Email: atucker@c4israel.org
PUBLISHER: Graeme Lee | Ph: +64 9 525 7564
Email: graemelee@c4israel.org.nz or
admin@thecentre.net.nz

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Cathy Eksteen
Email: info@c4israel.org.nz | Ph: +64 9 525 7564
DESIGN & WEBSITE: Cathy Coldicutt
Blue Rock Design Ltd
Email: bluerock@clear.net.nz | Ph: +64 9 263 4548

ADMINISTRATION: Lauris Lee
Ph: +64 9 525 7564 | Email: graemelee@c4israel.org.nz
GENERAL ENQUIRIES: Christians For Israel
PO Box 12006, Penrose, Auckland 1642.
297a Church St, Onehunga, Auckland 1061, New Zealand

Leon Meijer, New Chairman of Christians for Israel International



Leon Meijer was born in Dordrecht, the Netherlands in 1964. He is married to Janine and is the father of four children. In 1989 he obtained his master degree at the Wageningen University and Research Center. During his study, he spent six months in Israel for practical training. He returned to Israel with his wife in 1991 and arrived in Haifa just two weeks before the first Gulf war. During this war Iraq fired scud missiles on Israel. Leon has vivid memories of this period.

>> **“Running in the middle of the night with our one-year-old daughter to the sealed room in our house, donning gas masks, trying to calm our little one and listening to the radio until the sign all-clear was given.”**

A shopping centre in the area took a direct hit, other missiles were taken out by the anti-missile system. Although many expatriates left the country in this period, Leon stayed with his family.

From 1991 until 1992 he worked as a scientist at the Technion – Israel Institute of technology in Haifa. In 1993 the Technion admitted him to their PhD program at the faculty of Agricultural Engineering. He researched the environmental effects of intensive Israeli aquaculture (fishponds). In 2000 he graduated and became one of the few

foreigners with an Israeli doctor’s degree. After almost 8 years in Israel Leon and his family returned to his native Holland. They left Holland with one daughter and returned 8 years later with three daughters and a son. “Returning to Holland was a reversed culture-shock for us. Life in Israel is intense. With threats of war from neighboring countries, the possibility of a terrorist attack at the bus stop , armed guards at schools and shopping centers. We had to get used to the fact that people in Holland can argue about the length of the grass in public parks.’

In 2000 Leon started to work in the European Parliament in Brussels as an advisor to several members of Parliament. He started as an advisor on Agriculture and Fisheries but soon became head of a team of advisors on all fields of politics including the Middle East. As an advisor he participated in several visits of the European Parliament to Israel. His knowledge of the language proved an asset. In 2007 he left the European Parliament and became a senior policy advisor of the Christian Trade Union in the Netherlands.

After the local elections of 2014 Leon became Alderman in the city of Ede. Together with the mayor and four other Alderman he governs this city of more than 110,000 inhabitants in the center of the Netherlands. And yes, he is now responsible for the length of the grass in parks. But besides management of public spaces he is also responsible for traffic, sustainability, environment, food, youth care and social welfare teams.

Leon was raised in a Christian family where Israel was seen as the ‘oldest son of the father.

>> **“Love for Israel and the Jews was a natural thing in our home”, says Leon, “at that time I was unaware that my life would become so connected to the land of Israel and its people.”**

During his time in Israel Leon became more and more aware of the Jewish character not only of the Old Testament but also the New Testament. ‘Jesus was a Jew, not by accident but because God chose the nation of Israel to bring forth the Messiah of the world. Jesus was raised as a Jew and used the Jewish traditions. He wore tefillin, the prayer phylacteries, acted as a rabbi and confirmed God’s relation with Israel.’ Asked about what in Jewish culture inspired him most, Leon points to the Seder meal. A meal where Jews all over the world celebrate the pesach, the exodus out of Egypt. “Our holy supper originates from this meal. We know from scriptures that Jesus celebrated this meal with his disciples when he told them about his coming suffering, the bread symbolizing his flesh and the wine his blood. The seder meal is full of symbolism, first of all pointing towards the exodus out of Egypt. But as a Christian I could apply many of those symbols to men’s life saved from slavery and redeemed by the Lamb. God did not abolish the feasts of Israel, each one of them tells us more about the Messiah’s redemptive work.”

In 2008 Leon became a board member of the Dutch branch of Christians for Israel. It was an opportunity for him to use his skills for the benefit of the people of Israel. Last February Leon was chosen as the new chairman of Christians for Israel International.

>> **His vision is that Christians all over the world will learn that God is faithful to His promises.**

Promises given to Israel are being fulfilled in our days. Jews from all corners of the earth are returning home, just as the prophets have said. We can be onlookers but Leon’s desire is that we will be involved in the fulfillment of these promises. Christians for Israel International is about understanding God’s word concerning Israel and involvement in God’s plan for the Jewish nation. Involvement by praying, giving and raising our voice on behalf of the people and land of Israel.

Short News



Nancy Reagan, Former First Lady, Recalled As ‘Great Friend’ Of Israel By Its Leaders

Nancy Reagan was remembered as “a great friend” of Israel by its country’s leaders expressing their condolences on the former first lady’s death. Reagan died Sunday 6 March 2016, at her home in Bel-Air, California, of congestive heart failure, her assistant said. She was 94. President Ronald Reagan died in 2004. The couple were married 52 years, and Nancy Reagan took care of her husband while he suffered from Alzheimer’s disease during the last decade of his life. “I remember Nancy as a noble woman who supported President Reagan and stood by his side,” Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement issued Sunday afternoon. “She will be remembered as a great friend of the State of Israel.” Former Israeli President Shimon Peres in a statement wished his condolences “to the whole Reagan family, her friends and all citizens of the United States.” He called Nancy Reagan “President Ronald Reagan’s dedicated wife, a true partner in the president’s unique leadership, including his strong friendship with Israel.”

Airports Worldwide Look to Israel for Help After Belgium Attacks

In the wake of the horrific bombing attacks at a Brussels airport and subway station, officials at the Israel Airports Authority have been inundated with dozens of requests for assistance in securing airports around the globe. Security agencies and airport authorities in Europe, North America, and Africa have contacted Israel looking for advice on how to prevent tragedies like the Zaventem airport bombing.

“There’s been a jump [since the attacks] in the number of requests we’ve received in the area of airport security,” a senior Airports Authority official told Walla News. The focus of these requests is [a desire] to learn Israel’s strategies for assessing travellers. The requests have come from all different levels.”

Israel’s unique airport security system has long been held up as a model of effective surveillance and screening. Following the 9/11 attacks in 2001, Israeli security forces including the Shin Bet and Israel Airports Authority were called upon to assist a number of countries find ways to bolster airport security and implement more effective screening measures for passengers bordering plane. In contrast to the American model of airport security adopted after the 9/11 attacks, which rely on extensive checks of all but a few pre-screened passengers, Israeli security uses highly trained security specialists to monitor and assess the behavior of individuals from the moment they enter the building. Reactions to questions, body language, facial expressions, all give security personnel a clear indication of who represents a potential threat – and who is just a traveler.

Wonderful Opportunity to Serve God

By Ruth Dubbeldam, Executive Coordinator Christians for Israel



My name is Ruth Dubbeldam. I grew up in the wonderful country of The Netherlands. After being part of a mission trip as a teenager, a desire grew in me to be involved in ministry. I started working with YWAM (Youth With A Mission) and in 2002 I moved away from The Netherlands to work with YWAM full-time. Among other places, I spent five years in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Together with a team of people our aim was to simply bless the Bosnian people and show the love of God in a practical way. We restored parks and playgrounds all over the city which were destroyed during the war and we provided English classes and after-school programs.

After five years in Bosnia, I moved to Denver, Colorado to be part of a YWAM ministry there. Hundreds of young people from all over

the world come to Denver each year to receive training and be equipped to use their gifts and talents for the glory of God. They also get the opportunity to go into all the world and be part of the great commission. At this ministry I worked as the HR manager overseeing 85 staff members. It was a job I greatly enjoyed. I would also organise and lead three month long mission trips. On these trips I would take groups of young people to six different countries around the world to work with orphanages, churches, food and aid programs for the poor and other practical projects. It was a wonderful way of blessing people in all these countries and life changing for the students themselves as well.

After living overseas for 13 years I felt it was time to return to The Netherlands. I moved back in May 2015 and started the process of settling back into my home country. Having loved ministry all these years, I was hoping to find a Christian organisation where I could use my skills and experience. When I saw that Christians for Israel International was looking for an Executive Coordinator, it seemed like a great fit. I had been to Israel once in 2012 and God very much moved my heart for His people while I was there. I had the opportunity to go back to Israel just a few weeks ago and once



again it was a very eye opening experience. I feel greatly privileged to get to work for this incredible organization which does such significant work and I’m looking forward serving this ministry in the years to come.

Christians for Israel Leaders Meet in Jerusalem

By Andrew Tucker



Christians for Israel International leadership team near Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem. From left to right: Wilson Ng, Ruth Dubbeldam, Marloes van Westing, Ruud van Neijhof, Janine Meijer, Leon Meijer, Harald Eckert, Mandy Worby and Ian Worby

Seventeen Christians for Israel leaders met in Jerusalem from 26-29 February 2016. This was the third annual meeting of the “Global Executive Council”, which was established in 2014. The Council comprises the International Chairman, President and Executive Director, the Regional Directors, and the Christians for Israel International staff. These annual meetings are an opportunity to report on developments in the Christians for Israel ministry around the world, to encourage each other, and prayerfully to consider plans for the future.

The Regional Directors brought encouraging and at times challenging reports from the various regions. Some highlights -

>> Marie Louise Weissenböck (Europe) reported that we are consolidating our ministry in Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and Ukraine. New planned projects in Europe include: developing French-language resources and speaking team, building a new team in the UK, a second conference planned in Albania in April 2016, and new openings in Denmark and the Baltic States.

>> Drake Kanaabo (East Africa) reported that Christians for Israel Uganda is experiencing fruits of the many years of hard work. One million flyers were printed and distributed during Christian meetings in the New Year – encouraging Christians in Uganda to pray for Israel and their nation. Willem Glashouwer will lead a teaching conference planned in Kampala in April 2016, in an effort to equip more church leaders to teach about God’s faithfulness towards Israel.

>> Elemi Samson (Central/ West Africa)

reported that despite the many challenges, the ministry is gaining a foothold in Nigeria, in part due to the increasing TV broadcasts of Christians for Israel programmes, networking in churches and training conferences.

>> Wilson Ng (Asia) reported that the ministry is growing rapidly in Asia. A two-pronged approach is being adopted – raising awareness through networking with Christian leaders throughout the region, and training teachers to educate others about God’s purposes with Israel, the church and the nations. National teams have been established in Malaysia, Indonesia,

Thailand, Singapore, and Philippines. Teams are being established in Myanmar and India, while new contacts have been made in Pakistan and Vietnam.

>> Ian Worby (New Regional Director for Oceania/Pacific)

reported on growth in Australia and New Zealand, the appointment of national Christians for Israel representatives in Fiji and Cook Islands, and the great potential throughout the region of Oceania and Pacific Islands. Worby combines his new responsibilities with his role as Regional Director for United Christian Broadcasters (UCB).



Ian and Mandy Worby with Wilson Ng

>> International Chairman Harald Eckert Hands on the Baton to Leon Meijer

Harald Eckert, Chairman of Christians for Israel Germany, has been Chairman of the



New Christians for Israel International Chairman, Leon Meijer with former Chairman, Harald Eckert



Christians for Israel International Board Members Leon Meijer, Pim van der Hoff, Marie Louise Weissenböck, Drake Kanaabo, Harald Eckert, Bert Fluit, Willem Glashouwer

Christians for Israel International Board since 2012. Under Harald’s inspired leadership during this period, the ministry has experienced consolidation and significant growth. The International Board thanked Harald for his years of service to the international ministry as Chairman. President Willem Glashouwer stated: “Harald Eckert has demonstrated unique leadership skills, strategic mindset, and a deep spiritual understanding. We are deeply grateful for his years of service and hard labor for the ministry”.

Harald has decided to step down as Chairman, in order to devote more time to Christians for Israel Germany, as well as developing the Global Prayer Call (GPC) following the successful conferences in 2015 in Krakow and Jerusalem. Harald will remain on the International board, with special responsibility for strategic development.

Leon Meijer, a member of the board of Christians for Israel Netherlands, has been appointed as International Chairman for a period of four years.

The International Board has a supervisory role within the ministry.

>> Christians for Israel Delegation Comforts the Family of Israeli Soldier

On Sunday 28th February, a Christians for Israel delegation had the privilege of visiting the family of Eliav Gelman, a reserve officer in the IDF who was killed on 24th February.

Gelman, a 30-year old father of two whose wife is expecting their third child, was killed by errant IDF gunfire after he was attacked by a Palestinian man while standing at a bus stop at Etzion Junction. The Christians for Israel delegation had the opportunity to meet Gelman’s father and other family members and friends as they observed “shiva” (the Jewish week-long period of mourning) at Gelman’s home in Karmeit Tzur. Incoming Christians for Israel International Chairman Leon Meijer: “It was so moving to hear Eliav’s family say that they did not feel angry or bitter, but that they



Leon Meijer signing condolence register for Eliav Gelman

trust in God’s providence. They expressed their grief, but equally their thankfulness for Eliav’s life. This was a deeply moving moment, and we are so grateful that we could speak words of comfort, and share in their mixed grief and joy”.



Bus stop at Gush Etzion where Eliav Gelman was killed



Marloes van Westing and Yitzhak Sokoloff next to the photo of Eliav Gelman

Netanyahu to Visit Africa, First Israeli PM to do so in 50 Years

By Raphael Ahren, Diplomatic Correspondent for The Times of Israel



>> **“Africa is coming back to Israel. It’s happening in a big way,” premier proclaims.**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday 29 February 2016, announced his intention to travel to Africa this summer, in what would mark the first visit by an Israeli leader to the continent in 50 years.

“I received an invitation from the president of Kenya to visit Africa and I intend to do so around the 40th anniversary of the raid on Entebbe. It was a dramatic national event with great personal consequence for me,” he said at the launch of a new Knesset caucus to promote Israel-Africa ties.

Operation Entebbe was a daring operation to liberate Israeli hostages in Uganda on July 4,

1976. Netanyahu’s brother Yonatan, who led the Israeli commandos, was killed in action. Netanyahu met with Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta in Jerusalem, where the two leaders signed a joint statement focusing on water and agricultural issues, promoting cooperation and establishing a joint bilateral committee.

“Israel is coming back to Africa. Africa is coming back to Israel. It’s happening in a big way,” the prime minister said Monday in the presence of Israeli lawmakers and several ambassadors from African countries. “It’s happening now because it’s so clear that it’s good for Africa and good for Israel.”

Aside from Kenya, Netanyahu is also expected to visit Uganda on the trip. “I look forward to my visit in Africa. If I could, I’d like to visit every one of your countries,” he told the foreign envoys. Islamic terrorism is the world’s greatest challenge, and it threatens the entire African continent, Netanyahu said. Its nexus is in the Middle East but it is rapidly spreading, he said, adding, “It can be stopped if nations threatened by it make common cause.” Israel is willing to help Africa defeat Islamic terrorism, he vowed. The Jewish state is furthermore ready to assist Africa in the areas of health,

science, agriculture, tourism, science and cyber technology, Netanyahu said. Any country can be brought to its knees without cyber-security, but Israel is now a “world power in cyber-security,” he added.

Also speaking Monday at the launch of a new Israel-Africa caucus, Knesset speaker Yuli Edelstein mentioned that ties with the continent have been an Israeli priority since the 1960s. “Over the years there were better and worse periods. What we see in the last several years is a revival and renewal of our relations,” he said. “We have a lot to offer and a lot to learn.” The Ethiopian-born MK Avraham Neguise, who chairs the new caucus, quoted Zionist visionary Theodor Herzl as saying that once he witnessed the Jewish people’s redemption he would like to see the same for Africans.

“The Jewish people and the people of Africa have a sense of sharing a common destiny. Both have suffered from discrimination and foreign rule. In this way both nations are united by a common historical struggle against colonisation. This struggle can bring us together,” he said.

Netanyahu: Peace Will Come Through Arab World

By Gil Hoffman, Khaled Abu Toameh and Tovah Lazaroff, The Jerusalem Post



>> **Netanyahu praised for making peace with Egypt and said it was time for the international community to realise that the paradigm for peacemaking had changed.**

Peace with Israel’s Arab neighbours will lead to an agreement with the Palestinians, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said recently as a French envoy visited Jerusalem to solicit support for an international conference on the conflict.

“The Arab world softening its views toward us will help us when the time comes to reach a real and lasting agreement with our Palestinian neighbors,” Netanyahu said. “If someone thought earlier that a breakthrough with the Palestinians would lead to improved relations with the Arab world for us, the opposite is happening and will continue to happen.”

The prime minister spoke at a Likud faction meeting at Jerusalem’s Menachem Begin Heritage Center on the same day French envoy Pierre Vimont held talks with Foreign Ministry Director-General Dore Gold and Netanyahu’s special diplomatic envoy Isaac Molho.

Gold, in the past, has spoken against the idea of international conferences to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Foreign Ministry issued a skeptical statement following Gold’s meeting with Vimont.

“The Israeli side emphasised the importance of the principle of direct negotiations,” the Foreign Ministry said. “There should be bilateral talks without preconditions.” It added however, that the Palestinian Authority must fight against terrorism and incitement.

The US Administration recently launched an effort to scuttle the French initiative, a Palestinian official said. “The Americans have made it clear that they don’t want other parties meddling in the Israel-Arab conflict,” the official said.

Another official added: “I don’t see how this is going to work when the US administration has endorsed the Israeli stance, which basically rejects the idea of convening an international conference. Besides, Israel does not want the international community to play any role in the conflict,” he added.

In Brussels, French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault presented his initiative to the foreign ministers of the European Union’s 28 member states. EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said all the member states welcomed Ayrault’s efforts to coordinate his country’s work with theirs and that of the Quartet.

In speaking to his faction in Jerusalem, Netanyahu praised past peace deals, such as the one Begin made with Egypt, but said it was time for the international community to realise that the paradigm for peacemaking had changed. Israel’s relations with Arab countries have improved due to threats from Iran and Islamic State, he said. “More and more Arab countries are realising that Israel is not the enemy of the Arab world, but rather their partner in a joint struggle against Islamic extremists,” Netanyahu said. “We are both fighting the Shiite Islamic extremists led by Iran and the Sunni extremists led by ISIS.” Netanyahu said he hoped such partnerships would lead to the Palestinians adopting views that are more realistic and responsible regarding a future agreement with Israel.

The *New York Times* recently weighed in on the frozen peace process with an editorial that suggested a non-binding UN Security Council resolution on the two-state solution may be the next best step to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The paper stated that Netanyahu had “never shown a serious willingness” to progress toward a peace deal, “as is made clear by his expansion of Israeli settlements, which reduce the land available for a Palestinian state.” It also described Abbas as “a weak and aging leader who has given up on peace.”

Despite Obama’s efforts, the paper said, he “may be presiding over the death of the two-state solution.”

Should the US push for a UNSC resolution, even one such as proposed by the *New York Times*, it would mark a break from the Obama administration’s position that direct talks between the two parties is the best way to resolve the conflict and arrive at a two-state solution.

Last fall, however, US officials in Washington said the president did not expect to arrive at a two-state solution by the time he leaves office in January. Since then, the US has pushed for a plan that would move the process forward so the next administration could best arrive at a two-state solution.

Haaretz reported that as part of an effort to stabilise the situation in the West Bank, Israelis and Palestinians had held talks on stopping IDF incursions into Area A of the West Bank in pursuit of Palestinians it believed posed a security threat. The PA has full civilian control of Area A, but the IDF has the right to enter for security reasons. The Prime Minister’s Office had no comment on the *Haaretz* report. An Israeli official said, “Israel would prefer not to have to conduct military operations inside Area A. From our perspective, it would be preferable that the Palestinian security services do what they are supposed to do and prevent terrorist operations against Israel from Area A.”

Short News

Palestinian Teacher Awarded for Peaceful Methods, Praised With Calls to War



It was the kind of bitter irony that so characterises the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Palestinian primary school teacher Hanan al-Hroub was very rightly recognised for educating for peace, even as fellow Palestinians celebrated her victory with calls to war. Al-Hroub, a native of Bethlehem, was recently announced as the winner of the Global Teacher of the Year award for her development of teaching methods encouraging students exposed to conflict to engage in dialogue and seek coexistence, rather than perpetuate violence. Al-Hroub was introduced by Pope Francis (in a video message) and was handed the winning check of USD \$1 million by the ruler of Dubai, where the award ceremony was held. In accepting the award, Al-Hroub repeated her mantra of “No to violence,” and told the *Associated Press* that “hand in hand we can effect change and provide a safe education to provide peace.” Unfortunately, fellow Palestinians in the audience had a different message to convey in celebrating the memorable occasion. Waving Palestinian flags and pumping their fists in the air, al-Hroub’s compatriots shouted, “With our souls, our blood, we sacrifice for you, Palestine” - a common call to violence against Israel.

Thousands Worldwide Unite in Reading of Shema Prayer to Save Israel

A global reading of the Shema, the declaration of accepting God’s rule, was held on Wednesday, March 16th, at 9:00 pm, Israeli local time, 3:00 pm EST. The reading of the Shema will come directly after the much-anticipated consecration of the Torah scroll written for the Messiah, which will be celebrated on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

United in the Homeland

Three months have passed from this remarkable day when the Tsarenko and Pleshkov families made their aliyah from Ukraine. Leaving behind old lives, relatives and friends, they headed to the very South of Israel, to the hot and dry Arava desert.

Although First Home makes their landing and adaptation in Israel as easy as possible, some difficulties are hard to avoid. One after another, the children were ill with viruses and fevers; they found it difficult to adjust to the new climate.

But their neighbours were there to help and support the families. The children were warmly welcomed by local children, who started to play together very quickly, and talk to each other in their common children's language, so the future is bright.

True Reality

By Rev. Willem J. J. Glashouwer, President Christians for Israel



Calabria – Italy is a wonderful place to be. The mountains, the villages, the seashore and the magnificent sunsets. The warmth and sometimes heat of this southern part of Italy during the daytime, and the cool breeze at night to cool you off. As in the whole of Italy Roman Catholicism is visibly present everywhere. Churches, crucifixes along the roads, statues of the Madonna. But on the high cliffs of Maratea there is another statue: Christ Risen. Like the huge statue of Christ at Rio de Janeiro – Brazil, this statue of over 20 metres high is visible from a long distance. But when one reaches the top of the cliff one sees that this Christ is not overlooking the sea, but his face and outstretched arms are looking landwards. As if he is telling the people who approach him the message: “Don’t pass me by!” There is great danger behind my back! Please let me stop you! Because if you ignore me and pass me by, you will fall down the steep cliffs behind me and there will be no hope for you. You will smash against the rocks and die, and the people will find you hundreds of meters below me with a broken body like a ragged doll. Please don’t ignore my outstretched arms! I do want to save you from perishing! Isn’t that a beautiful message? The risen Christ wants to save us from eternal damnation. If only we would not ignore Him and His pierced outstretched arms.

Christ is Risen. That is not a fairy tale. Not something that one has to ‘believe’ by putting one’s mind out of action and one’s brains to a standstill and then jump into blind faith. No, the Bible is a book of realities. People like you and me reported about astonishing realities they experienced. And they were as flabbergasted as we would have been, if we had been in the same place at the same time as they were. The friends of Jesus were down-to-earth people. Fishermen – and Jewish. One does not take people like that for a ride, or impose fancy stories upon them. But they were witnesses to astonishing facts, and they had a hard time believing them. But facts one cannot deny, can one? If you have seen things with your own eyes, and heard things with your own ears, and if your hands could even touch the reality of it, there is no way one can deny the things one was witness to.

John later writes: “...that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched –

this we proclaim!... We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard. We write this to make our joy complete...” (1John1:1-4). Because joy it was, that finally prevailed, after all the astonishment and shaky feelings, doubts and hopes, and finally total conviction! Because one cannot deny the facts, can one? John was there. He saw it and believed. In his gospel he writes in *John 20:6-8*: “Then Simon Peter who was behind him (John) arrived and went into the tomb, and he saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus head...Finally the other disciple (John), who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed...”



Now it has always puzzled me: what did John see so that he believed? He saw the grave cloth, the strips of linen in which the body of Jesus had been buried. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus had seen to that. They had even brought with them a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about 75 pounds, *John 20:38-39*! And they had buried the body of Jesus in the way the Jews were accustomed. They did not mummify the dead bodies as the Egyptians did. They left the corpse intact, but wrapped it into two pieces of linen: one for the head and one for the body, and simply wrapped the whole body in it while adding these oils, spices, anointments, herbs, etc. to prevent the bad smell, the stench, that eventually a decaying body would produce, and to make sure that instead of that the sweet odour of these spices would prevail. Then they laid the body wrapped up like this onto a couch of stone, hewn in the back wall of the cave in the rocks where the body would be put to rest. The body on the stone bench and the head on the stone ‘pillow’. Then a huge stone was rolled before the entrance of the cave to prevent grave-robbery, or animals coming in to scavenge the body.

After some time the oils, herbs, spices, aloes and myrrh dried up, giving the grave cloth and strips of linen in which the body and the head were buried a certain stiffness. It would have

been very difficult to unwrap them and take the body out. So what did John see that made him believe? He must have seen the linen in its original form of the body – but without the body! Had he seen the strips of linen and the burial cloth thrown as a bundle somewhere in a corner of the cave, he would have thought: ‘what on earth has happened here?’ Even if he had found them neatly folded in a pile on the stone bench, he still would have thought: ‘what happened here, where is the body, who did this, etc.?’ But if he saw the grave cloth in the form of the body – but without a body – the only logical conclusion he could have come to is this: the body somehow must have risen through the ‘burial-clothes’, because it is

impossible to unwrap the body, then remove the body, and then put the stripes of linen and the burial cloth back into the form of the body. The 75 pounds of mixture of myrrh and aloes simply would make that impossible. So He must have risen. How? I don’t know, I cannot explain it, but it is the only logical explanation, John must have thought. He must have risen through the ‘burial-clothes’!

And if wrapped burial-clothes could not retain Him, neither could a stone rolled before the entrance. Neither could a room with the doors closed keep Him outside. So the stone was removed not to let Him out, but to let us in! In order that we could see with our own eyes and give testimony about these facts, incredible as they seem to be. John saw and believed. And he is telling us what he saw in order that we might believe. Jesus rose from the dead. The grave was empty. And only because the grave was empty, we start to understand the meaning of the cross.

Even the famous Matthews Passion by Johan Sebastian Bach ends with it. We wish Jesus a good rest in the grave, that’s the final chorus. And the ‘Passion of Christ’, the movie by Mel Gibson ends in the same way. But was Jesus one of those unsuccessful martyrs for a good cause? The Bile says: No! The Bible claims that His death on the cross was a sacrifice,

atonement for sin. But how can we be sure about that? Why was His death on the cross different from all the other crucifixions? Only if we look backwards from the empty grave, we start to understand the meaning of His death upon the cross.

How had ‘death’ entered into this world? Because of the sin of Adam. The Bible calls ‘death’ the wages of sin. When Adam fell, ‘sin’ entered this world. And because of ‘sin’ God decided to let ‘death’ enter into man’s life. He became a mortal being. And ‘death’ entered not just into the life of man, but into the whole of creation. The whole of creation is suffering because of the sin of man.

So if God one-day would accept a sacrifice for sin, atonement for sin, redemption of sin, then the result must be that the consequence of sin - being ‘death’ – would simply disappear. And it happened. He crossed out ‘sin’ and therefore crossed out ‘death’ as well. Praise the Lord. The grave was empty. Death could not control Jesus anymore. So His death on the cross must have been the atonement for sin. The empty tomb is the proof of the validity of the cross. Free at last! And this is only the beginning. Those who put their faith in Jesus will rise in glory as well, with the same resurrected body that He had – and has, for that matter.

One day the whole of creation will be made free as well. Paul writes about it in *Romans 8:18-23*. The Risen Christ, depicted as a statue high on the cliffs at Maratea in Calabria in the South of Italy is standing with outstretched arms and with hands on which the signs of the crucifixion are visible. It is telling without words everyone who is looking at it: “Don’t pass me by, because you will find a terrible end to you life. Let me save you from that horrible death.” In the same way the Risen Christ is speaking in the Word of God to us all: “Let Me save you! I died for you on the cross in order that you might have life everlasting.”

John says it in these words: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.” *John 3:16*17

Are you saved by the blood of the Lamb that He shed as a sacrifice for your sin? Have you ever thanked Him for that what He did for you? Now is the time to do it in a personal way. It is between you and Him. Just speak to Him right now, ask forgiveness for your sins, ask Him to come into your life by the Holy Spirit and you are saved and on your way to a glorious future! To your own resurrection, because from now on heaven is your home, and His future is your future!

Five Chinese Jewish Women Make Aliyah

By Michael Freund, Chairman of Shavei Israel



Recently five young Chinese Jewish women received permission to return to Israel from the Israeli government. Christians for Israel supported their return to their ancient homeland through Shavei Israel. The

women finally arrived at Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv on the 29th of February.

The five women join seven young Chinese Jewish men whom Shavei Israel helped make aliyah in 2009. A total of 19 members of the Kaifeng Jewish community have come to Israel.

It’s been a long road getting to this point. “We’ve been struggling for 3-4 years to get the requisite permission to bring these young women here,” Shavei Israel Chairman Michael Freund told Israel National News TV reporter Yoni Kempinski at Ben-Gurion Airport. “I’ve spent a lot of time nudging and cajoling and lobbying bureaucrats, Knesset members and ministers. But thank God finally the permission came and they’ve come home.”

>> History of the Kaifeng Jews

Jews have lived in Kaifeng since the 8th or 9th century, the result of Jewish merchants from Iraq or Persia who traveled to China along the ancient Silk Road. The community once had a large and beautiful synagogue, rabbis and its own Torah scrolls. At its height, the Jewish community numbered up to 5,000 people. But after widespread intermarriage and assimilation, and the death of the community’s last rabbi, today there are only about 100 active members of the Jewish community in Kaifeng who continue to observe Jewish customs. Still, there are close to 1,000 people “who are identifiable as descendants of the Jewish community via family trees,” said Freund.

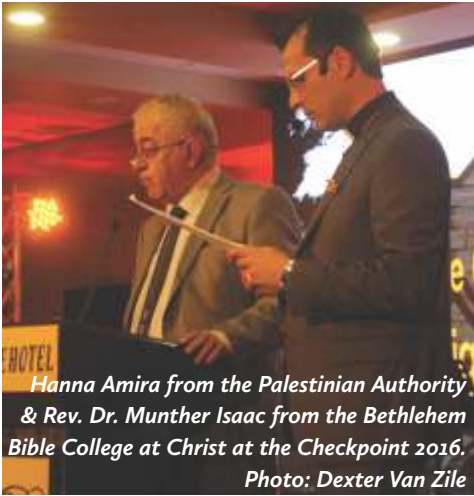
>> Emotional Moments

Reporters from numerous media outlets, local and from around the world, were waiting in the arrivals hall to watch history in the making, as the ancient Jewish community of Kaifeng slowly makes its way home to Israel.

Following the high emotions at the airport, the women, along with Shavei Israel representatives including Michael Freund, drove to the Western Wall (the Kotel). With brand new Hebrew siddurim (prayer books) in hand, each with a personal dedication inside, the women prayed at Judaism’s holiest spot and placed notes between the stones.

Palestinian Pastor Helps PA Official Broadcast Propaganda at Christ at the Checkpoint

Sourced from blog.camera.org



By now, most people have come to expect that officials from the Palestinian Authority will speak words of peace when addressing foreigners and words of hate when they speak to their own people. And most people realise that PA officials will level outrageous charges at Israel every chance they get. This is what the PA does. Governing through the use of misinformation and demonising propaganda comes with the territory if you're in charge of the Palestinian Authority.

But even the most hardened and cynical observer of the Palestinian Authority would be shocked at the speech given by a PA official at the opening session of the Christ at the Checkpoint Conference that began March 7, 2016. (This conference, organised by the Bethlehem Bible College, a non-denominational Evangelical school located in the West Bank, has taken place every even-numbered year since 2010.)

The speech was given by Hanna Amira, who serves as the chairman of the Higher Presidential Committee for Christian Affairs for the Palestinian Authority. During his speech, he stated "The Israeli government is giving the green light to the Army and to the settlers to continue the acts of killing and attacking the Palestinian people, in particular, the children and the young and the women."

This is defamation, pure and simple. It is the Palestinian Authority, not the Israeli government that has given the green light for its people to kill. They have done this by falsely accusing the Israeli government of having designs on the Al Aqba Mosque in Jerusalem. In response to this incitement (which will be addressed in more detail below), many young Palestinians have attacked Israeli soldiers and civilians with knives.

In the course of these attacks, which have killed more than two dozen Israelis (including one mother who died in front of her children), Palestinian attackers are sometimes shot to death. Israel is not giving its citizens or soldiers permission to kill anyone, most especially women and children. It is the PA that is doing this and as a result, the people it is supposed to

protect are getting killed. Amira also added that he and the audience were in "the cradle of religions and civilisations and it was in this context that many prophets spoke about the values of coexistence and forgiveness. And today in Palestine we continue to speak about these values despite the historical injustice we have been going through for the last 68 years of occupation and aggression."

While Israel is continuing to commit crimes, Amira said, the Palestinians are "giving an historic example of coexistence and the rejection of violence and hatred." He continued:

>> We have created a national non-violent resistance, a national peaceful resistance in our fight and in our struggle to achieve freedom and achieve peace and change the current circumstances and establish our Palestinian state.

This is an outrageous thing for Amira to say in light of the horrific stabbing attacks mentioned above. They are not the actions that can be characterised as "non-violent" and "peaceful" resistance. They are acts of murder.

It's also an outrageous thing to say in light of the hateful polemics that the PA has been leveling at Israeli Jews since it was established in the mid-1990s and which have intensified during the stabbing attacks that began last fall. The Palestinian Authority is not presiding over a peaceful resistance movement. It is inciting young people to kill Israeli Jews going about their lives.

Amira's boss, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, has praised Palestinians who have murdered Israelis in cold blood. In September 2015, Abbas declared, "The Al-Aqba Mosque is ours, and they have no right to defile it with their filthy feet. We will not allow them to, and we will do everything in our power to protect Jerusalem." He also stated "We bless every drop of blood that has been spilled for Jerusalem, which is clean and pure blood, blood spilled for Allah, Allah willing. Every Martyr (Shahid) will reach Paradise, and everyone wounded will be rewarded by Allah."

This is not the language of coexistence. This is the language of religious incitement coming out of the mouth of PA President Mahmoud Abbas. And here was Hanna Amira from the PA claiming that the Palestinians have applied the principles of coexistence handed down by the prophets.

We are used to politicians offering up a self-serving and distorted view of reality, but this was over the top. Anyone with even a passing knowledge of the events of the past few months know full well that the Palestinian

leaders and the people they have incited to attack Jews. (PA President Mahmoud Abbas is not the only Palestinian leader who has spoken like this. There have been numerous others.)

>> Amira's speech, given to an audience of Christians from throughout the world, was disgraceful.

But what was even more disgraceful was how he conveyed this message to the approximately 300 international attendees at the conference.

You see, Amira does not speak English and he needed to have someone translate his speech for him.

>> Who did the translation? A pastor, a Christian pastor!

The pastor in question is Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac, who is ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. In addition to serving as the director of the Christ at the Checkpoint Conference, Rev. Dr. Isaac also serves as academic dean of Bethlehem Bible College.

Despite his training and his credentials, Rev. Dr. Isaac allowed himself to be used as a mouthpiece for some pretty dishonest propaganda.

And to make matters worse, he did it at a conference dedicated to confronting religious extremism, a conference that he organised. By repeating Amira's speech word for word, Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac helped obscure the problem of religious extremism that the conference was intended to confront.

The scene, captured in the photo above, is a key to understanding the Christ at the Checkpoint Conference. Suppose Rev. Dr. Isaac had, in the middle of Amira's presentation, refused to translate any more of the text for the audience, telling both Amira and the audience, "I can't go on. This is just too much. I'm sorry."

Suppose he did that. He'd be in a lot of trouble. He would have embarrassed an official from the PA in front of an audience of 300 foreigners (and a number of Palestinian security officials who were also in attendance). So Rev. Dr. Isaac continued on like a soldier, translating Amira's speech, as propagandistic as it was, until the very end.

It's hard for the school's supporters to admit, but the Bethlehem Bible College serves as a propaganda arm of the Palestinian Authority.

On the first night of the 2016 Christ at the Checkpoint Conference, that reality was on display for those who had eyes to see and ears to hear.

Short News

Check Out Ramon Airport, Israel's New Airport, Opening in 2017



Ramon Airport, which is now in the final stages of construction about 10km north of Israel's southern-most city of Eilat, is set to open in 2017, replacing Eilat Airport in the city center, which handles domestic flights from Tel Aviv and Haifa, and Ovda Airport, about 40 minutes north, which handles low-cost and charter flights from Europe, in the winter season. The airport is located in the Timna Valley, and aside from its beautiful location, looks set to be one of the most beautiful airports ever seen.

The new Ramon Airport, named after Ilan Ramon, Israel's first ever astronaut who died in the 2003 Colombia Disaster, and his son Asaf Ramon, who was killed a few years later in an aircraft accident, is also known as Timna Airport. The terminal has been designed by leading Israeli architecture firms, Mann Shinar Architects and Moshe Zur Architects, and is set to handle 2 million passengers a year upon opening, expanding to 4 million passengers a year later on. It is set to take care of all domestic traffic to Eilat, and the growing number of international low-cost flights from Europe, including airlines such as Ryanair and Monarch, who started flying to Ovda Airport in the 2015-2016 winter season.

Israeli Hi-Tech is Surging



Israel has become the go-to place to invest in startups. Yearend marketing reports show that Israeli startups were a hot item in 2015 and will continue to be a big market attraction in 2016. Last year mergers and acquisitions (M&A) within the country's high-tech industry reached \$7.2 billion, up from \$5 billion the previous year.

"We have grown accustomed to the presence in Israel of global giants like Facebook, Apple, IBM, Qualcomm, Microsoft, Intel and more," writes Rubi Suliman of the professional services network PricewaterhouseCoopers. He notes that such new players as ARM, Amazon and Zynga have been looking for opportunities in the local M&A market, adding that "in 2015, 56 buyers acquired 62 companies, versus 49 buyers that acquired 52 companies in 2014." Microsoft was the company most active in the Israeli high-tech market, acquiring four companies in 2015; the cybersecurity firms Secure Islands and Adallom, the "Surface Pen" company NTrig and the machine-learning developer Equivio.

Israel Condemns Iranian Missile Test Fire

By MFA Spokesperson's Bureau

Israel condemns the recent Iranian ballistic missile test launches. The range of these missiles includes all of Israel and large parts of the Middle East, a region currently engaged in a bloody conflict resulting in waves of refugees fleeing to countries in the region and in Europe. The commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards stated to the media that most of Iran's missile arsenal covers Israeli territory. The test firing of ballistic missiles constitutes a gross violation of UNSC

Resolution 2231, which confirmed the nuclear agreement between Iran and the powers. The resolution restricts Iran from launching missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead – the same missiles that Iran test-fired this week. The development of ground-to-ground missiles with nuclear warhead capability calls into question Iran's intentions to comply in full with the nuclear agreement. Iran continues to dismiss the international community's demands and to develop its

aggressive capabilities. It seems the Zarif-Rouhani "smile campaign" is nothing more than a smoke screen to disguise the real intentions of the ayatollah regime. Israel calls on the international community to react firmly and decisively against further Iranian missile launches and Iran's continuing development of ground-to-ground missiles – a violation of the Security Council resolution. Iran's ballistic missile program must stop.

Juxtaposition

By Pim van der Hoff, Board Member Christians for Israel International



migration of huge populations in those centuries seriously impacted the Western Roman Empire and led to its collapse.

In our days a large migration is taking place towards Western Europe. Millions of people

No doubt that you heard in history class at school about the Migration Period in the fourth and fifth centuries. Many peoples were adrift in Europe. The

from countries in the Middle East and Northern Africa are fleeing the violence that has swept across Syria for five years already. More than 450,000 people have already been killed in this vicious civil war. The Arab Spring that people hoped for has turned into a brutal winter. Not only Syrians have been displaced from their homes, but also citizens of Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran.

>> Among the stream of refugees are also fortune hunters, people who hope to reach rich and safe Europe.

The media confront us daily with the wandering masses of men, women and children, moving across fields, through woods,

along barb wire fences, waiting at borders, in search of an unfamiliar, unknown place where hopefully they can finally find peace and quiet. This migration was preceded in many places by ethnic cleansing. In previous centuries the Jews were expelled from these countries, and now there seems to be no place any more for Christians. In the enormous confusion and chaos that reigns in the region, the enemies of those who believe in the God of Israel seize their chance to make a clean sweep.

>> ‘First the Saturday people, then the Sunday people.’

What receives little or no coverage is the large flow of Jews who are heading in the opposite direction: to Israel, which in reality is the only

secure country for them in the world, right there in the middle of the Middle East. Frightened by the resurgence of anti-Semitism, which manifests itself in many forms, Jews are abandoning the seemingly peaceful Western European countries. It is estimated that of the 600,000 French Jews, this year 15,000 will leave for Israel. The flow of Jewish immigrants from war-torn Ukraine is still rising. Furthermore it is expected that in the coming years, many Jews will leave Russia and go to Israel. Even among the 200,000 Jews living in Germany, there are many that have their suitcases packed to move permanently to the promised land.

>> The Jewish People Are Going Home

When God Becomes the Sole Defender of Israel - Part 1

By Rev. Hon. Graeme Lee, National Leader Christians for Israel New Zealand



point where we are almost inured to the gravity of the situation.

Think about it – Iran the world’s major terrorist promotion nation has been given a green card by the USA and other suppliant nations to get out of prison and has been paid several billion dollars to pass Go!

Russia and in particular leader Putin, who was recently the world pariah because of the devious deployment of arms to the Ukraine, is now sitting a short distance away from the Golan heights border of Israel with seemingly the ‘gratitude’ of the west and certainly the United Nations. “Do stick to the agreement in terms of who you bomb” is Obama’s only reply and weak lament!

>> All this in the space of a few months. But that’s not all.

The largest ever exodus of people from Syria and other countries continues unabated. This is not a few displaced people but a swollen, swirling river of abject, hopeless, helpless people. Europe is itself reeling from this human crisis and geo political upheaval. The result appears to be a dislocation and growing division amongst countries! The only one thing that seems to be increasing and agreed upon by most is anti-Semitism!

But then we have something much bigger in its devilish designs and that of course is ISIS. Be reminded that they are deliberately and deviously part of that humanitarian refugee crisis. Young men with death wishes hiding behind the women and children in the march.

We now know that ISIS is the world’s most murderous regime bar none so we should be aghast at the success of their world wide recruitment. However, the leaders of the free world said they won’t last! But they have! Seemingly with the devil’s power they are still there. Everyday people are beheaded whilst we prevaricate. Islamic nations of the world go tut, tut, but otherwise it is a deafening silence.

It is an amazing time in the Middle East right now. There are so many cataclysmic happenings all occurring about the same time. But have we come to a

>> Where’s All This Leading To?

There in the middle of the Middle East cauldron is Israel – a tiny nation of 8½ million. For many years it has been attacked by rockets from the south and the north. Now they are sustaining an intifada but not called an intifada, of brutal, barbaric senseless knife attacks. The perpetrators are Palestinians – the same people who depend on Israel for both their lives and livelihood!

For providing a modern, innovative and democratic state, Israel is increasingly vilified and besieged by anti-Semitism. This is not about trade with Israel and the absurd boycott BDS movement which is primarily hurting the Palestinians more than Israel but the depraved view of some that Israel should not even be allowed to exist at all. This is anti-Semitism from the pit! However how amazing is the relative calm of Israel at this time – or is it the calm before the storm?

So all this is well known. In fact so well known that as I said at the beginning we have become inured to the continuous pandemonium or worse still, people believing that God is now out of the picture! Things, bad things are happening with such rapidity and blackness that perhaps God has given up and annulled his plans of redemption for the Middle East and Israel in particular.

Well the great news, albeit delivered by God Himself not yesterday but approx 2000 years ago is that He has a plan and purpose for Israel as he has indeed separately for the Church. Furthermore, He will fulfil those plans 100% The covenants given to Israel by God are clear and unambiguous!

>> They are many and they are everlasting, unconditional covenants!

Has Israel deserved them – no! The same of course can be said for the church today. Has Israel remembered their God in this time of unprecedented pressure – no! Approximately 50% of Jews would regard themselves as secular. Has Israel’s miraculous rebirth in May 1948 and the several wars the IDF have won against impossible odds been understood by all of the population as from the hand of God? No!

But God is faithful to His word as He of course is to the church. God is always sovereignly bringing about His plan. Indeed, He says He is doing it for His sake “I am doing it for my names sake” *Ezekiel 36: 23-26*. Amazingly He has allowed us to know about it.

People say how can we possibly be serious about writings over 2500 years ago? *Ezekiel 37* can be accepted because it is a figurative description of the return of the Jews to Israel. That cannot be denied because it has been happening since 1948. In Chapter 40-46 *Ezekiel* describes the last temple in great and wonderful detail. However, *Ezekiel 38-39* the intervening two chapters remain unfulfilled. So what is God saying to us today about the message of these two chapters? Well there are many new sign posts that have been erected all around us in recent times.

>> Russia Has Arrived

So what are those signs? Well we have mentioned some big ones such as the militarily strong and money flush Iran and the betrayal and hypocrisy of Europe to Israel by vicious Anti-Semitism attacks! But the biggest signpost to note and biggest player now in the Middle East is Russia. Should we be apprehensive about Russia? – Yes!

One reason alone should be sufficient – God is opposed to Russia and Russia is opposed to God! *Ezekiel 38:3*. But consider that Russia has come from nowhere but suddenly it is now the ‘defender of the faith’ for the Islamic nations. Will Russia shuffle off home soon? No way! Russia has arrived to stay. It says it has now withdrawn some troops (the port and air bases remain) but ironically it needs to stay to ensure any form of continuing peace in Syria!

As much as the Saudis, Turkey, Jordan and Egypt thump their chests about the presence of Russia in the middle east it is a super power. The surrounding nations are relative minnows. Russia nearly went under economically at an earlier stage but it never lost its military power.

So why would Russia stay. It has a plan to acquire former Russian territory and its current leader Vladimir Putin has recently been given new authority by the Kremlin to implement Russian designs and dominance. They wont be waiting for Security Council permissions or visits by Banki Moon! The USSR has returned. *Ezekiel 38: 1-39*

So what does the Bible say about Russia in these end times. A lot! It comes from the Book of *Ezekiel 38-39*. It is a very precise description of a war prophesied by Ezekiel living in exile in Babylon in 586 BC. This was before and after the fall of Jerusalem.

How could a prophecy be given of a specific war so long ago and not have taken place some

time over the centuries? Commentators however agree that it has not taken place. Why? Because the details given by God are such that nothing in the past has matched this event! Some however still maintain the invasion of Israel by Gog and Magog as part of the Campaign of Armageddon – but Armageddon involves all the nations of the world.

>> How unbelievable therefore is the arrogance of puny man that he thinks he knows more than God or that God is outmoded and not to be taken seriously in this present enlightened age and society!

It needs to be said that there are varied opinions about the identity of Gog and Magog. Some commentators say Gog is actually a spiritual leader! However, what is clear to me is that an invasion in Israel will happen in future days and it will be a broad ‘Russian/ Islamic Nations’ invasion!

So let’s start with a clear sheet and the clear statement of *Ezekiel 39*. God says – it will come – it will surely take place.

>> What Really Triggers this Gog and Magog Event?

- FIRST – Iran has particularly declared it’s intentions to annihilate Israel. Other Islamic nations have said the same thing. *Ezekiel 38:5-6*
- SECOND – Russia though roughly the size of North America considers it worthwhile to invade tiny Israel for its recently discovered off shore oil and gas reserves. The Bible describes it as plundering the land for loot. *Ezekiel 38:12*
- THIRD - God says unequivocally and most importantly “He is against Gog; chief Prince of Meshech and Tubal - *Ezekiel 38:3*. But God doesn’t really give Russia an option not to invade. God says I will turn you around in case you are hesitant, put hooks in your jaws and bring you out with your whole army and the many nations with you. *Ezekiel 38:4 and 6*.
- FOURTH God has a purpose! He will show his greatness and His holiness and will make Himself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that He is the Lord! *Ezekiel 38:23*

To be continued in June 2016 issue...

Our World: Time to Draw Lines and Defend Them

By Caroline B. Glick, The Jerusalem Post



The government has clearly awakened to the threat of the BDS movement; but our leaders still don't seem to recognise that the answer to hatred isn't

inclusion. At a certain point, you just have to know when to draw a line in the sand.

Sloan and Guy Rachmuth, Jewish parents in Durham, North Carolina, reached that point in 2014 when they opted to walk away from their local Jewish day school and home school their two children.

The Rachmuths pulled their children out of the Lerner School when they concluded the school would not abide by its commitment to assist "all students in developing a positive Jewish identity and pride in their Jewish heritage."

As committed Zionists, the Rachmuths were dismayed to see that far from fulfilling its commitment, the Lerner school was cultivating a learning environment that questioned the legitimacy of the Jewish national liberation movement and of the State of Israel.

Perhaps the turning point was when the school took down all the maps of Israel from the classroom walls. Perhaps it was when their five-year-old son came home and asked them why the map of Israel hurt some people's feelings.

Perhaps it was when they discovered that the school had employed a Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) activist as a Hebrew teacher. Perhaps it was when they discovered that the school's development director and former president of the board was an anti-Israel activist whose group, Jews for a Just Peace, had joined forces with the anti-Semitic and rabidly anti-Israel BDS groups Students for Justice in Palestine and the Palestinian Solidarity Movement.

Perhaps it was when the school refused to back Israel during Operation Protective Edge during the summer of 2014.

Or perhaps the Rachmuths felt obliged to draw their line and walk away when they got the sense that the school rejected not only their Zionism, but also vigorously opposed their right to defend their values.

According to Andrew Pessin's two-part report on the Rachmuth family's ordeal published by JNS, in internal memos, the current school board president Tal Wittle referred to Sloan Rachmuth's repeated complaints about the school's diffident position on Israel, and the dominant role BDS supporters played at the school as "bigotry."

If the Lerner school had simply let the Rachmuths walk away, the story would have

been relegated to the shadows. Instead, it became a matter of importance for the American Jewish community and for Israel because the school decided to punish the Rachmuths for their decision.

Last fall the Lerner school sued the couple for breach of contract for their refusal to pay \$20,000 in tuition for the 2014-2015 school year, despite the fact that their children did not go to school that year. School officials told Pessin that it was "a business decision" to sue the family.

Maybe monetary considerations played a role, but Pessin quoted an internal email from Wittle to school principal Allison Oakes making clear that "business" was only one consideration.

"Part of me," Wittle wrote, "wants to say [to the Rachmuths] fine, keep your money because our school doesn't need such bigotry anywhere near it.

But, one, that sends the message that they are in the right, and two, we run a business." In other words, the school decided that it needed to sue the Rachmuths in order to punish them for rejecting the school's values. And that isn't the end of it. Pessin reported that community members are so angry at the Rachmuths that some are calling for the Durham Jewish community to boycott their business.

That is, "A family withdrawing from a school in protest of those who support the boycott against Israel [is now being threatened with] being boycotted by those who support the school."

Pessin was assured by Oakes that while she had heard the same talk, the community would never really carry out the threat, although she is maintaining the lawsuit. It's hard to know the precise moment that unapologetic Zionism became controversial or even, as the president of the board of the Lerner School would have it, a form of bigotry, for a significant portion of American Jews. But there can be no doubt that it happened.

Last month a group of alumni from Oberlin College tried to oppose the rabid anti-Israel and anti-Semitic atmosphere on their alma mater's campus. They organized a closed Facebook page and sent an open letter to the college's president demanding action to protect Jewish students.

Among the many incidents that upset the alumni were the student cooperative association's decision to expel the kosher food co-op. Another low point was when anti-Israel activists planted 2,133 flags in the center of campus to symbolize the Palestinians killed during Operation Protective Edge. They planted the flags on Rosh Hashana.

Rather than thank the alumni for acting to protect them, last week three Jewish student leaders published an op-ed in the Cleveland Jewish News condemning the alumni for failure to take a "nuanced" view of the

Palestinian conflict with Israel.

The students wrote that they believed that the alumni's call for an end to BDS on campus needed to include "a call to end settlement expansion and other obstacles to lasting peace and a two-state solution."

"We all agreed," the Jewish student leaders wrote, "that working to end the occupation and achieve a two-state resolution is vital for the future of a Jewish and democratic Israel."

In other words, you can't be for Israel without embracing J Street's moral equivalence – at best – between Hamas, a terrorist group which aspires to murder all Jews, and law abiding Israeli citizens who live in Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, Judea and Samaria.

Perhaps the moment Zionism became a form of bigotry for American Jewry was in September 2007 when Columbia University's Jewish president Lee Bollinger invited then Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to speak on campus. Ahmadinejad broke the post-Holocaust taboo of openly calling for the annihilation of the Jewish state.

By inviting him to speak on campus, Bollinger effectively said that the Jews have no intrinsic right to life – let alone to freedom and national self-determination.

>> Rather, the determination of whether or not Jews can exist is a legitimate subject for debate and inquiry.

Everyone – including Ahmadinejad – has a right to voice their position on the issue. Moreover, Bollinger indicated through his action, America's greatest universities have a duty to confer legitimacy and grant a prestigious venue to Ahmadinejad to air his genocidal position.

After Columbia gave legitimacy to a man who seeks to murder every Jew, how could anyone object to anti-Israel and anti-Jewish hate groups merely insisting that the US end all assistance and support for Israel? How could it be illegitimate to blame Israel for the suffering of the Palestinians? How could it be illegitimate to teach Jewish kindergarteners that there is something intrinsically hurtful about the map of the Jewish state when a Jewish university president invited a man who called for that state to be wiped of the map to speak to his students? Last week Strategic Affairs Minister Gilad Erdan held a "top secret" conference for Jewish leaders from around the world to develop strategies and action plans to fight BDS. Pollster Frank Luntz reportedly shared with the 150 conference participants the dismal results of a survey he had taken of



PA demonstrator wears a shirt reading 'Boycott Israel'. Photo: AFP/MOHD RASFAN

American Jewish university students.

According to Luntz, only 42 percent of American Jewish students surveyed said that Israel wants peace. A mere 31% of the students believe that Israel is a democracy.

According to media accounts, the Strategic Affairs Ministry set out what its experts believe is the sort of language pro-Israel activists should use to counter BDS propaganda. The language, participants were told, should be inclusive, not condemnatory.

For instance, people opposing BDS should say, "Boycotts divide people, and that's part of the problem, not the solution."

On the other hand, it would be a big mistake to say, "The BDS movement is not about legitimate criticism. It's about making Israel illegitimate." It's hard to escape the sense that in advocating these slogans, the government has missed the point, and the boat.

>> You can't engage people who believe you are evil.

You cannot cooperate with people who insist that anyone who defends you, or insists that you have a right to be defended is a bigot, whereas anyone who opposes you – including Ahmadinejad – has a right to be heard, and that it is the duty of right thinking people to provide them with prestigious venues to vent their hatred of the Jewish state and those who defend it.

For drawing the line in opposing anti-Israel indoctrination at a Jewish day school, the Rachmuths have been forced to cough up \$30,000 in legal fees and endure the condemnation of their Jewish community which shuns them for their Zionism.

For drawing the line in opposing ever-so thinly veiled anti-Semitic intimidation of Jewish students at Oberlin, Jewish alumni have been castigated by the Jewish students they seek to protect. The government has clearly awakened to the threat of the BDS movement. But our leaders still don't seem to recognize that the answer to hatred isn't inclusion.

It is drawing a line and defending it without apology.



ISRAEL NEWS
Stay Informed, Pray Informed

Israel today

www.israeltoday.co.il

Now available at an affordable US\$3.99 per month



www.israeltoday.co.il/Subscribe.aspx



Iby Knill - The Woman Without a Number - *Part 1*

Summary by Marie-Louise Weissenböck, Chair Christians for Israel Austria

When my husband and I visited Iby Knill, a nearly 92-year-old woman, on 12 September 2015 in her home in Leeds, England, a long-cherished wish of mine was fulfilled. Her moving memories were disclosed for the first time in 2010, when she published the book: “The woman without a number”. It took her 60 years before Iby Knill could speak about her time in concentration camp Auschwitz, Buchenwald (Lippstadt) and the death march to Bergen-Belsen. When she was 75 years she decided to study theology at the University of Leeds, and when the subject of the Holocaust came up Iby Knill she expressed herself for the first time as a survivor. With the help of her professor and good friends, she found the courage to unfold her experiences and to write a book about it. In this article we have summarized a few incidents from her dramatic life story.

>> Childhood and Youth

Ibolya Kaufmann, called Iby, grew up in a well-off, assimilated Jewish family in Bratislava (capital of present-day Slovakia). Her mother Irene was Slovakian, her father Benó came from Hungary. Until the early thirties of the last century, Iby born in 1923 in Kosice, enjoys a carefree childhood in the best neighbourhood of the city. The cheerful girl is an avid reader and has a talent for writing. She learns Hungarian, Slovak, Czech, German and English, five languages, which will later help her a great deal. Visits to her family in Vienna continue to exist as a cherished memory. The first shock she suffers is in 1933, when she was forced to switch from a German to a Czech school, because she is Jewish.

It gets worse after the annexation of the Sudetenland in 1938 by the Nazis and the secession from the Czech Republic. Slovakia becomes a German vassal state. In Iby's family, religion never played a role. But suddenly she is part of a minority who are only served in stores, when no other customers are there. Iby is ashamed that she has to wear a yellow star. She tries to hide it with a scarf as much as possible on her way to school. During this time the young girl meets her first boyfriend, Nick. You can guess how short this period of happiness is. In time Nick will be one of many who do not return from the death camps.

In February 1942, the mother of a same age friend calls: her daughter has just been abducted. Young Jewish girls are deported from Bratislava to the Eastern Front and are forced to be prostitutes at the disposal of German soldiers. Not one of the abductees will survive. Iby hides for a few days outside of town at a Slovak family until she disguises herself as peasant girl and in the cover of the night escapes to still fairly stable Hungary. She has to crawl through ditches and streams, being led by a paid helper. A while later that same man brings her parents over the Danube border as well. He will also guard in safekeeping belongings and photos of the family until the end of the war.

>> Resistance in Hungary

Iby manages to get to Budapest. Her aunt Bella lives in the Ring Street. She should offer shelter to her niece. However, fearing reprisals Bella rejects the request. Fortunately her cousin Marton, who also lives in Budapest, is willing to hide Iby in his home. The fascinating young man reveals to her soon that he belongs to the Hungarian resistance movement. He introduces his cousin to the group. From now on 18-year-old Iby helps shot-down Allied pilots to escape. She visits the Budapest spas,



Iby Knill and Marie-Louise Weissenböck

coffee houses and dance halls - with the aim to establish useful contacts and to gain practical knowledge. A priest, who also belongs to the resistance movement, baptizes her, gives her a New Testament and becomes an important prop and stay to her. At the end the group is busted. The young spy is threatened with torture during interrogation. The police are serious. When they pull out Iby's right ring finger nail with pliers, her resistance is broken.

After three months the charges are dropped due to the efforts of an influential double agent. Iby is released from the women's prison in Ujpest and the others are set free as well. As soon as she has passed through the gate, she is arrested again for another reason. As a native from Slovakia she resides illegally in Hungary. She needs to go to a detention centre in the Mosonyi Street in Budapest. Due to the catastrophic hygienic conditions she gets scabies, head- and pubic lice. After her recovery the doctor teaches her some basics of nursing, skills she can use very well later on.

Iby's situation improves and she is transferred to a refugee camp at the Szabolcs Road. There it is relatively safe. There is even a chance of being able to buy her freedom, but she lacks the necessary money. After she refuses a police officer's directions, she is transferred to another refugee camp, far away from Budapest, in northern Hungary, where bed bugs are an ever-present plague.

There she will eventually get permission to visit her family members who are now also in Hungary as illegal immigrants residing in Budapest. Iby meets Gaspar, a friendly and good-looking 30-year-old. She falls in love with

the tall dark-haired man, who seems to be immune to prosecution. He works in the film industry, which is an important industry for the war. Their wedding is planned for June 12, 1944. Gaspar wants to use everything within his power to make sure Iby is free. A marriage would give her Hungarian citizenship. She hopes that she will have nothing to fear after that.

In February 1944 Iby is paroled, but to her disappointment she cannot go to Budapest to her Gaspar, instead she must go the city of Székesfehérvár. From then on she works as a nanny for distant relatives. The German invasion of Hungary in March 1944 has no effect on their situation at first. Since she is classified by the bureaucrats (the Nazi security police) as "illegal immigrant" Iby does not need to wear a yellow star in contrast to the Hungarian Jews.

In May 1944 she walks on the street with little Gaby, one of the children, when a German patrol stops. Infuriated they ask why she was on her way without a star, while her child wears one. "I do not need one", she replies in perfect German, "I'm just the nanny." Since she cannot show any papers, she needs to go to Gestapo quarters for inspection. She claims to be Fraulein Trude, the sister of a Protestant minister from Austria. That woman was once the nanny of her little brother Tomy. Since Iby can remember many details, it is a compelling story. The Gestapo criticizes her: Why is she working for a Jewish family here, instead of being involved in Austria for her own people and leader. But for now the matter is resolved. In Székesfehérvár she needs to report to the police every week and always with the same

official who has an eye on her. One day in the early summer the policeman believes they can spend the night together. That would be of great benefit, he suggests. Later on Iby will often wonder how her life would have been, had she consented.

That same evening, on 5th June 1944, there is an air raid alarm. A few hours later, the family with whom she lives as a nanny, is torn from their sleep. The police bring all the Jews they can find together. Iby protested: She is not a Hungarian Jew, but a baptized Christian from Slovakia. It does not help. She is locked down in a brickyard and her wedding ring, money and her passport are stolen. Together with some doctors Iby tends to the sick and weak. Her planned wedding day goes by without receiving a message from Gaspar.

>> Auschwitz

After five days the prisoners are picked up and transported by train in cattle cars. Crowded together, their days-long journey starts. When the door opens upon arrival in Auschwitz, the unpredictable Doctor Mengele is waiting for them. After a brief inspection, he decides on life and death of the people that arrive. The sick, the elderly and the very young cannot get out. They suspect what awaits them. Their lamentations and their crying haunt Iby to the present day. Tactfully, 20-year-old Iby survives the selection. During the journey she teamed up with two female doctors, a lady dentist and a nurse. The five women get off the train with their arms hooked and singing. Mengele is amused and points to the right to the gate with the heading: “Arbeit macht frei.”

Iby is spared the number on the left arm that is usually tattooed upon arrival. The people responsible for it are behind on schedule that day, because so many people arrived from Hungary. The "woman without number" will spend several weeks in the notorious concentration camp. Thanks to their multilingualism she can communicate with the Czech Kapos (overseers in the concentration camp) and negotiate larger food rations.

A Vatican envoy visits Auschwitz one day. In no time everyone in the barracks get better clothes. Proper tables and benches are brought in. Shortly before the Cardinal, who is escorted by Mengele, enters, the women get postcards and a pen. The command is to write home. When the Cardinal passes by, Iby speaks a few words in Latin, pretending that she is speaking to her neighbour: ‘Non quod credite videte; Ecce non est veritatem.’ (Do not believe what you see, this is not the truth). She dares to look aside and sees the surprised expression in the eyes of the Cardinal. He pauses for a moment and says a blessing for the women. As soon as he leaves again, the scenery is torn down. Cards and pens are collected. The women have to take of their clothes quickly and wear their usual prison clothes again.

The passing smoke from the crematorium smells of death. Iby is used as guinea pig for an X-ray experiment. Thanks to fortunate circumstances she must endure the procedure only once. One morning, she cannot get up; her left leg is completely stiff. She knows that if she cannot be at the mandatory roll call right away, that would be her end. The Kapo summoned orders to bring her to the hospital. This is also a death-prone place where the most vulnerable are selected daily.

To be continued in June 2016 issue...

Copy of Iby's document © Search service ITS in Bad Arolsen

KL: <i>unvollständig</i>		Jahres:		Häftl.-Nr.: <i>25245</i>	
Häftlings-Personal-Karte					
Fam.-Name: <i>Kaufmann</i>		Überstellt		Personen-Beschreibung:	
Vorname: <i>Johanna</i>		am: <i>2. 12. 44</i> an KL: <i>Buchenwald</i>		Größe: <i>160</i> cm	
Geb. am: <i>25. 4. 23</i> in: <i>Wien</i>		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> an KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Gestalt:	
Stand: <i>ledig</i>		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> an KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Gesicht:	
Wohnort: <i>Szabolcs Road</i>		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> an KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Augen:	
Strasse:		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> an KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Nase:	
Religion: <i>ms. Staatsang. Ungarn</i>		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> an KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Mund:	
Wohnort d. Angehörigen:		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> an KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Ohren:	
Budapest, Hódmezővásárhely		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> an KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Zähne:	
Eingewiesen am: <i>12. 6. 44</i>		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> an KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Haare:	
durch: <i>Auschwitz</i>		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> an KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Sprache:	
in KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Entlassung:		Bes. Kennzeichen:	
Grund: <i>Bd. 1. 12. 44</i>		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> durch KL: <i>Auschwitz</i>		Charakt.-Eigenschaften:	
Vorstrafen:		am: <i>1. 12. 44</i> mit Verfügung v.:		Sicherheit b. Einsatz:	
Strafen im Lager:					
Grund		Art		Bemerkung:	
Vollst.		Mitteln			
<i>Bd. 1. 12. 44</i>		<i>1. 12. 44</i>			
<i>Szabolcs Road</i>		<i>Eibegew</i>			
KL: <i>1. 12. 44</i>		KL: <i>1. 12. 44</i>		Körperliche Verfassung:	

The Letters of the Aleph-bet: Gimel

By Kees de Vreugd, Theologian, Christians for Israel International, and Editor of Israel and the Church

The Gimel is the third letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and its numeric value is 3. The ‘g’ is pronounced like the g in ‘girl’. Its archetype consists of two lines which form a corner. Compare the gamma, the third letter of the Greek alphabet, with which the Gimel corresponds.

The Gimel is related to ‘gamal’, the Hebrew verb meaning: being charitable. The basic meaning of gamal, moreover, is ‘to burden’. That’s why the Middle East’s most important beast of burden is called gamal – a camel.

And it is, additionally, possible to lay a reward, gift or sentence on someone. Judaism holds that both reward and punishment serve to bring a soul onto the right path, in order to receive God’s light. But Judaism’s central idea is that of ‘Gamilut Hasadim’ or ‘charity’. (Gamilut correlates with gamal and Gimel.)

It is one of the three basic concepts – alongside the Torah and worship service – on which the world rests, according to the Mishnah (the ‘oral traditional law’).

And that, according to the Talmud, is what the letter ‘Gimel’ represents,: “Gimel Dalet (more about the Dalet, later) means ‘gemol dalim’ – charity to the poor.” The shape of the Gimel reminds one, somehow, of a walking man. The image of the Gimel, in the Talmud, is that of a rich man running after the Dalet, the poor man, in order to show charity to him. The Torah Scroll writers, traditionally, decorate the Gimel, amongst others, with a crown consisting of three lines. Jewish tradition asserts that the most important expositors are able to extort

meaning from these crowns as well. Some of them believe these are the titles Jesus spoke about, in *Matthew 5:18*.

Gimel symbolically, represents ‘three’. There are three patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The Hebrew Bible consists of three sections: the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings – or, as we often see it in the New Testament: the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms; because this is Jesus’ and the apostles’ Bible.

The Catholic Church and Judaism - Sisters who have drifted apart

By Jan-Heiner Tück, German Roman Catholic Theologian

>> In 1965, fifty years ago last year, the Second Vatican Council issued the encyclical ‘Nostra Aetate’ (“in our time”), on the relation of the Church with non-Christian religions.

It was the first official document to renounce every form of anti-Judaism, while acknowledging that to call the church the ‘new people of God’ cannot mean that Jews are no longer the people of God. A new Vatican document tries to give a theological foundation to the special relationship of the Catholic Church to Judaism. It also touches a still delicate point.

“A Christian cannot be an anti-Semite, as Christianity is always referred back to Judaism as its root.” Pope Francis has repeatedly brought this to mind. Fifty years after publication of “Nostra Aetate”, a declaration of the Second Vatican Council “on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions”, a new Vatican document pertaining to Judaism has seen light, bearing the programmatic title: “The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (*Romans 11:29*). This title implies a rejection of classical supercessionism, the theory which declares the meaning of Israel in salvation history obsolete and conceives the Church as heiress and as “new Israel”.

>> Special Theological Position

The document, which was written by the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, states that communities that used to face each other skeptically, since the Council have become “reliable partners and even good friends”. It explicitly appraises the special theological position of Judaism, which because of its constitutive meaning for the Church deserves a different treatment than other non-Christian religions. What would the Church have been without the confession of the One God, without the ethics of the Ten Commandments, without the Psalms? The diverse appraisal of the figure of Jesus, however, divides Jews and Christians till today. Indeed, the teaching of Jesus is correctly understood only within the horizon of Judaism, at the same time, though, Jesus’ claim of divine authority remains for Jews a “stumbling block”.

Until now, Catholicism had explained the long process of the separation of the Church from the Synagogue in such a way, that Christianity as a daughter had come forth from Judaism as the mother religion. The document speaks however of formative Christianity and post-Biblical rabbinic Judaism as ‘sisters’, who stemmed from the same soil, but have drifted apart and have even become enemies. Concerning this history of conflict the document succinctly states: “For Christians, Jews were often represented as damned by God and blind since they were unable to recognise

in Jesus the Messiah and bearer of salvation. For Jews, Christians were often seen as heretics who no longer followed the path originally laid down by God but who went their own way.” The anti-Judaism of the Church has had incomparably darker consequences for the Jewish minority in European history, than Jewish anti-Christianism for the Christians, though.

The Second Vatican Council has taken the long shadow of the Shoah as an impulse to renounce each form of anti-Judaism and to open the dialogue with Judaism on a footing of equality. In this respect, John Paul II has emphasized that Judaism stands in a “never revoked covenant”.

This raises the question whether Jesus had any significance for Judaism at all. The dual covenant thesis, which is represented by many actors in the Jewish-Christian dialogue, affirms this. Jews believe the only the way to salvation is the Torah, while for the nations of the world it is Jesus Christ. This thesis sounds elegant and saves the Jews the imposition that Christ should be their Savior, too. It has the disadvantage, though, that it restricts the faith of the Church in the universal meaning of the salvation in Jesus Christ. For the authors of this document, this price is apparently too high. With surprising clarity they renounce the dual covenant thesis and make clear, that Jesus, the Messiah from Israel, is also the Messiah for Israel.

>> A Delicate Point

This touches a delicate point. For it is precisely Christology that in history time and again has been misused as spearhead of anti-Judaism. On Good Friday, the memorial day of the death of Christ on the cross, it came to anti-Jewish riots against the supposed “murderers of God”, forcible sermons tried to convert the Jews – measures which have left traumatic traces in the collective memory of Judaism. With the recent emphasis on the universal meaning of salvation in Jesus Christ the question is put in the centre whether Jews have to be missionised again. No! is the no less resolute answer of the document. The question how and when Israel, that until now has not come to the recognition of Jesus as the Messiah, will be saved, relates to the “mystery” of God itself. With the apostle Paul the question of Israel’s salvation is put forward to the end time – as if the rift which has divided the one people of God in Jews and Christians, finally can be healed only by the Messiah. On Jewish side, the emphasis on the universal meaning of salvation in Jesus Christ will hardly find approval, even if it is moderated by the renouncement of mission among the Jews. But the eschatological perspective could also launch a new alliance of expectation, in any case when Jewish expectation of the Messiah and Christian hope of the coming again would give a joint testimony against the growing despondency in Western societies.

Israel Adds Advanced Sub to Fleet

Courtesy of Israel Today

Israel’s submarine force is a critical part of its military capability. It is able to spy on enemies, insert operatives into other countries, and create havoc for enemy fleets. It also represents Israel’s “second strike” nuclear deterrent.

A new vessel, the *Rahav* (Hebrew for “Sea Monster” - Isa. 51:9), has now been added to this small - but powerful - fleet, bringing the total number of submarines in the Israeli Navy to five. The Germanmade *Rahav* is capable of carrying nuclear weapons.

At its arrival ceremony, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the

submarine fleet is a deterrent to those who seek Israel’s destruction. Enemy countries “need to know that Israel is capable of hitting anyone who tries to harm us with great force,” he said. “And Israel’s citizens need to know that Israel is a very strong country that is doing everything to defend them, everywhere and on every front.”

Strategic depth: Israel has quietly become a submarine superpower



‘David’s Sling’ Close to Deployment

Courtesy of Israel Today

David’s Sling, also known as *Magic Wand*, will replace the aging US-made Patriot missiles that are currently deployed for medium-range threats. It can also be used against enemy aircraft. The new system will go through additional real-world exercises before being deployed, but it has already passed a series of tests lasting several weeks. In a landmark achievement, a missile was launched and passed through all phases of flight before intercepting and destroying its target.

David’s Sling proved successful against both ballistic missiles and more maneuverable aircraft. It is intended for targets within a range of 42 to 150 miles (70 to 250 kilometers).

The Arrow 2 anti-missile system, which is operational, and the Arrow 3 (under development) are Israel’s answer to longrange threats. The Arrow 3 is making significant progress: In the latest test, it brought down a ballistic target missile in outer space.



Firing on all cylinders: Israel’s medium-range missile defense shield

Difficult But Not Impossible

By Koen Carlier, Christians for Israel Leader in Ukraine



The main road between Dnepropetrovsk and Uman

During January and February 2016, we were accompanied by a number of aliyah field workers as we visited Eastern Ukraine on three different occasions in order to attend a variety of events and discussions. The results were very favourable!

As always, it was not easy to drive the many thousands of kilometres on snow covered, icy roads. It is always risky! An appeal on radio and television even urged people to stay at home and not to set out.

>> Kharkov

Towards the end of January 2016 we organised a day on which the Chief Consular Representative of Kiev and the Consular Representative of Dnepropetrovsk addressed one hundred and fifty potential olim. This speech was followed by an aliyah seminar, organised by the Jewish Agency for Israel.

The day was dreadfully cold, with temperatures below -26°C. The Jews were extremely thankful that we organised the meeting and it resulted in many appointments for interviews with the Consular Representative of Dnepropetrovsk!

Next we had another discussion with a Jewish aid organisation that signed up four hundred Jewish families who escaped from the east. We will have the opportunity to address them in March 2016 about returning to Israel, and learn about their worries that holds them back from making aliyah!

>> "Pass through, pass through the gates. Prepare for the people. Build up the highway! Remove the stones. Raise a banner for the nations." Isaiah 62:10

>> Dnepropetrovsk & Zaporozhe

Our next destination was Dnepropetrovsk, followed by Zaporozhe. The highway resembled an ice rink! The advantage was that there was hardly any traffic, so we were able to make use of the whole width of the road.

At the shelter we talked to and encouraged many olim who will be leaving soon. Amongst them is the family Saienko, who fled from the village of Zaichenko many months ago. They have absolutely nothing, and we have been following them for almost a year, assisting them with their travel documents, food parcels and second hand winter clothes and shoes. On January 28, they eventually departed! The Saienko family was able to leave for Israel after almost a year! They could barely believe that it finally was time to go!

Presently the family Saienko has been in Kiryat Motskin, in Israel, for more than a month. The mother, Oksana, has found employment, her daughter Yuliia has a part time job, and her youngest daughter is happy at school. Her husband is undergoing medical examinations, because of his previous occupation in a polluted steelworks factory in Eastern Ukraine!

>> Practical Matters

The second journey to the east was primarily to ease discussions for extending the contract for the two shelters until the end of the year, to house Jewish refugees. We strongly suspect that the war in Eastern Ukraine can break out anew any moment. Therefore we must be prepared to adequately shelter all Jews!

We also had discussions with our chauffeur in the east. We would like to have an extra minibus and chauffeur in the province of Lugansk. This person will be able to drive the Jews via Donetsk to the shelter in Dnepropetrovsk.

>> Consular Day in Melitopol

The third trip was due to another Consular day in the South-east city of Melitopol. Here two Consular Representatives also addressed the potential two hundred olim, who were brought with minibuses from Mariupol, Berdyansk, Tomak, Zaporozhe. In February 2015, the bus of the last Jewish families from Volnavakha, was hit by a mortar-shell. In this incident many people were killed and gravely injured.



This family fled from the war in East of Ukraine and thanks to Christians for Israel, this Jewish refugee family is now in Israel

>> The Jews thought it extraordinary that the two Consular Representatives came to address them in particular.

In March we transported them by bus to the consulate in Dnepropetrovsk for an interview!

Much is happening, but much can also be done thanks to the large number of motivated co-workers! We believe the most important aspect of our task is to inform the Jews about the return, and in providing practical assistance as it is written in the Bible, for example in *Isaiah 62:10*.

When in mid-February winter appeared to be a thing of the past, we received a brand-new load of fresh snow! Our shelter in Kiev is becoming progressively more popular amongst the Jewish refugees who want to stay there to prepare for their return! Though the future remains uncertain, we continue because of His blessings!

>> Help the Jews Come Home

Support our action 'Bring the Jews Home'. It costs 135 euros to assist one Ukrainian Jew with transport to the necessary institutions to obtain the required documentation for making aliyah.

Greetings from the Ukraine



YES! I Want to Support Christians for Israel

Thank you for this issue of Israel & Christians Today.

☐ Yes, I would like to receive this FREE I&CT bi-monthly newspaper.

CHRISTIANS FOR ISRAEL EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY

☐ Donation \$ _____

ALIYAH

☐ One Person - NZ \$300 \$ _____

☐ One Family (5 persons) - NZ \$1250 \$ _____

☐ One busload (25 persons) - NZ \$6250 \$ _____

OTHER

☐ For Zion's Sake \$ _____

☐ Hineni Jerusalem \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Please send your cheque, payable to Christians for Israel New Zealand to PO Box 12006, Penrose, Auckland 1642 or donate by internet banking: 030166 0834515 00

Name _____
Address _____
Post Code _____
Phone _____
Email _____

WORLD COUNTRIES: Refer to side panel

NB: Receipts are generated annually at the end of each financial year.

ISRAEL & Christians Today

Israel & Christians Today is the premier publication of Christians for Israel

Christians for Israel - International

Leon Meijer, Chairman
Rev Willem J.J. Glashouwer, President
Andrew Tucker, Executive Director
PO Box 1100, 3860 BC Nijkerk, The Netherlands
Tel: +31 33 245 8824
info@c4israel.org | www.c4israel.org

The English edition of Israel & Christians Today is published by the following English speaking branches:

Christians for Israel - Australia

Ian Worby, National Leader
PO Box 1508, Springwood
Queensland, Australia 4127
Tel: +61 402 277 930
info@c4israel.com.au | www.c4israel.com.au

Christians for Israel - East Africa

PO Box 34479, Kampala, Uganda
Tel: +256 392 865 461 | c4iuganda@yahoo.com

Christians for Israel - New Zealand

Rev Hon Graeme Lee, National Leader
PO Box 12 006, Penrose,
Auckland, New Zealand 1642
Tel: +64 9 525 7564
info@c4israel.org.nz | www.c4israel.org.nz

Christians for Israel - South East Asia

Towner Post Office, PO Box 078
Singapore 913223 | Tel: +65 9179 1757
wilson@c4israel.org
khooen888@yahoo.com.sg

Christians for Israel - UK

PO Box 789, Sutton Coldfield
West Midlands B73 5FX, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 121 647 3710 | ukinfo@c4israel.org

Christians for Israel - USA

Fred J van Westing, CEO
PO Box 2589, Manteca, CA 95336
Tel/Fax: +1 209 665 4280
fredvanwesting@c4israel.org | www.c4israel.us

Christians for Israel - Central/West Africa

12 Ibanga Ikpe Close, Uyo, AKS, Nigeria
Tel: +234 813 785 7204 | esamson@c4israel.org

Christians for Israel - Europe

Marie-Louise Weissenböck, Chairwoman
Mühlbergstr. 44/9, A-1140 Wien
Tel: +43 1 9795109
info@israelaktuell.at

DISCLAIMER - Articles: The articles printed in Israel & Christians Today express the views of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editors or that of the Board of Christians for Israel. The printing of articles or advertising in Israel & Christians Today does not necessarily imply either endorsement or agreement.

www.facebook.com/c4israel