

# ISRAEL

*& Christians Today*

NEW ZEALAND

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[www.c4israel.org.nz](http://www.c4israel.org.nz)  
[info@c4israel.org.nz](mailto:info@c4israel.org.nz)

CHRISTIANS FOR  
**ISRAEL**  
NEW ZEALAND

## Israelis Flee Fires...

Nations send assistance to help extinguish fires gripping country



Hundreds of firefighters continue to battle fires raging throughout Israel. The fires are difficult to control due to extremely dry and unseasonably warm conditions along with strong winds.

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# Israel is the Legal Frontier of Europe

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



Ninety-nine years ago, on 2nd November 1917, the British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour wrote a letter to Baron Rothschild, a leader of the British Jewish community, conveying the content of the decision of the British War Cabinet three days earlier.

The decision was as follows: “His Majesty’s Government views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

The Balfour declaration set off a chain of events that allowed the Jewish people in the diaspora to settle in Palestine and reconstitute their own national home. On the basis of those instruments, thousands of Jewish people emigrated to Israel in the 1920’s and 1930’s (it could and should have been many more if Britain had honored its Mandate obligations), and in May 1948 the Jewish State of Israel was created.

Today, almost 100 years later, the right of the Jewish people to determine their own future is under attack. The Palestinian Authority has announced it intends to sue the British government for issuing the Balfour declaration. That is of course absurd and has no chance of success. But attacking the validity of a Jewish homeland in Palestine has significant mainstream legal support. In 2004, the most prestigious judicial body in the

world, the International Court of Justice, issued its advisory opinion in the “Wall” case in which it concluded that “the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (including East Jerusalem) have been established in breach of international law.” Basically, what the court was saying was that Jews have no right to live in the old city of Jerusalem, Judea or Samaria. In fact, Jews who do so are somehow “illegal” – outside the pale of accepted norms.

This is supported by the UN General Assembly. Hundreds of Arab-sponsored resolutions have been issued by the UN General Assembly in recent decades condemning Israel’s occupation and claiming the Palestinian right to statehood in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria. So far the Security Council has refrained from interfering on the issue of Palestinian statehood. This may change. There is a real chance that President Obama will allow the Security Council to pass a resolution in the coming weeks effectively requiring the creation of a Jew-free State of Palestine in East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

To put this in perspective: the area that would become the state of Palestine covers the old city of Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria – precisely those parts of Palestine with which the Jewish people have the deepest and longest historical and religious connection. And together with Jordan, Jews would be excluded from living in over 75% of the territory of Palestine, that was intended by Balfour to become a Jewish homeland.

These are not abstract legal issues. For the Jewish people, their right to a safe homeland is a question of life and death. If, as the Palestinian leaders claim, and many states support them, a Palestinian state is imposed on the basis of the pre-1967 lines without adequate security measures in place, that will be the death knell for the Jewish state. This is no exaggeration. I invite you to read the Palestinian National

Charter – the constitution of the body with whom Israel is to negotiate – which advocates jihad to liberate all of Palestine from the Zionists. The Hamas Charter goes even further in justifying violence to destroy the Jewish state. If Hamas, H’zbollah or - heaven forbid – Islamic State gain power in the state of Palestine, we can be sure they will attack West Jerusalem and all other Jewish centers. The result will be full-blown conflict.

## The Legal Basis of Israel was Laid in Europe

The Balfour declaration was itself just a political declaration, but it opened the way to the creation of legal rights and obligations in the subsequent years. The San Remo resolution of 25th April 1920, the Charter of the League of Nations (in particular article 22), and the Mandate for Palestine, together conveyed legal rights on the Jewish people to reconstitute their homeland in Palestine. Arguably, these instruments still give the Jewish state of Israel a valid claim to sovereignty over the whole of the West Bank - including East Jerusalem.

The Principle Allied Powers (France, Britain, Italy and Japan, together with the US) met in San Remo, Italy in April 1920 as an ‘extension’ of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. Their aim was to consider the submissions that had been made by the Zionist and Arab leaders in Paris, to deliberate and to make decisions on the legal recognition of each claim. On 25th April, relying on Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, they decided to set up three mandates: one over Syria and Lebanon (later separated into two mandates), one over Mesopotamia (which later became Iraq), and one over Palestine.

The Mandate system was nothing short of revolutionary. Under influence of US President Woodrow Wilson, the Mandate system rejected colonialism and acknowledged the right of the indigenous

peoples to govern themselves. Article 22 of the Charter states that “the well-being and development of these peoples forms a sacred trust of civilization”. By creating the Mandate for Palestine, the Jewish people were recognized by the international community as one of those “peoples” whose well-being and development was a sacred trust of civilization.

The decision in San Remo was implemented in the Mandate for Palestine which stated that “recognition has thereby been given to the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and to the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country.”

- There are three important parts of this:
- a. The historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine. The history of the Jewish people in the land, as described in the Hebrew and Christian Bible, is accurate. The League of Nations acknowledged that the Jews did live as a nation in Judea and Samaria, there was a Temple in Jerusalem.
  - b. The right of the Jewish people to re-constitute their national home. The Jewish national home was not something new. It was the re-establishment of their home after 2000 years of forced exile.
  - c. The “ground” (or right) for recognizing Jewish self-determination was the growing anti-Semitism in Europe. After 2000 years of Christian anti-Semitism and persecutions, it was finally time to allow the Jews to live in safety in the land where their nation was born.

On this basis, the borders of the State of Israel on 14th May 1948 were the boundaries of the Mandate. This includes all of what is today called Occupied Territory.

In the next edition of Israel & Christians Today, I will explain how international law has been misused by the enemies of Israel since the late 1960’s.

# Fires Rage in Israel

Sourced from Breaking Israel News. Abridged by Publisher.

Fires, many of them arson, set by Palestinian terrorists, raged across Israel shutting down the Jerusalem Tel-Aviv Highway and burning over 32,000 acres of forest all across the country. The damage so far is approximately 30% worse than the Carmel Forest fire of 2010. The area affected includes the Judean Hills national park and the Kfir natural reserve.

The arsonists set fires in the town of Neve Ysuf in Samaria, Bet Meir and Nataf near Jerusalem, Dolev, Alfei Menashe and

Karnei Shomron. Fires were also started near Harashim in the Galilee, and many fires were reported in Churchill forest near Nazareth Illit.

60,000 Haifa residents have been evacuated, with city officials reporting that over 600 homes have been damaged in the fires, with over 400 of them said to be unlivable and 37 completely destroyed. Three people have been critically injured and nine others have been moderately injured in a fire in Ma’ale Adumim.

Ten Palestinians have been arrested on suspicion of arson. Army Radio reported that at least six of those arrested were Palestinians staying in Israel illegally.

Firefighting planes, trucks and firemen arrived in Israel from Cyprus, Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Turkey, Russia, Jordan, and Egypt. A converted firefighting Boeing 747, has arrived from Nevada. It is the largest firefighting aircraft in the world and is the only firefighting aircraft capable of operating at night.

*Israel was struck by these fires just before this edition of Israel & Christians Today went to print. The magnitude of the damage is not clear at the moment but it is evident that immediate action and assistance is needed.*

*Please help to relieve the suffering! Please pray for Israel and the Jewish people that they can overcome this terrible crisis. If you would like to help, make a donation in the coupon on page 12.*

*“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.” (Isaiah 40:1)*

<b>INTERNATIONAL EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:</b> Andrew Tucker Email: atucker@c4israel.org	<b>MANAGER NEW ZEALAND I&amp;CT:</b> Cathy Eksteen Email: info@c4israel.org.nz   Ph: +64 9 525 7564	<b>OFFICE ADMINISTRATION:</b> Lauris Lee Ph: +64 9 525 7564   Email: graemelee@c4israel.org.nz
<b>PUBLISHER:</b> Graeme Lee   Ph: +64 9 525 7564 Email: graemelee@c4israel.org.nz or admin@thecentre.net.nz	<b>DESIGN &amp; WEBSITE:</b> Cathy Coldicutt Blue Rock Design Ltd Email: bluerock@clear.net.nz   Ph: +64 9 263 4548	<b>GENERAL ENQUIRIES:</b> Christians For Israel PO Box 12006, Penrose, Auckland 1642. 297a Church St, Onehunga, Auckland 1061, New Zealand



# ECI Marks 99<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration

Sourced from European Coalition for Israel

**The nexus between the Balfour Declaration and the rebirth of the Jewish State of Israel cannot be denied.**

European Coalition for Israel has called upon the British Government to renew its commitment to stand with the Jewish people and the State of Israel, on the eve of the 99th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, which promised British support for a national home for the Jewish people in their ancestral homeland of Israel. The event, which was hosted by Lord Polak, took place only a few days after a tumultuous anti-Israeli rally in the House of Lords had demanded that Britain offer an official apology for the Balfour Declaration.

In his keynote address, renowned international legal scholar Dr Jacques P. Gauthier explained how those who want Britain to apologise for the Balfour Declaration are barking up the wrong tree.

“It was the adoption of the Balfour Declaration by the Principal Allied Powers on April 25, 1920 during the San Remo Conference which resulted in the granting of rights under international law to the Jewish People. These rights were then incorporated into the terms of the



Dr Jacques P. Gauthier

Mandate for Palestine which was approved by the Council of the League of Nations on July 24, 1922,” he explained.

“This courageous and noble act of the British Government, which was fully supported by the United States, France and Italy, greatly invigorated the Zionist movement to establish a Jewish National home in Palestine,” he said.

“The current campaign to delegitimise Israel is based on the false historical assumption that Jews are trespassers in Israel and do not belong in the region. The San Remo declaration, which incorporated the Balfour Declaration in

international law, states the opposite as it affirms the historical, cultural and spiritual connection between the Jewish people and the land of Israel which spans more than 3000 years,” he concluded.

In his closing remarks ECI Founding Director Tomas Sandell noted that, “The fierce opposition to the Balfour Declaration of 1917 reveals the true nature behind the anti-Balfour campaign, namely to deny the Jewish people their right to self determination and statehood, which was granted by the Principal Allied Powers in 1920 and confirmed both by the League of Nations in 1922 and the United Nations in its Charter of 1945.”

## Campaign of Balfour Declaration Announced

By Times of Israel Staff

**Worldwide activities and planned events were launched 2 November 2016 and will end 2 November 2017 - the 100-year mark since British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour announced his government’s intention to establish “a national home for the Jewish people” in the Land of Israel.**

Signed by Balfour in 1917, the declaration was seen as giving the Zionist movement official recognition and backing on the part of a major power, on the eve of the British conquest of the then-Ottoman territory of Palestine.

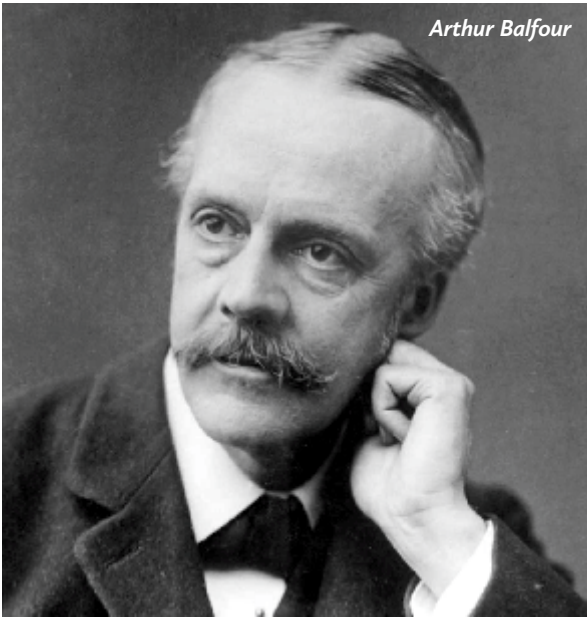
Calling the declaration a ‘colonialist project,’ Taysir Khalid, a member of the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), said the new Palestinian effort was intended ‘to remind the world and particularly Britain that they should face their historic responsibility and to atone for the big crime Britain had committed against the Palestinian people.’

In July the PA said it was preparing a lawsuit against the British government over the 1917 document that paved the way for the creation of the State of Israel.

In October at the UN, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attacked the PA over the plan, characterizing it as another example of Palestinians refusing to accept Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish state.

“That’s almost 100 years ago,” said Netanyahu. “Talk about being stuck in the past! The Palestinians might as well sue Iran for the Cyrus declarations, or file a class action suit against Abraham, for buying land in Hebron,” he added, referencing a Persian edict allowing Jews to return to Judea in 539 BCE and the Biblical patriarch.

Reiterating that he remains “committed to a vision of peace based on two states for two people,” Netanyahu said that, “One thing I would never negotiate is our right to the one, only Jewish state,” Netanyahu said.



Arthur Balfour

“This conflict is not about the settlements, it never was,” he said. “It’s always been about the existence of a Jewish state.

“If the Palestinians had said yes to a Jewish state in 1947 there would have been no war... and when they do finally say yes to a Jewish state we will be able to end this conflict once and for all,” Netanyahu said.

### Short News

#### Israel Appoints Ambassador to Turkey



Israel recently appointed Eitan Na’eh as the ambassador to Turkey, the first appointment since the reconciliation agreement was signed in June 2016. Eitan Na’eh, 53, has specialized in Turkish affairs during his career and served in Ankara in 1991 as Second and then First Secretary for political affairs. Currently Na’eh serves as deputy ambassador to Great Britain, and has also served as ambassador to Azerbaijan and as a policy adviser in the Prime Minister’s Office.

#### President-elect Trump Invites Netanyahu to US

PM Benjamin Netanyahu spoke to United States President-elect Donald Trump, congratulating him on his victory recently and told him that the United States has no better ally than Israel. The two leaders, who have known each other for years, had a warm and heartfelt conversation. They also discussed regional issues. Mr Trump invited Netanyahu to the United States at the first opportunity. Netanyahu told Mr Trump that both he and his wife Sara are looking forward to meeting him and his wife Melania.

#### 3,600 Year Old Canaanite Trove Found Near Judea

A treasure trove of ancient gold and silver artifacts dating back 3,600 years was recently discovered in Tel Gezer, an archaeological site on the Judean foothills. The archaeologists believe that the trove was an offering in a structure likely seeking to synthesize Mesopotamian-Canaanite gods and Egyptian culture. The structure complex itself is part of a Middle Canaanite period city that includes an impressive gate, a wall and the largest Canaanite water tower known to date.

#### Warren Buffett Raises \$60m for Israel Bonds



Recently the business magnate hosted 43 investors who each made a minimum \$1 million new investment in Israel bonds. Buffett invested \$5 million. “You can tell prospective investors that I would have taken a perpetual bond if you had offered one. I believe Israel is going to be around forever,” Buffett said. “If you are looking for brains, energy, and dynamism in the Middle East, Israel is the only place you need to go.”



# Palestinians Try To Claim Dead Sea Scrolls

By Times of Israel Staff

**In latest diplomatic tussle over archaeology, Palestinians reportedly raise demand at UNESCO panel; Israel slams fresh bid to deny Jewish ties to the land.**

Officials in Jerusalem are concerned that the Palestinians will make a formal approach to UNESCO demanding a return of the historic Dead Sea Scrolls, considered among Israel’s most important archaeological holdings.

During a meeting of the UN’s cultural agency, UNESCO officials told Eitan Klein, a deputy director of the Israel Antiquities Authority, that the Palestinians had informally raised the issue and were likely to make an official request too.

“This is another instance of provocation and the ‘hutzpah’ of the Palestinians trying to rewrite history and erase our connection to our land,” said Israel’s envoy to the UN culture body, Carmel Shama-Hacohen.

Israel has been at loggerheads with the United Nations Educational, Scientific

and Cultural Organization in recent weeks, after it passed a series of resolutions that characterized the holy sites on and around Jerusalem’s Temple Mount as exclusively Muslim.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently recalled the envoy for consultations in protest of the UNESCO resolutions.

The Palestinians were said to have raised the issue of the Dead Sea Scrolls at the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation (ICPRCP). Israel does not sit on this committee and only has observer status.

The ancient texts were found in 1947 in a series of caves at Qumran in the Judean Desert overlooking the Dead Sea by a Palestinian shepherd, an area of the West Bank that the Palestinians claim for a future state.

But Israel views the scrolls a national treasure and keeps its share of them in a secure, climate-controlled storeroom that mimics the dark, arid caves in which they were preserved for two millennia.



The scrolls, written mostly on animal skin parchment, are thought to have been written or collected by Jews who left Jerusalem for the desert in the time of the Second Temple, in the centuries before the Common Era. The manuscripts are the earliest copies of the Hebrew Bible ever found, and the oldest written evidence of the roots of Judaism and Christianity in the Holy Land.

“The fragments of the scrolls are proof and a weighty archaeological evidence of the historical connection of the Jewish People to the Land of Israel,” said Shama-Hacohen.

“In any case, just like with the Temple Mount and the Western Wall, the scrolls will stay in our hands and the Palestinians will be left with their dreams,” he said.

# Donald Trump Successful

By Graeme Lee



Donald Trump has won the presidency of USA. It is very unfortunate that anti-Trump rallies and the media in general, continue to oppose. Let us pray that the right people will be appointed to the many tasks ahead.

President-elect Donald Trump has claimed he will be the most “pro-Israel president ever”.

He delivered a message to Israel just two days after his victory, expressing his personal affection for the Jewish state. He hopes that he will be able to strengthen the eight years of tense relationships between Israel and the Obama administration. He signalled he may end

longstanding White House opposition to increased Israeli settlement in the Palestinian West Bank.

Mr Trump said he will recognise Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, and move the American embassy from Tel Aviv. Most people support such a move. However the Palestinians have given notice that they will cause trouble if it is shifted. They refer to a resolution of the United Nations Security Council on this matter.

He also said he would “tear up” the multi-lateral Iran deal, a move greatly welcomed by Israeli Government but extremely difficult to execute in reality.

# Evangelical Voters Showed Up Big Time for Trump

Sourced from Unity Coalition for Israel

Evangelical voters, particularly white evangelical voters, showed up big time to vote for Republican nominee Donald Trump. The statistics reveal that 81% went for Trump, while only 16% voted for Hillary Clinton. It was the highest evangelical turnout since 2004 and it was a 3% increase from those who voted for Mitt Romney in 2012.

Fox News analysts pointed out how evangelical groups led a massive ground game effort with Mike Pence to reach hundreds of thousands of churches. Additionally, activists sent out daily PSAs to over 1,000 radio stations.

The Faith and Freedom Coalition, which embarked on its own impressive ground game, noted in a press release that this election showed some “astonishing margins” for Trump among evangelicals in certain states. In Florida, Trump won evangelicals 85% to 13% for Clinton. In Georgia, evangelicals voted 88% for Trump to 6% for Clinton. In Wisconsin, it was 71% for Trump to Clinton’s 24%.

Some of these stats can also be thanks to Trump’s own personal efforts to reach evangelicals. He hosted over 1,000 evangelical leaders in New York City over

the summer at a meeting in Times Square, giving them the opportunity to voice their needs and concerns. He then gave a shoutout to the demographic in his Republican National Convention speech. He also established an evangelical advisory panel and has repeatedly pledged to overturn the Johnson Amendment, which would allow pastors and priests to speak freely about politics from the pulpit. The Christian group My Faith Votes took advantage of this Christian undercurrent by sending PSAs to over 110 million households.

Trump’s policies resulted in endorsements from prominent evangelical Christians like Liberty University President Jerry Falwell, Jr., which was met with much criticism by students and faculty, and members of Billy Graham’s family.

Trump also won the Catholic vote by a 7-point margin – the first time a Republican has captured the Catholic vote since 2004.

Among all voters who attend religious services, they chose Trump by a 56% to 40% margin.



# Strength and Unity Will Overcome Adversaries

By Isi Leibler, Editor, Word from Jerusalem. Abridged by Publisher.



**The abysmal failure of most governments to display even a pretense of morality when formulating resolutions relating to international affairs was again highlighted by the latest outrageous resolution relating to Jerusalem endorsed by UNESCO.**

The promotion of this travesty by the Arab states merely highlights their manifestly false narrative denying Jewish continuity with Jerusalem. But it was the purportedly civilised countries, including the majority of European countries, many of whom claim to be friends of Israel, whose abstentions provided an aura of legitimacy to this obscene resolution. Such shameful behavior only serves to re-emphasize that these countries are solely motivated by short-term realpolitik, which induces their groveling to the Muslims even if this requires forfeiting morality and blatantly endorsing historical lies. Every European country should have opposed this deplorable resolution.

The UNESCO abomination should be viewed as a component of the concerted global effort designed to exploit Israel’s “intransigency” in order to impose indefensible borders, a demand to which no Israeli government could accede.

More significantly, despite the recent consummation of the multibillion-dollar defense agreement, the U.S. administration uses any pretext to condemn Israel, employing unprecedentedly harsh language, which starkly contrasts with the deference it conveys to the Iranian terrorist state. It has protested far more vigorously against Israeli home construction in the “settlements” (including entirely Jewish neighborhoods of east Jerusalem) than the butchering of thousands in the regional civil conflicts.

Israel’s first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, expressed his contempt for the U.N. using the dismissive nonsense phrase “Um, shmum” (perhaps best translated “U.N., shmu-N.”). Netanyahu also noted that “the U.N., begun as a moral force, has become a moral farce.”

Nevertheless, we need to gird ourselves over the next few months for an intense hostile diplomatic campaign, including efforts to impose sanctions on us. In these circumstances, we should have confidence in our strength. As Ben-Gurion stated: “Our future does not depend on what the goyim say, but rather on what the Jews will do.” Israel has never been in as strong a position as it is today and even many of the countries that castigate us have developed important covert economic and defense relationships with us. In addition, despite the Obama antagonism and an emerging hostile Democratic sector, public opinion in the U.S. remains extremely positive toward Israel.

**>> But displaying our strength can only be effective if we demonstrate a united front on these issues.**

This is a time for our political representatives to recognize that we face a concerted global effort to undermine us and they must suspend the personal and parochial backbiting that typifies our dysfunctional political system.

But that requires facing difficult and unpalatable truths.

Indeed, despite his faults, history will record Netanyahu as being an outstanding diplomat who has successfully walked a tightrope with a hostile American administration — refusing to concede on critical security issues but retaining sufficient flexibility to avoid a total rift. He has covertly achieved an unprecedented level of cooperation with the moderate Sunni states, especially Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. He has quietly developed relations with a swathe of countries such as China, India and African and Latin American countries. He has created a unique and delicate relationship with Russia's President Vladimir Putin, an unprecedented state of affairs of which nobody could have anticipated. He is blessed with a golden tongue and has the gift of being able to articulate the case for Israel to the world that no other leader could match.

Whatever his political status may be a year hence, by any objective criteria, Netanyahu is the leader Israel needs during the coming months. And if our politicians have any semblance of commitment to the national interest, they should support his foreign policy, which the vast majority of Israelis would endorse.

That includes denying further unilateral territorial concessions, which would undermine our security, and no annexation of territories, which would oblige us to incorporate another 3 million or so Arabs, transforming us into another Lebanon. Despite the despicable behavior of Abbas and Fatah, we should support Netanyahu’s offer to negotiate without preconditions. But endorsing a Palestinian state under the current conditions would be suicidal. The mainstream opposition groups in office have a national obligation to publicly support such a policy.

Netanyahu is aware of the importance of unity under these current circumstances and has sought to widen his narrow coalition. But regrettably, most of Israel’s politicians ignore the national interest, minimize the crisis we face and continue indulging in their petty political intrigues. The Labor party is in shambles, with party leader Isaac Herzog unable to control the substantial number of delusional leftist MKs who have betrayed the tradition of Labor Zionism and adopted a post-Zionist approach — which would have horrified the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Yesh Atid leader Yair Lapid has emerged in recent months as the most impressive opposition leader. He has moved to the center and, aside from routine personal attacks on the prime minister, espouses policies that are basically indistinguishable from those of the government. He has aspirations to assume leadership of the nation and has gained considerable support from the electorate. But impressive interviews and speeches are a far cry from the heavy burden of decision-making and leadership.

If Lapid can rise above the political morass and emerge as the first opposition leader to support Netanyahu’s efforts, he would convey the message to the world that Israel is united in its determination to resist all efforts to undermine its security. This could have a major impact on the incoming U.S. president and may revert the diplomatic tide flowing against Israel. Should Lapid act as a statesman and promote the national interest, he would display qualities that would appeal to most Israelis who are nauseated by the shenanigans of their elected representatives and, in so doing, would also advance his own objective of becoming a future prime minister. Today Israel is stronger than ever and if we display unity, we can and will overcome all the challenges we face.

## Short News

### Oldest Man in the World Celebrates Bar Mitzvah



Usually a Jewish boy celebrates his bar mitzvah at the age of 13, showing from a religious point of view he has become a man. But Israel Kristal from Haifa took his official step into manhood 100 years late, at the age of 113. Kristal was born in 1903 in Poland and, according to the Guinness World Records, he is the oldest man in the world. When he was of bar mitzvah age, World War I broke out. He was the only family member to survive the Holocaust. He always dreamt of making up his bar mitzvah. This year he fulfilled that dream.

### Leonard Cohen: On the Frontline



The passing of Leonard Cohen was the source of great mourning in Israel. The Canadian Jewish legend always saw himself as a brother to all Israelis. During his 60-year music career, he often visited Israel and worked on a kibbutz in the 1970s. His most notable visit was during the Yom Kippur War in 1973. He put a tour on hold and rushed to the Sinai to be with Israel’s frontline troops. Cohen was so overwhelmed by the experience that he retreated to a rock at the corner of the encampment and penned the song “Lover Lover Lover.”

### All Power the the Women

The year 2015 saw a new record set. Never before had so many women been elected to Israel’s Knesset. Since then, even more have joined those 28 women who reached the peak of political power. Several Knesset seats were adjusted so that there are now 33 women in total in the Israeli parliament. Over one quarter of the 120 seats, spanning the entire political spectrum, are now women.

### Top French Chef Slams Anti-Israel BDS Movement

Stéphane Jégo, a well-known French chef who has recently been targeted by anti-Israel campaigners for his attendance this month at the culinary Round Tables Festival taking place in Tel Aviv, has hit back, saying his critics are dishonest and biased. The chef also retweeted a remark about BDS being illegal in France, where dozens of the activists have been convicted of incitement to discrimination due to their actions against Israel.



# Jerusalem and the Temple Mount

By Rev. Willem J. J. Glashouwer, President Christians for Israel International, Honorary President European Coalition for Israel. Abridged by Publisher



“...But you will cross the Jordan and settle in the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, and He will give you rest from all your enemies around you so that you live in safety. Then to the place the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for His name - there you shall bring everything I command you: your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and the special gifts, and all the choice possessions you have vowed to the Lord. And there rejoice before the Lord your God, you, your sons and daughters, your menservants and maidservants...” (*Deuteronomy 12:10-12*).

“...Sacrifice as the Passover to the Lord your God an animal from your flock or herd at the place the Lord will choose as a dwelling for his Name... You must not sacrifice the Passover in any town the Lord your God gives you except in the place He will choose as a dwelling for His Name. There you must sacrifice the Passover in the evening, when the sun goes down, on the anniversary of your departure from Egypt...” (*Deuteronomy 16:2, 5-6*).

Let us see how Israel found out where this special place of God would be. It was a long time before Israel took Jerusalem, and realized that this was the place where God would make His Name dwell. It was hundreds of years after entering the Promised Land that Israel found out where that place was that the Lord would choose. It all started with the promise the Lord made to Abraham, the promise about a land, a nation and a blessing. “...The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.’” (*Genesis 12:1-3*). This is the basic Covenant that God made with this forefather of Israel, and the cornerstone of all the following Covenants as well. In later meetings with Abraham, more details of this Covenant were revealed.

“...On that day the Lord made a Covenant with Abraham and said: ‘To your descendants I give this land, from the River of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates - the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites,

Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites’...” (*Genesis 15:18-21*).

Did the Lord Himself arrange that those peoples would willingly move on before Israel took possession of the Promised Land? On the contrary, Israel had to conquer the Promised Land. In order to achieve that objective Moses’ successor, Joshua, under whose leadership the people of Israel would enter the land after wandering in the desert for forty years, had to be strong and very courageous. Many times he and the people of Israel were told: “...I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses...” (*Joshua 1:3*). This promise meant that Joshua had to be courageous himself, to go in faith and put down the soles of his own feet. Faith is like that. If you have a vision, and you know in faith that you are called by God to do something, then go out in faith and obedience. And in the going, you will find that you will possess ‘the land’, and that God will fulfill His promise and make you realise your calling. But you have to do it yourself. It will not just be tossed into your lap like a birthday-present. But when the going gets tough, the tough get going!

After entering the Promised Land, and conquering enemy strongholds like Jericho and Ai, Joshua and the Israelites also planned to conquer Jerusalem. Then Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem, joined forces with five kings of the Amorites to fight the people of Gibeon, who had escaped conquest by Joshua through making a treaty with Israel (*Joshua 9*). The five kings tried to conquer Gibeon, but Joshua defeated them. The Lord fulfilled His promise to give the enemies into the hands of the Israelites.

Here we have a striking parallel with Israel’s current situation. Even now that there is the independent State of Israel, Jerusalem’s status is still hotly disputed. There are claims from the Palestinians, and from the Muslim Arab world for whom Jerusalem is their third holiest city. The Pope wants to ‘internationalise’ Jerusalem as a Holy City for Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Meanwhile, the United Nations do not accept Israel’s decision, following the Six-Day-War in 1967, to make Jerusalem the undivided capital of the independent Jewish State of Israel! So we find that almost seventy years have already elapsed between the ‘conquest’ of

the land and the definitive destiny of Jerusalem in the middle of Israel!

## God’s choice of Mount Zion

What do we know about the historical location of the Temple? It is certain that Solomon built this Temple in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah. *2 Chronicles 3:1* says: “...Then Solomon began to build the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David. It was on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, the place provided by David...”

So this was the mountain that Abraham had called “The Lord will provide, and to this day it is said, ‘On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided’...” (*Genesis 22:14*). Here the Lord provided Abraham with what he needed for body, soul and spirit, just as Melchizedek, the Priest-King of Salem, had provided Abraham with what he needed for body, soul and spirit. Mount Moriah is Mount Zion, the Temple Mount in the heart of Jerusalem. Grace characterises the site of the Temple. It was not a place where people provided for God’s needs, as so many temples of other gods appeared to do. It was the place where God provided for the needs of His people (*1 Kings 8:31-53*).

Solomon may have done the building, but David had made all the preparations, as he explained to Solomon: “...I have taken great pains to provide for the Temple of the Lord a hundred thousand talents of gold, a million talents of silver, quantities of bronze and iron too great to be weighed, and wood and stone. And you may add to them. ... Now begin the work, and the Lord be with you...” (*1 Chronicles 22:14-16*).

## David’s Choice

David had identified the site where the Temple would be built. God chose by choosing David, the man after his own heart, and David made God’s choice. The Lord inspired David’s heart, and thus David’s choice became God’s choice. In *Psalms 132*, David had said: “...I will allow no sleep to my eyes, no slumber to my eyelids; till I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob...” (*Psalms 132:4-5*). Jerusalem was to be the city where the Lord chose to establish His Name (*2 Chronicles 12:13*).

The mountain of His inheritance was the place that the Lord had chosen for His

dwelling place (*Exodus 15:17; 1 Kings 11:32, 11:36, 14:21*). “...For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling. ‘This is My resting place for ever and ever; here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it’...” (*Psalms 132:13-14*). *Psalms 132* clearly shows that the Lord, David and his descendants, Jerusalem, and the mountain (Zion/Moriah) are in an unbreakable relationship.

As we have seen, the Lord confirmed the choice of the site by allowing fire to descend from heaven: “...David built an altar to the Lord there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. He called on the Lord and the Lord answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering...” (*1 Chronicles 21:26*). Moses had said that God would choose His own place to dwell. Through His servant David, God had chosen the city of Jerusalem and Mount Zion. And after the prayer of dedication by King Solomon, the Lord confirmed this by fire from heaven. *2 Chronicles 7:1-3* says: “...When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the Glory of the Lord filled the Temple. And the priests could not enter the House of the Lord, because the Glory of the Lord had filled the Lord’s house. When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the Glory of the Lord on the Temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the Lord, saying: ‘For He is good, For His mercy endures forever’...”

## Rebuilding the Temple

Preparations for the rebuilding of the Temple today are in full swing in all kinds of Jewish organisations. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in the Qumran caves in 1952 was a copper scroll, which interpreters maintain lists 64 places where Temple treasures are hidden or buried. Rabbi Goren insists that Temple artefacts are hidden deep under the Temple Mount. These treasures may even include the Ark of the Covenant, lost since the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC. However, we must bear in mind our previous quote from *Jeremiah 3:16*: “...‘In those days, when numbers have increased in the land,’ declares the Lord, ‘men will no longer say, “The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord.” It will never enter their minds or be remembered; it will not be missed, nor will another one be made’...”





# UNESCO Denies Ties to Western Wall

By Aryeh Savir, World Israel News



**In yet another display of blatant anti-Semitism, UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee this time voted in favour of a resolution denying the millennia-old Jewish connection to Jerusalem including the Temple Mount and the Western Wall.**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has adopted another resolution denying the Jewish bond to Jerusalem, and specifically the Temple Mount and the Kotel, the Western Wall.

In a vote cast by secret ballot at the World Heritage Committee in Paris, ten countries voted in favour of the motion, while two countries voted against and eight abstained. Jamaica was absent from the 21-country body.

The conservation report on the status of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, proposed by Lebanon, Kuwait and Tunisia, accuses Israel of various violations and refers to the Temple Mount

only by its Muslim names, the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Al-Haram Al-Sharif, and defined it singularly as “a Muslim holy site of worship,” while failing to mention the importance of Jerusalem to the three monotheistic religions.

The resolution calls for a return to the ‘historic status quo’ on the Temple Mount, which it sees as favouring Muslims. “This is yet another absurd resolution against the State of Israel, the Jewish people and historical truth,” Israel’s ambassador to UNESCO Carmel Shama-Hacohen charged after the vote.

Displaying a trash basket with the word ‘history’ on it, Shama-Hacohen placed the resolution in the bin and said that this motion would eventually join other such anti-Israel resolutions adopted by the UN that were subsequently reversed or discarded.

Israel’s Ambassador to the UN Danny Danon condemned the resolution, pointing to the ludicrousness of the resolution. “The absurdity continues, and UNESCO has adopted yet another ridiculous decision that is completely disconnected from reality,” said Danon.

“UNESCO embarrassed itself by marching to the tune of the Palestinian pipers. All attempts to deny our heritage, distort history and disconnect the Jewish people from our capital and our homeland, are doomed to fail,” Danon added.

This vote follows a similar controversial one from last week which also denied that Jerusalem was Jewish or Christian, and referred to it only by its Islamic names, in blatant disregard of history, archaeology and plain common sense.

Prime Minister Netanyahu said recently of this vote that even “the theater of the absurd” at the UN must have limits, and noted that it was important that “countries which respected both themselves and the truth” not support it. He added that it was not a political question, but one of historical facts. This resolution elicited angry responses from Israel, several countries and even UNESCO’s Director-General Irina Bokova.

While the resolution itself has limited consequences, it is yet another battle in international arenas led by Palestinian Authority head Mahmoud Abbas and fought by the Palestinians against Israel’s existence.

This vote is the latest of several measures adopted at UNESCO over decades that Israel sees as evidence of ingrained anti-Israel bias within the UN, where Israel and its allies are far outnumbered by Arab and Muslim countries and their supporters.

## Short News

### Evangelical Church in Germany Makes Declaration of Support

In light of the Reformation Jubilee 2017, the synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany (the main protestant church in Germany) has spoken about the so-called mission amongst the Jews. In 2015, the synod distanced itself from Martin Luther’s negative stance towards the Jews. Now it reformulates its relation with Israel and Judaism as a dialog based on equality and mutual respect. Christians and Jews are both seen as witnesses to the faithfulness of God. “Christians are not called to show Israel the way to God and His salvation.” That is part of the mystery of God’s unique relationship with Israel.

### Jewish, Arab Fertility Rates in Israel On Par

Arab rate drops, Jewish rate rises, and women in both groups now give birth to an average of 3.13 children, highest in OECD. The fertility rates of Jewish and Arab women were identical for the first time in Israeli history in 2015, according to figures released by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics to mark International Children’s Day.



### Rabbis Urge Trump, Putin to Help Rebuild Temple



A group of leading Israeli rabbis see in US President-elect Donald Trump and Russia President Vladimir Putin echoes of King Cyrus of Persia, who 2,500 years ago assisted the Jewish people in rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. Prof. Rabbi Hillel Weiss, a spokesman for the Sanhedrin, says, “The political conditions today, in which the two most important national leaders in the world support the Jewish right to Jerusalem as their spiritual inheritance, is historically unprecedented.”

The Sanhedrin sent letters to both Trump and Putin urging them to work together to fulfill a project that will benefit all mankind - the rebuilding of the Holy Temple atop Jerusalem’s hotly contested Temple Mount. Both leaders have expressed support for Jewish claims to Jerusalem.

### Secret Israel-Jordanian-Syrian Border Talks Begin

Israel, Jordan and Syria have embarked on secret discussions for the stabilization of their borders in southern Syria by restoring the status quo ante that reigned on the Golan prior to the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011.



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# A Modest Attitude

By Rev. Oscar Lohuis, Baptist Minister, Speaker and Bible Teacher

**In many churches, there is a certain awareness that Israel is a special people and land. It is almost inevitable when you are familiar with the Bible!**

But the only conclusion drawn from this fact is, that we therefore should commit ourselves fully to bring the Gospel to the Jews. As if the Church, the Body of Christ, is the only channel through which God's blessing flows into the world.

But having a vision for Israel goes much further than only the conviction that Israel should come to faith in Jesus. In fact, by saying so, you are telling the Jews that they have to join us. And does that also not imply, that we, who believe in Jesus Christ, are the only people of God in this world? Isn't that actually the same as what replacement theology tells?

### The Root

In *Romans 11:17-18*, Paul says very specifically to gentiles who believe in Jesus, that they should not boast over Israel. "If ... you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you." As believers from the

gentiles, we are supported by a root. Life in the olive tree comes in essence from the root. Even we, as wild shoots that against nature are grafted in this olive tree, thank our lives to that root.

What is the root? That has everything to do with what Jesus said: "Salvation is from the Jews" (*John 4:22*). The root and the noble olive tree itself stand for the promises, the blessings and the life which God has bestowed upon Israel, and through Israel desires to bestow upon the whole world.

Salvation is in essence not from the worldwide Church, but from Israel. The worldwide Church is the receiver, and not the source. Israel has always been the channel par excellence through which this redemption has come into the world. Through Israel we have received the Law, the Gospel, the Bible, the promises, the life and our Redeemer.

### Metaphor

If you would consider the deeper meaning of the metaphor that the root supports us and not vice versa, then it would appear short-sighted to have an attitude like 'they had better come over to us, and that is their only possible redemption'. Rather, we would get a sense of the fact that it is a great privilege to us that we are allowed to

share in the many things they have received from the Lord God. After all, He is the God of Israel! We are grafted in their olive tree, we have received access to the new covenant that God has made with Israel. They don't come to us, but we to them.

Therefore, an attitude of modesty with respect to the Jewish people befits us. Besides, such an attitude is inevitable in light of the horrible history of the relation between Christians and Jews. If the church fathers, and the popes, and the reformers, and all sorts of other theologians and Christian leaders would have better studied *Romans 11*, the way of Israel and the Church would have been totally different.

### Promises for Israel

We should gain a deeper insight in the fact that God not only has a plan with the worldwide church, but also with Israel, and even with the nations. Salvation was from the Jews, salvation is from the Jews, and salvation will be from the Jews. There still remain many promises for the people of Israel that are to be fulfilled in order that the whole world will be blessed.



Some of these promises are realized before our eyes. Not the least this has all to do with the promises of the coming again of the Messiah and the coming of the Kingdom of God. The fulfilment of those promises will not take place without Israel.

In respect of the Biblical testimony and of history, it befits us first and foremost to learn to bless Israel. God says that Israel is the apple of His eye, that He protects, for it is His channel of blessing for the world.

Let us therefore support, help and pray for Israel, contrary to what the rest of the world is doing. In that way, we are better witnesses than when we would like to convert Israel to the Church.

# Fresh Perspectives

By Kees de Vreugd

**While the work of Christians for Israel International is expanding worldwide, the opposition to the message on Israel, and Christian support for Israel, seems also to become stronger and stronger.**

Even the legitimacy of the Jewish state is at stake in many churches. Four or five decades ago, many mainline churches would basically stand favorable with regard to the Jewish state – prompted by the horrors of the Holocaust and the miracle of the subsequent resurrection of the Jewish people.

On the other hand, they would frown at the absolute support for Israel by so-called 'fundamentalists', who based their support on certain apocalyptic expectations. In the theological debate, Christian support for Israel became associated with end-time speculations, conservative politics, and the neglect of international laws. This association was dubbed Christian Zionism and considered unhealthy and dangerous. Moreover, the rise of the BDS movement, that acts against alleged violations of International Law by Israel, has blurred a sound theological view on Israel.

People and the land of Israel are central to the story of the Bible. This might seem obvious. But Israel has not been central to

the church's telling of the story of salvation. In a narrative, that moves from creation and falls straight to Christ's death and resurrection, with Israel as an illustration of false paths, it is imaginable, that solidarity with the present Jewish people and the state of Israel can count on just a very small base.

In other words, continuous theological reflection on Israel is necessary, first of all within the movement of Christians who stand with Israel. It is necessary to formulate a Biblically and theologically coherent view on our support and our solidarity. If we want to reach out to other Christians and churches, we must know what we are talking about, and we must present a story that is not easily disregarded or put aside. We must deepen our insight in what the Bible says. We need an understanding of the history and the actuality.

To mention just a few subjects, theologically, many issues are at stake. What do we mean by Israel? How does the Bible speak of Israel and the nations? What is the relation between the Old and the New Testament? Does the New Testament speak about the People and the Land of Israel?

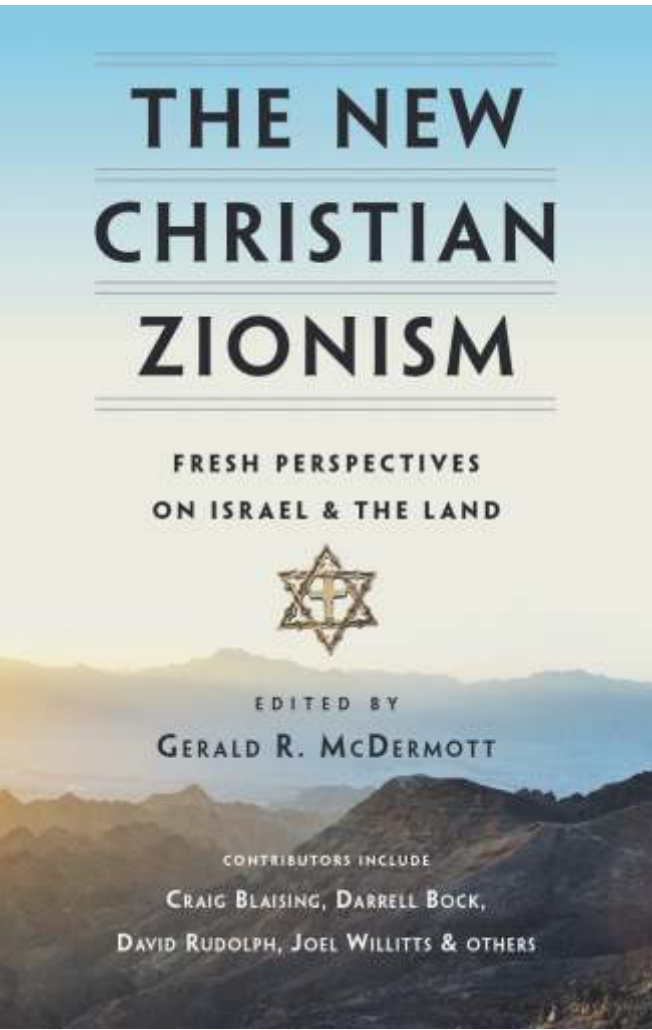
**>> Historically, it is not just about the history of the Jewish people through the ages. We**

**should also get an awareness of the history of a Christian theology that has put Israel aside, also known as supercessionism or replacement theology.**

These and other questions are addressed by Gerald R. McDermott in the book "The New Christian Zionism - Fresh Perspectives on Israel & the Land," (published 2016). In the introductory chapter, it presents a concise view on Israel, arguing that it is time for Christians, and not just Jews, to make a case for the Jewish people and their land. It succinctly refutes theological and legal-historical objections, and creates misunderstandings and false allegations.

In the following chapters, these points are developed into different directions, historical, Biblical, theological, and towards the future.

In upcoming issues of Israel and Christians Today, I would like to address



more specifically some of the topics raised in the book.

For now, I conclude by heartily recommending it as a needed contribution to the Christian debate about Israel.



# Netanyahu to Visit 3 Nations Never Before Toured

Sourced from 1israelnews.com



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and wife Sara

**Within the next three months, Netanyahu will travel to Australia, Singapore and Kazakhstan.**

He will also visit Azerbaijan, a strategic country on Iran's border. Like Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan is a majority Muslim country. Netanyahu visited there briefly in 1997 with the late Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev, the father of the current president. Israel purchases most of its oil from

Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. Starting in January, Kazakhstan will have a seat on the 15-member UN Security Council. Netanyahu's visit to Singapore will be a reciprocal visit to one that Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong made to Israel in April. The trip by an Israeli prime

minister to Australia has been discussed for months, in order to demonstrate to Canberra that it's strong, consistent support for Israel is not taken for granted.

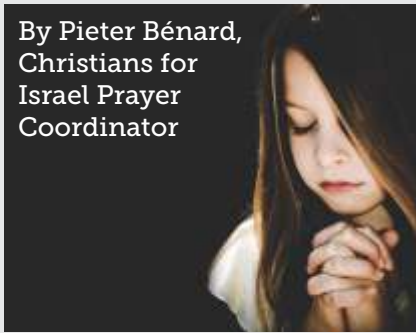
He is also travelling to Togo in the Spring for a summit there with West African leaders; President Reuven Rivlin will go to India after president Pranab Mukherjee visited Israel in October; and recently a government meeting was held in Jerusalem with the Polish government. All of this, Netanyahu said, attests to the

degree to which Israel's international relations are flourishing, despite losing two votes in UNESCO recently.

"Israel's international relations are spreading in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and many other places," Netanyahu said. "We realize that this development flows from Israel's technological and economic strength on one hand, and its security and intelligence capabilities on the other. This is another indication of the great changes in Israel's position in the world in direct relation to Israel's strength."

*Publisher's note: As PM Netanyahu will be visiting Australia, New Zealand's PM John Key has sent an official invitation for Netanyahu to also visit New Zealand. 2017 will be the 100th anniversary of the battle of Beersheba, it would be a great opportunity to commemorate this important ANZAC event. Therefore there is now a push for New Zealand citizens to write directly to the Israeli Prime Ministers office, requesting Netanyahu to visit.*

## Prayer Points



By Pieter Bénard, Christians for Israel Prayer Coordinator

- As intercessors we are confronted with alarming messages from around the world. From London (UK): 'Jews go back to Israel, you are not welcome here!' From Poland: soccer fans bring a banner that states that Jews should be burned. From Argentina: school children dress up like Nazi's. Please intercede against this hatred of Jews.
- Pray that Israel will retain the Biblical territories in Judea and Samaria. The UN, BDS-movement, the European Union, Islamic nations and fascist movements: they all want the Jews to leave the area.
- Pray that the churches will not be led by anti-Jewish and anti-Israel feelings, but that they will read the Bible and learn to understand the Biblical truth about Israel and the Jewish people.
- "Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever." (Psalm 125:1) A Psalm that makes the past visible in the present. Pray that the Jewish people will have confidence in their God. Thank God for His eternal faithfulness to His covenant with them.
- The city of Jerusalem is mentioned 811 times in the Bible. The name Zion is used 154 times. Other names for the city are used about 100 times. So in total the city of Jerusalem is mentioned over a thousand times! Pray that UNESCO will understand this, because under the pressure of the Islamic nations, they are denying every bond between the Jewish people and Jerusalem.
- Jews make Aliyah (return to Israel) from Ukraine, often from a situation of poverty and war. Or from the United States, a land of prosperity and peace. Whatever their background may be: God restores Israel. Give thanks!
- Please pray for the 9,000 Jews who are gathered in Gondor (Ethiopia) expecting their Aliyah. Ethiopia is full of unrest; the government and the population oppose each other and use violence. Pray for protection of this last group of Jews in Ethiopia.
- We live in the era, when "the times of the gentiles are being fulfilled" (Luke 21:24b). The restoration of Israel and Jerusalem under Jewish sovereignty are an indication of this. A reason for thanksgiving and for eager expectation of what more will happen.
- Two short verses from Psalms to recite every morning:
  - Psalm 25:22: Deliver Israel, O God, from all their troubles!
  - Psalm 129:5: May all who hate Zion be turned back in shame.

For more Prayer Points, please go to our website [www.c4israel.org.nz](http://www.c4israel.org.nz)

# The Special Work of Aleh



Doron Almog is a war hero. He fought for the liberation of hostages at Entebbe airport in Uganda, and became Major General. But when I met Doron Almog, all those achievements don't mean much to him. His son Eran, who passed away in 2007, is his main motivation. "I can be a great guy, a good General... But what kind of father have I been? That's what matters."

Doron and his wife's son, was born with a severe form of autism and a mental disability. "As parents, we searched for a good home where he could grow up but in a predominantly ultra-Orthodox Bnei Brak, there was only one institution with a very good reputation. However, it was only for children from Orthodox families and that didn't suit us.

In 1996, Aleh opened a branch in Gedera, welcoming non-Orthodox children. That was when I got involved with Aleh.

Aleh asked if I could use my extensive network to help raise money. In a short time, I raised enough for the construction of a new building in Gedera, one with high specifications and functionality. When the building was finished, the manager called me and said, "You should see the children, they love it, they are laughing!" It was evident how much the children loved their new surroundings. That gave me the idea for a whole village.

In Israel, amenities for children like Eran, are paid for from the age of three to twenty one. They are then expected to 'integrate' into society. But this is impossible for children like Eran, who has multiple severe disabilities. They usually end up in a nursing home, among the elderly, or in hospital, in a closed ward. But I envisioned something else - a town where people like Eran could live and enjoy life, with gardens, animals, music, sports, entertainment...

That town is Aleh Negev, where we do a reversed integration. Rather than integrate these helpless people into society, we bring society to them. In addition to the staff, we have a lot of volunteers and visitors who help, so the people get a lot of attention and love in the village."

This reversed integration pays off, and is evident from the enthusiasm to volunteer at Aleh Negev. "We have many volunteers from the Army," says Almog. "When former Chief of Staff Benny Gantz visited Aleh a while back, he asked every soldier who volunteered what they did and what they had learned. They said that working with the people of Aleh, gives you perspective on life. It is extremely rewarding, making you a better person.

**My son Eran was my biggest teacher. He taught me step by step to become a better person, prepared for a higher mission.**

He is always with me, in me. You can be a great guy, a good General, but what kind of father are you to me? How do you feel to have such a son? Are you ashamed of me? Or are you there for me? What kind of world are you willing to create for me and children like me? Aleh was really the work of Eran. I'm just the messenger."

*To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the reunification of the city of Jerusalem, Christians for Israel has decided to raise funds for a very special project – a brand new 2-story High Dependency Wing at Aleh in Jerusalem which will accommodate 24 patients. All donations are welcome (see coupon on page 12).*



# The Heart of Judaism

By Marjorie W. Eberlé-Gotlib. Abridged by Publisher

**In an article I wrote in 1966, entitled “To be or not to be”, I wrote that we were no longer “in”. Messianic Jews were no longer popular. For a long time we had been ‘the’ subject of dissertations, pocketbooks, lectures, seminars, themes for conferences. But by 1966 that had come to an end.**

Nevertheless, the basic reason that so many individuals and groups in the Christian world were interested in us remain. Messianic Jews were seen as being able to provide a sure word of hope in the midst of the growing confusion around us in this secularized age. Possibly, it was said, we could provide the stability that people are looking for. And for that reason, it seems that we are now “in” again.

Now, I can assure you that being “in” is a very relative thing. As soon as we say or do anything that resembles traditional Christianity, we are “out” again. For that they don’t need us. After all, words like ‘grace’ and ‘sin’ are no longer fashionable, and as soon as we use them we too are dismissed. No, we are expected to give birth to a new theology.

In *Matthew 5:17* Yeshua makes it clear that He did not come to abolish the Law or Prophets but to fulfill them! In chapter 5 there is a series of summaries of the Laws, each starting with: “You have heard ...”, followed by a law. In the next sentence, Yeshua makes that law even more onerous. For example, *verse 27*: “You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery, but I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” Or *verse 43*: “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” The last verse is: “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

When reading these last words of Yeshua literally, you could be filled with despair. At least, that is what happened to me. How can we reconcile the words ‘Good News’ or ‘gospel’ with the commandment to be as perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect? Just think about that - that is impossible!

At the same time, in *Matthew 11:30* Yeshua says that His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Is He so ignorant of our life right here on earth that He doesn’t understand we can’t be perfect like our heavenly Father is? Of course He understands, and of course we haven’t read this verse correctly if we think that He has imposed this impossible requirement on us. Yeshua started by saying (*in Matthew 5:17*) that we should not be mistaken. He says: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” He came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets for us!



Therefore, He warns us, not one iota or dot will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. That’s why nobody should be taught to discard even the smallest commandment. Yeshua says we have to fulfill all commandments in the Law - including the smallest - and He goes on to quote *Deuteronomy 27:26* where Moses says: “Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out.” So if we leave out even an iota or a dot of the law, we are cursed.

Can we really avoid God’s curse by carrying out the 613 rules made by Rabbi’s? I sin a lot every day. It’s a dilemma. Is this what is meant by His yoke being easy and His burden light?

Why does Yeshua impose such a heavy burden on us? He does that explicitly, in order to show us just how incapable we are of fulfilling the Law. He wants us to see that there is a deep chasm between us and God, a chasm that in the Bible is called sin. Despite our best intentions, we have a wrong relationship with God. That’s why God sent His Son who - by trusting in the promises of His Father - through faith won the victory on the cross.

Yeshua Himself had announced that the Law would be fulfilled before the Kingdom of Heaven could come. We can read about the moment when the Law was fulfilled by Yeshua in *John 19:30*, where His death is described and He said: “It is finished.” With that, he bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

At that moment, Yeshua fulfilled the Law, including the last iota and dot of even the smallest commandment.

**>> That’s why the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom - because no separation was necessary any more between the Most Holy Place and the believer.**

The separation was broken down by the faith of Yeshua.

Unfortunately, it seems this message of grace is not enough for many of us; 98%

of all believers are unable to live successfully by faith alone. Very early, people began to look for visible and concrete ways to praise God; faith by itself is so bare. That’s why, for example, the idea of “works of thankfulness” started to grow in certain Protestant circles in the last century; this is a so-called ‘quid pro quo’ approach, which already existed centuries before Paul wrote his letter to the Romans. This is in fact a form of trying to earn salvation by observing the law, which in some Christian circles is no different from the orthodox Jews’ observance of the 613 rabbinical laws. But this is the poison of God’s opponent. Now his power over death has been broken, he is trying to exercise power over our lives. Dressed like an angel of the light, he is trying to undermine God’s message of grace by getting us to comply with rules and regulations, and thus taking us even further from the heart of Judaism. Satan has succeeded in this strategy since the day Yeshua was crucified on Golgotha.

Whether we are Jews or non-Jews, since the time of Adam we have had a broken relationship with God. All the good works in the world will never heal that relationship. Let us therefore search for the heart of our existence as God meant it to be. This is the same for Jews as for Christians. Let us put aside all temptations, whether they are Jewish or non-Jewish attempts to fulfill the law, and let us concentrate on that one thing that alone is necessary to justify us in God’s eyes. For the Bible tells us that anyone who expects to be justified by works is cursed: For as many as try to live by the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, but can’t perform them.” (*Gal. 3:10*)

So it’s clear that no-one can be justified by keeping the law.

“The righteous man shall live by faith.” (*Gal. 3:11*). No laws made by Rabbis or churches can make us perfect, only the faith of Yeshua on the cross can make us perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

I will show you a part of Talmud to confirm this. It’s written by Rabbi Simlai

who lived in the second part of the third century AD. He was a famous expert of the Aggada of Talmud. It is included in the Mishna in the part of *Neziekien, chapter 5* titled *Makkot 23b*. Here we can read: “Rabbi Simlai, when preaching, said: Six hundred and thirteen precepts were communicated to Moses - three hundred and sixty five negative precepts, corresponding to the number of solar days [in the year], and two hundred and forty eight positive precepts, corresponding to the number of limbs in a person’s body.”

Isaiah reduces this to 6, as it is written in *Isaiah 33: 15, 1*: “He who walks righteously and speaks with sincerity, He who rejects unjust gain and shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe; He who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil; He will dwell on the heights, his refuge will be the impregnable rock; His bread will be given him, His water will be sure.”

Micah reduced it to 3: “He has told you, o man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Later, Habakkuk reduced it all to one word (*Hab. 2:4*): “Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.”

According to the Talmud, the Tenach and the Gospel, the heart of Judaism is this: “The righteous will live by faith”. On this one word hang all the Law and the prophets and indeed, Yeshua was right when He said: “My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

**>> May this Good News carry you on your path of life.**

*The author has been President of Hadderech foundation for almost 50 years. She has represented the organisation in The International Hebrew Christian Alliance where she was part of the Theological Committee. In addition, she has given many speeches in Holland, and was Hadderech’s representative at the ICI, the Inter-denominational Contact Group for Israel.*



# Letters of the Aleph-beit: Zayin ז

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

The seventh letter of the aleph-beit is zayin. It is the letter z, as in zero. The numerical value is seven. The word zayin means ‘weapon’. According to some, the present form of the letter resembles somewhat, a sword. The word is derived from a verb zan/zûn that means to sustain, to equip, and to feed. Therefore, the Talmud says that the zayin expresses that God sustains (Hebrew: zan) the one who observes His commandments.

Zayin can also mean ‘crown’. The little crowns with which traditionally some letters in the Torah scroll are ornamented (see the column on the letter gîmel), are called zayenîn (plural of zayin). Seven is a symbolical number in the Bible, a holy number. The seventh day of the week is the Sabbath, the day on which God rested from His creative work, and which He set apart from the other days of the week. The Sabbath is

the crown of the week. God, in His infinite being, does not need to rest, of course. But He institutes this day for man, so that man will not think that he keeps his fate in his own hands. Rather, he has to cease his works on the seventh day, to realize that everything comes from God. The seventh day directs us on the Creator of heaven and earth. The Sabbath is given to Israel as a covenant and a sign that God sanctifies Israel.

The seventh day, however, also points to the seventh millennium of creation, thousand years that, according to the Talmud, will be ‘a day of rest for ever’. It is the era of the Messiah. According to the Jewish calendar, we stand at the eve of that thousand years. The preparations for the Sabbath start already on Friday afternoon. So we should concern ourselves now to prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

## Sacred Stones

By Whitney Hopler, About Religion and Spirituality

### Crystal Gemstones Used for Miraculous Guidance and Symbolism

Crystal gemstones inspire many people with their beauty. But the power and symbolism of these sacred stones goes beyond simple inspiration. Since crystal stones store energy inside their molecules, some people use them as tools to better connect with spiritual energy (such as angels) while praying.

>> In the Book of Exodus, the Bible and Torah both describe how God himself instructed people to make a breastplate with twelve different gemstones for a high priest to use in prayer.

God gave Moses detailed instructions for how to build everything that the priest (Aaron) would use when approaching the physical manifestation of God’s glory on Earth - known as the Shekinah - to offer people’s prayers to God. This included details about how to build an elaborate tabernacle, as well as the priest’s clothing. The prophet Moses passed this information along to the Hebrew people, who put their individual skills to work carefully making the materials as their offerings to God.

### Gemstones for the Tabernacle and Priestly Garments

The Book of Exodus records that God instructed the people to use onyx stones inside the tabernacle and on a garment called an ephod (the vest that the priest would wear underneath the breastplate). Then it presents the details of the 12 stones for the famous breastplate.

While the list of stones isn't completely clear due to differences in translations over the years, a common modern translation reads: “They fashioned the breastplate - the work of a skilled craftsman. They made it like the ephod: of gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen. It was square - a span long and a span wide - and folded double. Then they mounted four rows of precious stones on it. The first row was

ruby, chrysolite and beryl; the second row was turquoise, sapphire and emerald; the third row was jacinth, agate and amethyst; the fourth row was topaz, onyx and jasper. They were mounted in gold filigree settings. There were twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes.” (Exodus 39:8-14).

### Spiritual Symbolism

The twelve stones symbolize God’s family and His leadership as a loving father, writes Steven Fuson in his book Temple Treasures: Explore the Tabernacle of Moses in the Light of the Son: “The number twelve often indicates governmental perfection, or complete divine governance. We can conclude that the breastplate of twelve stones symbolizes the complete family of God - a spiritual Israel of all who have been born from above.

>> The twelve names engraved upon the onyx stones were also engraved upon the stones of the breastplate.

Surely this portrays a spiritual burden upon both the shoulders and the heart - a sincere care and love for humanity. Consider that the number twelve points to the ultimate good news destined for all nations of mankind.”

### Used for Divine Guidance

God gave the gemstone breastplate to the high priest, Aaron, to help him spiritually discern answers to the people’s questions that he asked God while praying in the tabernacle. Exodus 28:30 mentions mystical objects called “Urim and Thummim” (which mean “lights and perfections”) that God instructed the Hebrew people to include in the breastplate: “Also put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastplate, so they may be over Aaron’s heart whenever he enters the presence of the Lord. Thus Aaron will always bear the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart before the Lord.”

In Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Commentary: Spreading the Light of



God’s Word Into Your Life, Earl Radmacher writes that the Urim and Thummim “were intended as a means of divine guidance for Israel. They involved gems or stones that were either attached to or carried inside the breastplate worn by the high priest when he consulted with God. For this reason, the breastplate is often called the breastplate of judgment or decision.

However, while we know that this decision-making system existed, no one knows for sure how it worked. Thus, there is a great deal of speculation about the how the Urim and Thummim delivered a verdict [including making various stones light up to represent answers to prayer].

However, it is easy to see that in the days before much of the scriptures were written or collected, there was a need for some kind of divine guidance. Today, of course, we have God’s complete written revelation, and therefore have no need of devices such as the Urim and Thummim.”

### Parallels to Gemstones in Heaven

Interestingly, the gemstones listed as part of the priest’s breastplate are similar to the twelve stones that the Bible describes in the Book of Revelation as comprising the twelve gates to the wall of the holy city that God will create at the end of the world, when God makes a “new heaven” and a “new earth.” And, because of the

translation challenges of precisely identifying the breastplate stones, the list of stones may be entirely the same.

Just like each stone in the breastplate is inscribed with the names of ancient Israel’s twelve tribes, the gates of the city walls are inscribed with those same names of Israel’s twelve tribes. Revelation chapter 21 describes an angel giving a tour of the city, and verse 12 says: “It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.”

The city wall’s twelve foundations “were decorated with every kind of precious stone,” verse 19 says, and those foundations were also inscribed with twelve names: the names of Jesus Christ’s twelve apostles. Verse 14 says, “The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

Verses 19 and 20 list the stones that make up the city’s wall: “The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.”



News from  
First Home in the Homeland

Turning Darkness into Light

By Orly Wolstein, First Home in the Homeland Project Manager



A new family from Kazakhstan – Yevgeniy and Irina Ratner with two daughters Mikaella (5) and Adriana (2) recently made Aliyah via First Home in the Homeland, a program sponsored by Christians for Israel. They now live in kibbutz Urim (South of Israel).

Irina tells their story: “We didn’t flee from Kazakhstan, we had very stable and wealthy life. Yevgeniy was a CEO of a big company, I could afford not to work. But our roots called us here. Some friends told us, “Don’t worry, if you don’t like it in Israel, you can always come back.” We couldn’t understand what they were talking about – because we went home. Some people are moving here and bring their countries with them, but we had Israel in our hearts for so many years that it felt like home immediately.”

Yevgeniy continues: “Growing up in Kazakhstan meant not knowing anything about my identity. When I first came to the synagogue in 2000, it was Purim celebration, I was so frightened and so amazed. Do I belong here? Do I need it? About 200 Jews, kids with kippah running around saying Hebrew prayers – I had never met so many

Jewish people at once before that day! At school I was the only Jewish boy in my class. When I was 10 years old I found the documents of my grandmother with the name on it – Elka. But I knew my granny as Emma and not Elka! Her father’s name, according to these documents, was Gershon – and not Grigoriy, as I used to think. And, moreover, - my father’s name was Haim and not Yephim! Jews were forced to change their names if they wanted to be accepted in the society.”

Irina continued: “In one of his speeches, the Rabbi from Lubavich said, that in order to return from darkness to the light, we should bring the darkness with us and turn it into light. This is why we return to God and to the Promised Land.”

Yevgeniy and Irina explain that they wanted their children to grow up in a Jewish surrounding, to feel connection to this country and to its people. “We were accepted very warmly by the members of the kibbutz. In the first evening everyone came to say “welcome”, on the second day we got an invitation to a birthday party. It was a real shock for us! People that hardly know us receive us as family! Our children feel this attitude and became more confident and happy. They enjoy every moment of our life in Urim, at home. As well as we do!”



To Israel After All

By Koen Carlier, Christians for Israel Aliyah Fieldworker

In the early spring of 2016, we visited Alexander and Antonia Jacobson. Their only son had made aliyah years ago. He is doing very well, and would now like his parents to come as well but they are doubtful because of their advanced age, bureaucracy and other obstacles.

Unfortunately, they had a severe traffic accident with their old car and Alexander was severely injured. As there is no such thing as health insurance in Ukraine, hospitalisation and operations are at one’s own expense. That was given priority over the bills for heating and electricity for months and the couple survived on food parcels. On the advice of their son, they started the aliyah process anyway. Christians for Israel was asked to pay their overdue accounts (debtors are not allowed to leave the country for good) and because of our faithful donors, all overdue accounts could be paid. The couple’s gratitude was beyond description. Everyone was hoping that Alexander and Antonia would be able to make aliyah before Pesach (Jewish Passover), but personally I was pessimistic about it.



dead and children and infants were buried alive. September 29, 2016 is indelibly printed in our memories!

Departure on Babi Yar Commemoration Day

We heard nothing for quite some time but then received word that they had obtained all official documents. We took them to the Israeli Embassy in Kiev for consultation. Everything was in perfect order and their final departure was planned for Wednesday evening September 28 together with another large group of olim (*people making aliyah*). Owing to certain circumstances, their flight left sixteen hours late. They finally left on Thursday afternoon September 29, exactly when the official commemoration took place at the enormous ravine of Babi Yar in Kiev. On September 29, 1941, on Yom Kippur, a massacre began that killed more than 100,000 Jews who were shot

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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 33 422 0405  
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  
khooken888@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, USA  
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, Vienna, Austria  
Tel: +43 1 9795109  
info@israelaktuell.at

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