

ISRAEL

& Christians Today

INTERNATIONAL

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CHRISTIANS FOR
ISRAEL
INTERNATIONAL

Understanding Israel and world events from a Biblical perspective

www.c4israel.org | info@c4israel.org



It seemed impossible, but 85-year-old Holocaust survivor Anatoly managed to flee the war together with his wife and daughter. It took three days and six buses to reach a safe place from where they travelled to Israel. For Anatoly this was the second time since 1941 that he had to flee. On the photo left of Anatoly Koen Carlier, on the right his daughter. | Photo: Christians for Israel

special emergency campaign Ukraine

In this special edition of *Israel & Christians Today* you will read more about this difficult and dangerous work in Ukraine. You will read how we may be a comfort and a blessing to the Jewish people, especially in this difficult time. Would you like to pray for our employees and for the Jewish communities in Ukraine and help us with your donation? To donate, complete the coupon on the back page.

Flight from the North

Many centuries ago, the prophet Zechariah foresaw that the Jewish people would have to flee.
Zechariah 2:6 says: "Come! come! Flee from the land of the north".
Nobody could have foreseen how fast it would go.

A few weeks ago, the Russian army invaded Ukraine with unprecedented violence. Millions of Ukrainians have fled, among them many thousands of Jews. Thanks to your support, we have already been able to help thousands of Jews on their way to Israel. Our team in Ukraine works day and night to evacuate Jews from the North to the Promised Land.

Bus Transportation

Our coordinator Koen Carlier in Ukraine: "We help in any way we can: with food, temporary emergency shelter, and evacuation trips. The last few weeks the airspace in Ukraine has been closed: that is why we have arranged bus transport. In Ukraine, we drive people to the border in our own buses. From the Moldovan

border, we have found a Christian bus company that is at our disposal day and night to evacuate people with dozens of buses and bring them to airports in Moldova and Romania. From there, there are daily flights to Israel."

Drivers Wanted

Koen: "We are now also trying to find bus drivers who dare to drive to the east of Ukraine, where the war is even more intense. Some cities are currently partially or completely inaccessible and cut off from gas, water and electricity. We feel a responsibility towards the Jewish communities we have supported for years. Especially in this difficult time, we do not want to let them down".
More about our emergency campaign on pages 6-7 and 16.



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The Moment to Act Fast



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

Colophon

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Mission

Our mission is to bring Biblical understanding in the Church and among the nations concerning God's purposes for Israel and to promote comfort of Israel through prayer and action.

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Whither the New Dis-order?

■ Andrew Tucker

International Editor | Christians for Israel

The tragedy unfolding every day in Ukraine is turning the global world order on its head. Since the fall of the iron curtain three decades ago, it has widely been assumed that global capitalism was the universally accepted currency and that even dictatorial regimes such as China, Iran and Russia could be kept within the fold of ‘civilised nations’ through the simple imperatives of supply and demand. That illusion itself has now been shattered. Autocratic regimes motivated by ideology will not be restrained by the liberal norms of the UN Charter and the global economic system that has arisen since WWII.

The existing institutions of governance are being tested. The helplessness of the United Nations could be seen in the pleas of the Secretary-General to Russia to stop the bombing – as if Putin cares for the UN or its related organs such as the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court. He doesn’t.

The world is fragmenting into several competing empires, each driven by ideology or religion. One of them is Western capitalism. Others include the regimes of China, Iran, Turkey and Russia, each with its own regional and global ambitions of control and neo-colonialism. These non-Western despots each make cynical use of global institutions as and when it suits their hegemonic aims.

As so often has been the case in history, Israel and the Jewish people are placed precariously at the crossroads. Israel needs Russia in order to counter threats in Syria. We have thus seen Israel play a cautious role over the last weeks. Israeli Prime Minister Bennett even went to the Kremlin for discussions with Putin, at the request of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in an attempt to mediate the conflict.

It is impossible to predict how this will all play out. It is clear Putin will not give up his aims easily. What will convince Russia to stop with its violence? Will it continue beyond Ukraine to threaten or attack other neighbouring states such as the Baltic States or Finland? How will Russia continue its operations in Syria?



| Photo: Shutterstock

Putin’s thinly-veiled threats to use nuclear weapons have instilled fear in Western leaders, who are afraid to take any military steps that may provoke Putin to press the button.

Instead, they have resorted to the most extensive regime of sanctions in history that threatens to bring down the Russian economy.

This sanctions regime is a high-risk strategy. It could lead to a humanitarian crisis in Russia, which would ignite further tensions, as was the case in Germany after WWI. The sanctions regime is a new, undemocratic kind of global warfare, fracturing the lines between governments and the private sector undermining ownership structures.

Increasingly, some are seeking to compare Israel with Russia. Western and Islamic nations, as well as China and others, are united in their belief that Israel’s ‘occupation’ of Palestinian territory, and Jewish ‘settlements’ on those territories, infringe the territorial rights of the Palestinians and constitute flagrant violations of international law. Will Israel be next in line for such sanctions?

Events in Ukraine are just part of a broader picture. In Vienna, the USA and EU have indicated they are prepared to lift the sanctions on Iran, which will receive

an initial cash injection of \$90 billion and an additional \$50 million annually through oil and gas revenues. A deal with Iran would enable Iran to produce nuclear warheads within years. Several top US diplomats have resigned in protest. Russia is playing a key role in these negotiations.

All-in-all, it seems we are witnessing signs of the times preceding the Lord’s return –

On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. (Luke 21)

Whatever happens, we can be sure the Lord will bring to fruition the events that are necessary for Israel and the gentile nations to acknowledge His sovereignty: “And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord.” (Ezekiel 38).

Let us pray with increasing fervour that the Lord will protect the people of Ukraine and Russia, that President Putin will be convinced (or forced) to terminate the aggression, and that peace will be restored.

Above all, let us pray for the speedy coming of the Messiah to introduce His kingdom of peace and righteousness.

Prayer Points

By C4I Prayer Team

Israel

- Pray that all Ukrainians who recently moved to Israel will soon feel at home in Israel. Pray for comfort and strength for these people, after all they went through during the war.
- Pray for Israel’s security. Pray that attacks in the streets with knives or stones will be prevented, and pray that peace and security will prevail at Israel’s borders.
- “God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you’” (Exodus 3:14). From April 15 to 23, the Jewish people celebrate Passover. Give thanks that God is present. For He is there when people go through deep valleys and keeps them. Pray for peaceful holidays for Israel and pray they experience God’s presence.

Israel & the Nations

- “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be

given to you” (James 1:5). Since Israel has good relations with both Ukraine and Russia, Israel is seen as one of the parties that can mediate between the two countries. Pray for wisdom for the Israeli government in this matter.

- Pray for Israel using *Psalms 33:10-11*, “The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations.”

Christians for Israel

- Pray for the work of Aliyah worker Koen Carlier and his team in Ukraine. Now that war has broken out, many Jews want to leave for Israel, and Koen’s team is working around the clock. Give thanks for all the work the team has been able to do and how they experience God’s provision. Pray for the protection of the team, blessing on the work and pray that God will provide open doors for Jews to return to Israel.

For daily Prayer Points, go to our website www.c4israel.org

Jewish Identity Grew in Eastern Europe after WWII and the Holocaust



Meeting in the oldest clay synagogue in Europe in Bershad (Ukraine). | Photo: Anemone Rüger

■ Pamela Bruan Cohen

Ukrainian complicity in the Holocaust cannot be denied or absolved. That history cannot be alleviated. Unquestionably, Jewish-Ukrainian history has been fraught with centuries of pogroms and hatred, but the events of the last 30 years have left their mark on the fate of Ukraine and its Jews. In those decades, Jewish emigration and human-rights activists helped alter the face of Ukraine.

Under the USSR's repressive regime, dissidents and Jewish refuseniks—those who were denied exit visas—vigorously campaigned for the basic rights denied by the Kremlin and its Soviet Ukrainian apparatus. These activists demanded freedom of speech, their right to demonstrate, move across borders, and observe the religion and cultures of minorities. For their activity, many were condemned to prison and hard labour in Siberia. Some, like refusenik Vladimir Kislik, the Kiev physicist, were forcibly disposed of in psychiatric institutions, where they were given psychotropic drugs to suppress their 'psychotic dissidence.'

Dr Semyon Gluzman, a Kiev psychiatrist, was sentenced to seven years in a hard labour camp and three in exile for protesting Soviet abuse of psychiatry against dissidents. In Kharkov, Alexander Paritsky was a successful scientist until he

was fired for his visa application. During the 11 years he fought to live in Israel, his attempts to create a Jewish 'university' for refusenik kids, who had been denied a higher education, resulted in a three-year labour-camp sentence. Decades later, his efforts, however, may have found fruition in the officially recognised Jewish day school that was recently bombed in his city of Kharkov.

The relentless demand for human-rights guarantees by Jewish refuseniks and their grassroots partners in the West beginning in 1970, brought about the first cracks in the Iron Curtain. Twenty years later, the Soviet empire dissolved, bringing independence to Ukraine and other former Soviet republics.

In 1992, at the request of Ukrainian refuseniks and dissidents, the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews—the largest grassroots organisation working on behalf of Jewish emigration—launched the Kiev-based Ukrainian-American Bureau of Human Rights. Headed by the former prisoner-of-conscience, Dr Semyon Gluzman, the bureau monitored human-rights abuses. With the support of Ukraine's democrats, it urged the newly independent government to denounce Jew-hatred and protect their Jewish minority.

At the end of the long struggle, the Soviet borders had collapsed, allowing two million Jews to emigrate. However, after

the Kremlin's dissolution, thousands of Jews remained in Ukraine, some too elderly or ill to move, some Holocaust survivors. It's impossible to know the number of Jews who had tried to shelter themselves from Soviet anti-Semitism by hiding their identity, crawling out from beneath the rocks of the collapsed system, seeking their lost Jewish identity.

And in the post-Soviet era, a new brand of activists assumed leadership roles to create safety nets for those Jews who remained. In partnership, the Union of Councils created 'Yad L'Yad' to jump-start local communal projects. Elimelech Shoikhet, a Lvov refusenik when I met him in 1989, remained to establish a 'Meals-on-Wheels' for the impoverished and elderly and to battle the new government for Jewish property that had been appropriated under communism. Now he's providing housing, provisions and support to Jewish refugees. Religious organisations helped thousands of Jews without communal or family support. Yad Yisrael established an orphanage and an educational and communal complex in Kiev. Chabad has built shuls and schools. Limmud brought in educators. Israelis pursued commerce.

A tolerant new Ukraine has had a unique climate that has allowed thousands of potentially assimilating Jews to develop their identity as Jews. The process that began with Jewish refusenik activists who had the courage and moral vision to resist is now under attack; Israel is evacuating thousands of remaining Ukrainian Jews, and the Jewish people everywhere are united in their efforts to bring them safely to communities awaiting them.

Volodymyr Zelensky is the legacy of the decades-old Jewish movement that impacted his country. Ukraine's president stands as a proud Jew who has exerted moral courage and dignity that has captured the attention and respect of the free world. Tragically, the new Ukraine born out of a struggle for human rights and dignity is gravely at risk.

Pamela Braun Cohen is the former president of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews and the author of 'Hidden Heroes: One Woman's Story of Resistance and Rescue in the Soviet Union.'



Short News

Girl from Myanmar Undergoes Cardiac Surgery in Israel



Hannah, an eight-year-old girl from Myanmar, was successfully brought to Israel and underwent a life-saving heart operation in the first week of March through the Save a Child's Heart organisation. Hannah was born with a life-threatening heart syndrome. Three years ago, at the age of five, she underwent cardiac surgery in Wolfson Medical Center that required her to return for another operation. However, this was made difficult when a civil war broke out in Myanmar, and flights in and out of the country were stopped. Save a Child's Heart conducted an operation to extract Hannah from Myanmar and bring her to Israel. Funding for the flight and the operation came from Morris Kahn, who has taken a large part in the organisation since it was founded.

Israel's Galilee Chamber Orchestra has US Debut at Carnegie Hall



The Galilee Chamber Orchestra - Israel's first professional orchestra consisting of Arab and Jewish musicians - made its US debut at New York's Carnegie Hall on 18 March. The occasion was the annual Isaac Stern Memorial Concert, which commemorates the life and work of the late Jewish-American violinist and educator, who also had strong ties to Israel, including the founding of the Jerusalem Music Center in 1973.

New Species of Spider Discovered in Southern Israel

A new species of desert cave spider, unknown to the scientific community, was discovered by researchers at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Ben Gurion University during five years of monitoring the effects of oil spills in the southern part of the country. The velvety black spider from the Crevice Weaver family was named Sahastata Aravaensis. It is considered an indicator of clean soil.

Amnesty's False 'Apartheid' Allegations

■ Andrew Tucker

Director | The Hague Initiative for International Cooperation ([thinc.](http://thinc.info))

In a 280-page report published on 1 February 2022, Amnesty International alleges that the Jewish State of Israel is based on the systematic and brutal oppression by Jews of non-Jews. Israel deliberately implements 'an overall system of oppression and domination' that 'fragments' and 'segregates' Palestinians (i.e. non-Jews) – both within Israel and within the 'Occupied Palestinian Territories'.

"Since its establishment in 1948, Israel has pursued a policy of establishing and maintaining a Jewish demographic hegemony and maximising its control over land to benefit Jewish Israelis while restricting the rights of Palestinians and preventing Palestinian refugees from returning to their homes. In 1967, Israel extended this policy to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which it has occupied ever since."

Amnesty recommends that countries boycott products from 'settlements', cease supply of arms to Israel, prosecute Israeli leaders and publicly shame Israel.

According to Amnesty, Israel must:

- remove all settlements and 'relocate Israelis outside the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT)'
- remove the blockade of Gaza
- dismantle the security barrier
- recognise the right of Palestinian refugees and their descendants to return to homes where they or their families once lived in Israel or the OPT and receive restitution and compensation and other effective remedies for the loss of their land and property.

If Israel were to implement Amnesty's recommendations, it would effectively be committing suicide. The fact that Amnesty does not realise how existentially dangerous these recommendations are casts doubt on the sincerity – and credibility – of the authors.

Tellingly, many Israeli Arabs have rejected the findings of this report. Mohammad Kabiya tweeted: "Racist @amnesty in their fake report are calling me, a proud Israeli-Arab and Israeli-Muslim, a 'Palestinian living in Israel.' How dare you define my identity for me."

It is incredible that Amnesty devotes enormous resources to investigating Israel for war crimes – and not make the same investigation in countries like China or Syria. Amnesty's leaders have been unable to explain this choice, except to say that they are responding to a "growing debate by Israeli and Palestinian organisations that have a history of doing work on human rights for decades." The very existence of this debate in Israel is evidence that Israel is NOT an apartheid State - but this fact seems to be lost on Amnesty.

The Amnesty report follows very similar reports published by Israeli human rights organisations like B'tselem and the Human Rights Watch report in 2020. The publication of these reports is part of an orchestrated campaign intended to influence the UN Human Rights Council and the International Criminal Court to prosecute Israel and its leaders. No other UN country – not even Myanmar, China, Syria, North Korea or Saudi Arabia – is subjected to such a flagrant assault within the UN institutions.

'Palestinians'

The report clusters all non-Jews within the term 'Palestinians' and assumes they are a separate 'race'. This is, of course, not true – the non-Jewish population in Israel and the disputed territories comprises a wide mix of different ethnic and religious groups, including Bedouins, Druze, and Aramean Christians – many of whom who are proud Israelis and do not consider themselves to be 'Palestinians'.

The report ignores contrary evidence, such as a 2016 poll carried out by the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research showing that '68% of the Palestinians (73% in the West Bank and 59% in the Gaza Strip) describe Israeli democracy as good or very good.'



| Photo: Shutterstock

Factual Inaccuracies

The Amnesty report contains many falsehoods and distortions of the truth. Two examples are the falsified claims of discrimination against Arab property owners in East Jerusalem and false claims about Israel's refusal to allow Palestinians to exercise their 'right of return'.

The Legal Definition of 'Apartheid'

Amnesty bases its analysis on an invented definition of 'apartheid'. In fact, there is no universally accepted legal definition of apartheid, although there does appear to be a consensus that the South African reality between 1948 and 1994 informs our understanding of what constitutes apartheid. The essence of the South African regime was the physical and legal separation of whites from non-whites and the domination of the latter by the former.

The Rome Statute (1998) defines apartheid in Article 7(2)(h) as a crime against humanity where there are inhumane acts of a character similar to other enumerated crimes against humanity (e.g. murder, extermination, torture, rape and forced transfer) committed in the context of an institutionalised regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups, committed with the intention of maintaining that regime and as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack. Each element of the crime ('inhumane acts,' 'institutionalised regime,' 'oppression,' 'domination,' 'racial group,' etc.) must be carefully defined.

Amnesty applies a much lower threshold. It equates the concept of 'domination' with that of 'control', - which means that any place there is a power differential between countries and/or the existence of minority groups and any situation of belligerent occupation would be the equivalent of apartheid. That is an absurd outcome.

One-sided and Ahistorical Narrative

Amnesty totally ignores the fact that the State of Israel emerged in 1948 precisely as a result of the internationally-recognised right of the Jewish people to a homeland and their unique historical connection with the land. By definition, the State of Israel reflects its Jewish character. That is perfectly legitimate, and Amnesty's denial of the right of the Jewish people to nationhood is a cynical inversion of the concept of 'apartheid'.

Amnesty fails to even hint at the long history of complex and intensive Jewish/Palestinian/Israeli/Arab negotiations and even cooperation over more than a century – both prior to the creation of the State of Israel and since. It also gives no insight into the dilemmas faced by the Jewish State in creating a democratic society in a region that is intrinsically hostile to liberal democratic values and human rights.

Perhaps most problematic is that it ignores the long history of violent hatred of Jews within Palestinian and

Arab society and the fact that Palestinians themselves are largely responsible for their own destiny. For 100 years, the Palestinian leadership has played a decisive role, shaping and determining their people's future by consistently rejecting the existence of the Jewish nation in Palestine – as inter alia demonstrated by their categorical rejection of every peace proposal with Israel - and instigating violence against Jews.

Of course, none of these facts would justify an arbitrary system of 'oppression' or 'domination'. But they explain why Israel protects the position of the Jewish people and why some degree of separation between Israelis and non-Israelis is necessary.

Israel is not perfect, but this report will do nothing to amend those imperfections. Amnesty International's inflammatory and imbalanced report will only serve to foster hatred, mistrust and enmity.

The Hague Initiative for International Cooperation is a European-based global initiative promoting the fair and balanced application of international law to the Israel-Palestinian conflict and the Middle East more generally. www.thinc.info

Palestinian National Council Renounces All Agreements with Israel, including Oslo

(7 March 2022 | JNS) Despite the announcement, nothing has seemingly changed on the ground; the PLO and the Palestinian Authority have not said they were stopping security coordination.

Palestinian National Council deputy chairman Ali Faisal said there is a binding Palestinian decision to "renounce ... all agreements with Israel."

According to a report by Palestinian Media Watch, Faisal said that from the Palestinian leadership's point of view, the Palestinians "have entered a path of resistance in all its forms," indicating that this includes violence as well.

"The decision of the (Palestinian) National Council was a recommendation to the (Palestinian Liberation Organisation) Central Council to renounce all the commitments of the Oslo Accords and stop the security coordination (with Israel)," stated Faisal.

"The Central Council decided to renounce the commitments of all the agreements with the State of Israel, whether by the PLO or the Palestinian Authority," he added.

The PNC is the top authority in the PLO, and it formulates policies and programmes. According to PMW, despite the announcement, nothing has seemingly changed on the ground; the PLO and the PA have not said they were stopping security coordination.

Putin’s Troops Ravage Ukraine



12 February 2022: March of Ukrainian protesters against Russian aggression in Kyiv, Ukraine. | Photo: Shutterstock

Clifford D May

Putin’s troops ravage Ukraine while his envoy steers Team Biden’s talks with Iran.

The Biden administration’s behaviour has been shameful and damaging: It is proving the United States to be harmless as an enemy and treacherous as a friend.

We all have our patterns of behaviour.

Start with Vladimir Putin, who has assassinated dissidents over the more than two decades he’s ruled Russia, slaughtered Chechens, detached two provinces from neighbouring Georgia, and seized Crimea from Ukraine while fueling conflict in the east of that country. He’s also helped the Assad regime kill Syrians—half a million and counting. On 24 February, Putin again invaded Ukraine. He has been using artillery and unguided bombs to murder men, women and children and reduce cities to rubble. His apparent goal is to subjugate Ukraine, to strip it of its independence, sovereignty and freedom.

Over to President Biden, who, during his first year in the White House, capitulated on the battlefield in Afghanistan to the Taliban, a terrorist organisation joined at the hip to Al Qaeda. He left behind more weapons than a Ukrainian general could dream of. He then declared that mission a success.

Biden now appears eager to capitulate at the negotiating table in Vienna to the Islamic Republic of Iran, a regime that funds and instructs Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and the Houthis movement in Yemen, whose catchy slogan is “Allah is Greater, Death to America, Death to Israel, Curse on the Jews, Victory to Islam.” He’ll then declare that mission a success.

While Biden’s stated intention is to isolate Putin, his diplomats in Vienna continue to work hand-in-glove with Mikhail Ulyanov, Putin’s envoy.

That’s because the theocratic regime’s negotiators—as a matter of revolutionary Islamic principle—have refused to sit at the same table with Americans. The Biden team has meekly accepted this humiliation.

Ulyanov is reportedly not just a go-between but ‘the dominant player,’

proposing compromises to the Americans (who are always flexible) and to the Iranians (who never are).

As for Ulyanov’s interests, do you suppose they are peace, international security, nuclear nonproliferation and a ‘win-win’ outcome? Or does he want to please Putin by helping Iran’s rulers further humble and diminish the United States?

On Saturday, Moscow demanded a written guarantee that any sanctions imposed because of its war on Ukraine will not ‘in any way damage’ its commercial and military relationship with the Islamic Republic. The Biden administration has rejected that demand—for now.

Perhaps you think, as does the US State Department, that “Russia shares a common interest in ensuring Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.” If so, think again.

Putin calculates that any nuclear-tipped ICBMs produced by Iran’s rulers will be pointed at America and used to keep America at bay while their proxies conquer and/or destroy more of the Middle East than they already have.

When Biden’s ‘indirect’ talks with the clerical regime began, he vowed to produce a ‘longer and stronger’ variant of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that former president Barack Obama concluded in 2015 and from which former president Donald Trump exited in 2018. It’s now clear that a shorter and weaker variant—more economic relief in exchange for fewer verifiable restrictions—has been taking shape.

It’s not only ‘sources’ who say so. It’s also Ulyanov. “Realistically speaking, Iran got more than frankly, I expected, others expected,” he told one reporter. “This is a matter of fact.”

He added: The “Iranian clerics are fighting for Iranian nuclear—national interests like lions. They fight for every comma, every word, and as a rule, quite successfully.”

Biden’s deal will provide Iran’s rulers with billions of dollars that they can spend on arms and even nuclear power plants (for peaceful purposes only!) from Russia and use to fund terrorists and threaten their American-allied neighbours.

Biden won’t submit his deal to Congress

as a treaty (as he clearly should), so it won’t bind the next administration. But Russian and Iranian negotiators are reportedly looking for a workaround.

For example, they might persuade Biden to agree that Iran’s enriched uranium be stored in Russia, with the condition that it will be returned to Iran if, at any time, Putin and Iran’s rulers jointly declare that the Americans are violating the agreement.

Or they might insist on an ‘inherent guarantee’ that Iran’s rulers get to keep their advanced centrifuges on standby with permission to continue enriching at 60% if they decide the US has transgressed.

By contrast, noncompliance and even out-and-out cheating by the theocratic regime will be ignored or forgiven. We know that based on our experience with the JCPOA.

Relatedly, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Rafael Grossi, said on Saturday that a new deal cannot be concluded unless Tehran first settles outstanding issues relating to nuclear material found at former Iranian nuclear sites that the regime failed to declare.

That will require months. Can a deal be announced before these issues are settled?

Logically no, but, in the current era, logic is not a major component in the patterns of behaviour driving American foreign policy.

Was it logical to respond to Putin’s many crimes over the years with a salad of carrots and not enough sticks to make a bonfire?

Was it logical to invite him to partner with the United States in negotiations with Iran’s rulers while excluding the American allies most threatened by Iran’s rulers?

Is it logical to give the theocrats in Tehran the means to do in the Middle East what Putin is doing in eastern Europe?

The Biden administration—building on the record of too many of its predecessors—has been establishing a shameful and damaging pattern of behaviour: It is proving to be harmless as an enemy and treacherous as a friend.

Clifford D. May is founder and president of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) and a columnist for ‘The Washington Times.’

Short News

Israel Represented at Paralympic Winter Games for First Time



After the Winter Olympics, the Paralympic Winter Games started in Beijing. For the first time, an Israeli athlete qualified for the Paralympic Winter Games. The 20-year-old Sheina Vaspi from the village of Yesud Hama’ala represented her homeland in various skiing competitions in China. She had lost her left leg in a car accident as a baby and raced down the slopes on one leg. Her poles do not have a tip at the end but are equipped with small ‘skis’ that improve her balance and control.

Hamas: A Terror Group

Australia has put Hamas on the list of terror organisations. Until now only the military branch was on the list. Australia finds Hamas’ ideas very disturbing and believes that there is no place for them in the country.

Sea of Galilee Nearly Full



After times of concern about the water level of the Lake of Galilee (also called Lake Tiberias or Kinnereth) that was in danger of falling too low, the maximum has now almost been reached. At the beginning of March there was still one metre to go to the upper limit. And with the expected rain and snow on Mount Hermon the forecast on the short term is favourable. The Sea of Galilee is Israel’s main drinking water supply. Photo: Flashgo

No ‘Apartheid Label’ Israel

“How dare anyone speak of apartheid in a State (i.e. Israel) where Arabic citizens are represented in the Government, in Parliament, in executive positions and in responsible positions, where all citizens, regardless of their religion, understand that their only hope is collective peace.” This statement is from the French Prime Minister Jean Castex. He told this to CRIF, the organisation of French Jews, in response to Amnesty International’s report that accuses Israel of apartheid.

Our Support



Transportation

Whereas in recent years Koen Carlier and the C4I Ukraine team worked with small vans to bring Jewish people to the airports for departure to Israel, now the situation is very different. The airspace is closed, and many airports have been shelled. Therefore, all transportation has to be by road. The main route is from our shelter in Western Ukraine to the Moldovan border, but we are also trying to organise bus transportation from other parts of Ukraine to our shelter. This is, of course, a challenge. The often already wretched Ukrainian roads are very unpredictable due to war. Bus companies charge high prices to send their buses on the road. Therefore, Koen and his team purchased their own large bus to be used for transportation from the shelter to the border.



“I am not a religious person, but last night there was a call to prayer for all the Jews in the country. We all participated. At 9 p.m. the sirens went off announcing an air raid. We kept praying, and after a while the sirens stopped. They had called off the bombing! These things happen now. So please keep praying for us!”

“We are now preparing a Sabbath meal in the synagogue, which we will share with the Jewish refugees who came from the east. Your donation came just in time - now we can offer everyone a hot meal.”

Food Aid

In the weeks leading up to the war, our team in Ukraine took advantage of opportunities to turn donations into extra food parcels and medical support, especially for the needy elderly, many of them Holocaust survivors.

Hundreds of thousands are fleeing to areas where it is safe, but residents of besieged cities and the elderly are stuck in their apartments or bomb shelters. Supermarkets are (almost) empty - people have to survive with whatever they have left at home.

Alexander from the Jewish community in Kherson says, “Your recent donation for hundreds of food parcels was so well timed. Pensions are low; our elderly don’t have extra money to stock up on supplies. But because of your help, now that we have nowhere to go, we all have extra food to survive. We can’t thank you enough!”

More funding is needed to enable our Christians for Israel team in Ukraine to continue to support the increasing number of Jews in need.



“Yesterday we received your donation. This really saved us, because people are running out of money and have no supplies at home - this affects young and old.”

Searching for a Good Evacuation Route

In wartime, everything is uncertain. To help Jews return to Israel, we always work closely with the Jewish Agency. Normally we provide the transportation to the airport and the Jewish Agency organises the welcoming at the airport and the flight to Israel. Because the refugees now have to cross the border first, it was a matter of finding a good alternative solution. The route to the border was quickly found, but beyond the border everything needed to be arranged. Not only transportation, but also accommodation and meals. In the end, we miraculously succeeded in organising this. Buses take the Jewish refugees from the Ukrainian-Moldovan border to the airports of Kishenev and Bucharest, and from there the flights organised by the Jewish Agency leave for Israel.



"Are we Really Safe?"



Ira (41) comes walking with her son David (5) across the bridge that separates Moldova from Ukraine. She comes from Kharkov, which is under siege by the Russians. She spent 24 hours on our bus to get here.

When she sees our team, the first thing she says is, "I can't imagine that bombs won't fall here. Are we really safe? Kharkov was hell, it was just hell".

Before she could flee, Ira spent days in a bomb shelter. With no food, hardly anything to drink or medicine. Sometimes a few people would go out to look for food among the ruins risking their own lives. Ira: "My son David just turned five. We had to celebrate his birthday in the bomb shelter."

Just in Time

Ira's husband is still in the war zone. He cannot leave because Ukrainian men must stay in the country. Only men over the age

of sixty can leave. Later on, Ira mentions that she had to run for her life. Just hours after she fled, her apartment was bombed. She showed us a picture she got from friends who were still there. Her apartment had been completely destroyed.

Saved

Ira is traveling with us via Bucharest to Israel. She has many friends there who are ready to take care of her and her son. "You saved my life. If Christians for Israel had not been here, I might not be alive."

"Thank you so much for not leaving the country. Your help as Christians for Israel cannot be overestimated. It has been so valuable to us."

Miraculously Led

It is almost beyond our imagination how many miracles we were privileged to witness during this emergency situation.

- Evacuation plan**
In April last year we already felt the necessity to prepare an evacuation plan in case an emergency situation would arise in Ukraine. Under the leadership of Koen Carlier we were able to arrange shelters and stock up on food and diesel at several locations. By doing so, we were now prepared to receive the large stream of refugees and to offer them a warm bed and meals. For now, we have everything we need in stock!
- Beaten Path**
For many years, the road we now use to bring the Jewish refugees across the border was one of the worst-traveled roads in Ukraine, but last year it was renewed and now there is a well-paved road along which we can travel with our buses!
- God's providence**
In all the commotion at the onset of the war and the search for solutions, everything was provided for. Just across the border in Moldova, we found a large bus company that was run by Christians! They are now ready 24/7 to take refugees from the border to the airport. Also, accommodations and other necessities have been amply provided for. In times when exorbitant prices are charged due to high demand, we have been able to experience God's providence in many people who selflessly offer help, in whatever form!

Prayer Points

Pray...

- For our team in Ukraine - for peace, wisdom and strength, to make the right decisions in this crisis.
- For the Jewish community in Ukraine. Many are desperate and do not know who to turn for help.
- Especially for the elderly and Holocaust survivors. All the traumas of World War II are resurfacing.
- For the Jewish Agency (the organisation for the emigration of Jews to Israel) and the Israeli Embassy, for the proper coordination of emergency aid and evacuation efforts.

Pray on the basis of the following Bible verses...

- For wisdom for politicians and people in positions of authority: *1 Timothy 2:1-4*
- For a quick cease-fire: *Psalms 140:8*
- For protection of the civilian population, against panic: *Deuteronomy 33:26*
- For the Jews in Ukraine, and for the return: *Isaiah 43:4-6*

Emergency Aid Ukraine How can I help?

Transport for a Jewish refugee		\$ 110 € 100
Transport for a small family		\$ 440 € 400
One bus		\$ 4,400 € 4.000

Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast: Estonia



Tallinn, Estonia at the old city. | Photo: Shutterstock

■ Rev Cornelis Kant

Executive Director | Christians for Israel International

The Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast took place on 15 and 16 February in the parliament of Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. The Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast started as a global movement in 2016 by former Israeli member of the Knesset, Robert Ilatov, together with Albert Veksler and former US Congresswoman Michele Bachmann. The goal is to bring political and church leaders together in 2-day conferences to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Over 80 people attended, mostly from Estonia, Finland, Israel, America and various European countries. Participants from 50 countries followed the lectures online.

Member of Parliament and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, Urmas Reinsalu welcomed the guests: "We are facing a threat of war just a 1000 kilometres from here. This is a moment also between us, brothers and sisters, to be together with our prayers for peace. Peace on the borders of Ukraine, peace in the Middle East, peace in Israel and peace all over the world."

Rabbi Yehuda Glick, a former member of the Knesset who survived a Palestinian attack, wished everyone true shalom: "Not strength and violence and each side trying to knock the other down. We want true peace, a shalom." The Israeli Ambassador to Estonia, Mrs Hagit Ben Ya'akov, said: "The friendship of Christian friends of Israel is something that cannot be taken for granted. Your friendship is one of the most important things for the State of Israel. Your friendship shows the rest of the world that Israel is not alone." Then she read from *Isaiah 65: 17*, "See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor they shall come to mind."

Mike Pompeo, former US Secretary of State, addressed the gathering in a video message: "The situation in Ukraine is most surely on everyone's mind. Please join me in praying for our world leaders to have wisdom, patience and strength. We must pray that the Lord blesses His faithful with the strength to stand against those who would disrupt peace to further their own ambitions." He then quoted *Psalms 125: 1-2* "Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which can not be shaken but endures forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forevermore."

Chairman Robert Ilatov looked back on the beginnings of the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast: "When we talked about establishing the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast, the most important idea was to bring the truth about Israel to the whole world. Of course, in the Knesset, we are so accustomed to fighting - you know: two Jews, but three different opinions and five different synagogues. It was not easy to get the idea of the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast through the whole Knesset, but I did succeed. The idea is to bring about a dialogue. It is a difficult dialogue because we are talking about a dialogue between people who have

argued for 2,000 years over who is right and who is wrong. But at the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast, everyone is welcome to pray."

Illatov explained that the word 'Palestine' for Jews is a painful reminder of Emperor Hadrian who destroyed Jerusalem in the year 135, slaughtered a million Jews and gave the land the name 'Palestine': "So when you say the word 'Palestine' this for the Jewish people represents the attempted destruction of the Jewish traditions of the faith in one God, the God of Israel." He also said: "Somebody just mentioned that the Jewish people came back to the land of 'Palestine'. This is not accurate. We actually returned to Eretz, Israel. It is not just something symbolic. It has its foundation in the very Bible. We are a small but very strong people."

He said that since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, millions of Christians have come to love Israel and the Jewish people. This has encouraged him to research the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation and rediscover what the Bible says about God's love for Israel and His plan for Israel. Robert Ilatov was born and raised in the Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan and made Aliyah to Israel in 1985. He was deputy mayor of Netanya for many years.

American Messianic Jew Joel Rosenberg told about all his contacts with presidents and other world leaders about the need to stand up for Israel and bless Israel. He referred to Nebuchadnezzar, who changed from a world leader who burned Jews to a worshipper of the God of Israel.

Christians for Israel also got the opportunity to speak. I was allowed to speak for 15 minutes about the foundation and growth of Christians for Israel worldwide and about our goals. Our first goal is to proclaim the everlasting Biblical significance of Israel in God's plan of salvation. It is important not only to mention the well-known Bible verses regarding Israel but also to draw theological lines between the Old and New Testaments when it comes to God's eternal faithfulness to His people Israel. There is a great need for this within churches.

The leader of Christians for Israel in Italy, Professor Edda Fogarollo, told about the work of Christians for Israel in Italy and the permanent importance of adequate Holocaust education. She herself is a professor of Holocaust history, and proper education on the subject is very close to her heart.

This two-day conference in the Parliament of Tallinn was a valuable and blessed event with great speeches, a good spiritual atmosphere and important prayers together. It was inspiring and encouraging for people from both politics and churches.

Over the years the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast has already been held in several cities around the world. The main gathering is held yearly in June in Jerusalem and is attended by about 500 people.



Entertainment during the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast.



Rev Cornelis Kant speaking at the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast.



During the conference at the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast.

Uncomfortable Ukraine-Israel Analogies

■ Stephen M Flatow

With news of war in Ukraine grabbing all the headlines, Palestinian Arab officials and advocates are straining to find comparisons between the Ukraine-Russian crisis and their own cause. There are indeed some comparisons, though not the ones they have in mind.

PLO official Nihad Abu Ghosh sees an analogy between the collapse of the Soviet Union (in 1991) and the Ukraine crisis—in both situations, he complains, Israel is taking advantage of the situation in order “to increase settlement building in the occupied West Bank by promoting immigration.”

Abu Ghosh, it should be noted, is a longtime official of the PLO as well as head of information and education for the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a PLO member organisation. Over the years, he has served as head of diaspora affairs for the PLO and head of information and education for the DFLP.

That’s important because it was the PLO that signed the Oslo accords with Israel in 1993; the Palestinian Authority had not yet been established. The Oslo accords do not prohibit Israel from building new towns in the Israeli-controlled portion of Judea and Samaria. Nor do the accords bar Israel from allowing Ukrainian Jews, or anybody else, to settle in those towns.

In other words, Abu Ghosh is complaining about something that is permitted by the agreements his own organisation signed and is bound by. Indeed, any PLO or PA official who protests against more Jews becoming residents of Israeli-controlled territories is protesting against something that the PLO and PA leadership already agreed to.

So why do PA officials—and advocates of the Palestinian Arab cause in general—keep complaining about ‘illegal Jewish settlements’? Because they know they can get away with it. No reporter ever asks them, “But don’t the Oslo accords permit Jewish settlements in Israel’s territories?” No editor ever fact-checks them or corrects them before publishing their op-eds about ‘illegal settlers.’

Another Ukraine-Palestinians analogy currently making the rounds has to do with the suffering of civilians. This allegation gained currency in social media this week,



Demonstrators carry placards and flags during a protest against the Russian invasion to the Ukraine, in Tel Aviv on 12 March 2022. | Photo: Flash90

courtesy of international supermodel Gigi Hadid, who announced that she is donating all her earnings “from the fall 2022 shows” to “aid those suffering from the war in Ukraine” and “those experiencing the same in Palestine.”

Let’s leave aside, for the moment, the hypocrisy of the PA or Hamas accepting donations from the earnings of a model whose outfits flagrantly violate the Islamic strictures that are the law in both the PA territories and the Hamas-run Gaza Strip. The PA’s constitution says, “Islam is the official religion in Palestine” and that “the principles of Islamic Sharia [law] will be the main source of legislation.” The garb promoted or imposed upon women under the PA and Hamas differs quite noticeably from that which is worn by Hadid on the runway.

Instead, let’s focus on Hadid’s analogy. “Hands off Ukraine, Hands off Palestine,” she tweeted, and supporters of the Palestinian Arab cause everywhere surely are nodding their heads in agreement.

For decades, the Arab regimes surrounding Israel have been supporting the violent Palestinian Arab terrorist-separatists in Judea, Samaria and Gaza—just like Russia has been supporting the terrorist-separatists in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions of eastern Ukraine. The

Arab regimes have periodically launched wars against Israel based on the pretext of the ‘suffering’ of those separatists—again, just like Russia’s war against Ukraine.

The Arabs, like the Russians, are the aggressors, trying to take over a country that belongs to somebody else. Israel, like Ukraine, is an embattled democracy with deep roots in their land.

As for the suffering of innocent civilians—again, there’s a valid comparison, just not the one that Gigi Hadid or Nihad Abu Ghosh have in mind. The repeated Arab invasions of Israel have claimed the lives of thousands of Israeli civilians. The daily attempts by Palestinian Arab terrorists to shoot, stab or stone Jews to death cause constant suffering to Israeli civilians. I wonder when Hadid will donate some portion of her earnings to alleviate their suffering.

So, by all means, let’s examine the Ukraine crisis for comparisons to Israel, even if what we find proves uncomfortable for PA spokesmen, pro-Palestinian cultural celebrities or other advocates of the Palestinian cause.

Stephen M. Flatow is an attorney and the father of Alisa Flatow, who was murdered in an Iranian-sponsored Palestinian terrorist attack in 1995. He is the author of ‘A Father’s Story: My Fight for Justice Against Iranian Terror.’

Did You Know?

Interesting facts about the Hebrew Language

Hebrew is an ancient and unique language. It was originally a biblical language that was revived as a modern language over 150 years ago. Nowadays, it is spoken in Israel and beyond. Here are some interesting facts:

FACT

Israel is the only country in the world that has succeeded in reviving a dead language and using it as a national language.

FACT

Around the world, approximately nine million people speak Hebrew. After Israel, the United States has the second largest Hebrew speaking population (about 220,000 fluent speakers).

FACT

Hebrew is written right to left, but numbers are written left to right. The numbers used are exactly as in English, Arabic numerals.

FACT

Hebrew has vowels, but they mostly aren’t marked – you have to know how each word is pronounced. The Hebrew alphabet has 22 letters.

FACT

Hebrew is very close to Arabic – they are both Semitic languages. Although scripts are different, grammar systems are parallel, and often, similar words are used; for example, shalom in Hebrew is salam in Arabic (meaning both peace and hello).

If you want to know more about the Hebrew language, follow our short Hebrew course to learn more about the Aleph-bet. Subscribe here: <https://c4israel.org/learn-hebrew>

Recommended Reading

Israel on Trial...

How International Law is Being Misused to Delegitimise the State of Israel

By Dr. Matthijs de Blois and Andrew Tucker

One hundred years ago, the League of Nations agreed to the 'reconstitution' of a 'national home for the Jewish people in Palestine'. The Mandate for Palestine was established – a new kind of legal regime to enable the peoples of the former Ottoman Empire to become independent.

Great Britain received the task under the Mandate for Palestine to ensure that the Jewish people could return and settle the land – all the while respecting the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Israel.

The State of Israel was established in May 1948. Yet, ever since, Israel has never been fully accepted as an equal member of the international community. Israel is widely regarded as a colonialist regime, an illegal occupier of Arab land. There is no other State in the world that attracts so many United Nations resolutions condemning it for violating international law.

Many people consider that Israeli 'settlements' as illegal and that Israel must end its 'occupation' of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza.

International lawyers Dr Matthijs de Blois and Andrew Tucker explain, for the lay reader, what international law is and how it works. They argue that the system of international law is being manipulated by states and non-state actors with the purpose of attacking the Jewish State.

Topics covered include:

- The politics of the United Nations (UN) system, especially the role played by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and Arab League
- Why does Israel have such an isolated position within the United Nations?
- What is the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the 'delegitimation' of Israel?
- How was the State of Israel created? What is its legal status?
- Do the Palestinians have a right to statehood? Does the Palestinian state already exist?
- Is a 'Two-State' solution the only way to resolve the conflict?
- Are Israeli settlements 'illegal'?
- Does Israel occupy Jerusalem and the 'West Bank', and is it legal?
- What is the status of Jerusalem?

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Available from our website:
<https://www.c4israel.org/product/israel-on-trial/>

Who are the 'Israelites'?



| Photo: Anton Mislavsky | Unsplash

■ Johannes Gerloff

Theologian, Journalist, Lecturer & Author

This is part four in a series of articles based on the book *Rejoice, You Nations, with His People*, by Johannes Gerloff (due for release in 2022).

In *Romans 9*, the Apostle Paul refers to his own countrymen as 'Israelites' - those for whom he was ready to be "cursed and cut off from Messiah". He is referring to "Israel according to the flesh" (1 *Corinthians 10:18*) - the Jewish people who reject the Messiah Jesus and, in some cases, even persecute the Church.

He does not call them 'Jews', which would have been better understood by the Apostle's Gentile readers. Nor does he use the title 'Jacob' or 'house of Jacob'. Paul does not even designate his "kinsmen according to the flesh" as 'Hebrews'.

No, Paul explicitly names his fellow Jewish people 'Israelites'. This is very significant.

promise in itself: God will reign!

The New Testament uses the name 'Israel/Israelite' as a title of honour. Jesus calls Nathanael "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile" (*John 1:47*). He is so astonished at Nicodemus' lack of knowledge precisely because he is "a teacher of Israel" (*John 3:10*). Jesus himself, actually, uses the expression 'Israel/Israelite' quite carefully and exclusively in contrast to 'the Gentile nations'.

Peter, Paul and others, who anticipated particularly favourable attention from Jewish people, addressed them as 'men of Israel'. This conscious use of language in the Greek New Testament becomes clear by comparing the usage of the terms 'King of the Jews' and 'King of Israel'.

Exclusively, non-Jews speak about a 'King of the Jews'. Jewish people, in contrast, who know their Holy Writings, speak without exception of the 'King of Israel'.

... A few sentences later, talking about those, who are cursed and cut off from Messiah, he calls them 'Israelites' and claims that they already have this relationship with God.

Genesis 32 reports how Jacob receives the new name 'Israel' when he struggled with God and men until the break of day and prevailed (*verse 29*). In this narration, the emphasis is on Jacob's action and success.

Literally translated, 'יִשְׂרָאֵל/yisra'el' means "God will wrestle, fight, combat, reign". This already indicates what becomes even clearer in the context of *Genesis 35:9-12*. There God confirms Jacob's new name upon his return to the Land of Canaan. Jacob's efforts and achievements are not even hinted at anymore. Instead, the Biblical text emphasises: "I am God Almighty!" (*Verse 11*).

Thus, by her very name, 'Israel' proclaims that which Moses declared to the Israelites in totally hopeless circumstances: "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still" (*Exodus 14:14*). The name 'Israel' already carries the

relationship of God to the Church, which is redeemed by the blood of Jesus. In *Romans 9*, however, 'υἰοθεσία/hyothesia' characterises God's relationship with Israel. In all these occurrences, the context clearly implies that 'υἰοθεσία/hyothesia' is a gift of God. It does not describe a condition or state of people but rather God's attitude towards these human beings.

In *Romans 8:15 and 23*, he says that we, who have "received the spirit of υἰοθεσία/hyothesia," are eagerly waiting for it. Just a few sentences later, talking about those, who are cursed and cut off from Messiah, he calls them 'Israelites' and claims that they already have this relationship with God. Thus, according to Paul, we as Christians are hoping and striving for something Israel already possesses.

God's attitude towards his people is depicted as a father-son relationship throughout the Old Testament. Israel, therefore, has a hereditary title. For that reason, God chastises and admonishes this nation as he does no other. He is jealous of his 'firstborn'. Moses has to tell the Pharaoh: "Israel is my firstborn son. I tell you, let my son go that he may serve me. If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son" (*Exodus 4:22-23*). As the son of God, Israel enjoys a very special commitment and devotion from his Father and, therefore, enjoys a unique access to the Creator of the universe.

This special relationship, however, comes with extraordinary expectations. God's firstborn son was to be freed from slavery in Egypt in order to be able to serve his Father. The 'position as son' includes an obligation: "You are the sons of the Lord your God. You shall not cut yourselves nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead, for you are a holy nation for the Lord your God. The Lord has chosen you to be a peculiar people for himself from all the nations that are upon the earth" (*Deuteronomy 14:1-2*).

Writing in 1866, Friedrich Adolph Philippi said: "In the name 'Israelite' lies all the dignity of this nation. It denotes not only national identity, but also contains the promise and hope of Jacob passed on to his descendants forever".

In *Romans 9:4-5*, Paul refers to a number of specific attributes and riches God bestowed upon the Israelites. The first of these is their 'sonship'.

Israel's Position as Son

Romans 9:4 says the Israelites have "the position as son". The King James Version translates the word 'υἰοθεσία/hyothesia' as 'adoption'. This Greek word occurs in the New Testament only in the writings of Paul. Literally, 'υἰοθεσία' means a 'son's position/standing/rank' or 'institution/appointment as son'. On four of the five occasions in which Paul uses this word, he is describing the



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Russian Invasion of Ukraine: *Prelude to Gog and Magog?*

■ Kameel Majdali
Director | Teach All Nations Inc.

February 24, 2022: The Russian invasion is the first major military engagement on European soil since World War II, dwarfing the Balkan wars of the 1990s when the former Yugoslavia dissolved. A great civilisational change - even shaking - is occurring, no matter what the final outcome of this invasion may be.

What is the nature of the Russia-Ukraine war? Does it have any implications for Bible prophecy, specifically the Gog and Magog prophecy in *Ezekiel 38-39*? I intend to explore these questions. First, let's be clear: there is more going on here than meets the eye, though we acknowledge the tragedy of fraternal Slavs and Orthodox Christians fighting each other. Second, it is not entirely clear why Putin invaded his neighbour. Does he merely want to cause Ukraine to be a neutral border state, unaligned to the European Union and NATO, with a Kremlin-friendly government? Or does he want to conquer and annex Ukraine to Russia? The story continues to unfold.

The Russia-Ukraine war is causing people to turn the pages of the Bible to see what are the prophetic implications, if any. We learn from Jesus Himself that the warm-up to the last days, preceding His second coming, includes 'wars and rumours of wars' (*Matthew 24:6*), 'great shaking' (*Hebrews 12:26-27*), and 'intensity of living' (*Matthew 24:37-39*); in general, great and unexpected changes. Think back to life just three years ago. It seems like an eternity. The 'old normal' is gone, and the 'new normal' is unclear and unsettling. Life will not be the same again.

The fire and fury of this invasion, plus unprecedented global attention, has caused many to wonder: Is this the prelude to *Ezekiel 38-39*? Apart from Armageddon (*Zechariah 14*; *Revelation 16:16*), the Ezekiel prophecy is the best known of the major end-time events.

1 Chronicles 12:32 speaks of the men of Issachar who discerned the times and seasons and acted prudently. When you 'understand the times' - what is happening and why - you will know what to do. When applying current events to Bible prophecy, it is important to understand both the event itself and then carefully see how it lines up with the Biblical record.

Gog & Magog

In short, the Gog and Magog campaign is a massive



| Photo: Shutterstock

latter-day invasion by a coalition of nations led by a power from the north. The target is a peaceful, unsuspecting, and unprepared Israel. This unexpected invasion is so overwhelming that, humanly speaking, the Jewish state should be destroyed. Yet, at the eleventh hour, God Himself intervenes annihilates Gog and its allies, and Israel is saved.

Now let's look at some of the details (*all references are from Ezekiel*):

Who's the Leader: Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal (*38:1*).

Main Allies: Persia, Ethiopia (or Sudan), and Libya (*38:5*).

Secondary Allies: Gomer, the house of Togarmah and many peoples with them (*38:6*).

Timing: In the latter or last days, after 'many days you will be visited' (*38:8,17*). There is discussion and disagreement about where to place the Gog campaign in the prophetic calendar: before the tribulation, during the tribulation, or at the end, making it synonymous with the campaign of Armageddon? A fourth option is after the Millennium (the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth) since Satan will be loosed, gather the rebels together to attack the beloved city, and fire falls from heaven and destroys them (*Revelation 20:7-10*).

Target of the Invasion: The people of Israel in the land of Israel. The people are gathered out of many nations, on the once wasted mountains of Israel but now dwelling in safety (*38:8*). Israel will be 'living in peace.' Do the October 2020 Abraham (Peace) Accords with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco point Israel in that direction? Or does the menace of antagonists like Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas, and the drone-savvy Houthis in Yemen, preclude this?

Reason for the Invasion: Spoil will be seized, plunder carried off, livestock and goods confiscated (*38:12*). Will Israel's natural gas reserves in the Mediterranean Sea be part of the booty?

God's Response: God goes against Gog and his allies, sends the fire from heaven and destroys the coalition (*39:1-6*); it takes seven months to bury the dead (*39:12*). Ultimately, it is God who draws out Gog and company to battle and destroys them. When this happens, the nations will hallow and glorify the name of God (*38:16*).

Israel's aftermath: Instead of being destroyed, thanks to divine intervention, Israel experienced the final ingathering of the exiles (*39:27-28*). Furthermore, the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon them (*37:14*; *39:29*).

To be continued...

Isreality

Finally, the day had come. On Friday, 4 February at 6am, Salomé was ready to run the Dead Sea Marathon. Despite the early hour and the strong wind, she managed to run the 42.195 km in 3 hours and 32 minutes and took 2nd place in the women's division!

Salomé is a 24-year-old nurse from the Netherlands. She is the daughter of Roger van Oordt, Honorary Consul of Israel in the Netherlands. Salomé's goal was to raise € 13,000 for the children of ADI together with Isreality Netherlands. ADI (formerly known as 'Aleh') is an organisation that takes care of children with severe multiple disabilities, both cognitively and physically. She more than succeeded: the total amount that was raised was € 22.683! The funds will be

used to purchase much needed rehabilitative equipment.

Salomé: "As far back as I can remember, my family has been involved with helping Israel. I love the diversity, that different cultures can live together. As a nurse, ADI is a cause that is close to my heart."

After her success at the Dead Sea, Salomé was invited by *i24 News Network* to talk about her experience. You can watch a short clip of the Marathon and part of the *i24* interview here:

www.isreality.org/salome-ran-the-marathon-at-the-dead-sea/



Salomé's Run for Life



The Passover Lamb

■ Kees de Vreugd

Theologian | Christians for Israel International & Editor
| Israel & the Church

It plays an important role in the story of the exodus and is one of the first commandments given to Israel in the Bible. Yet the Passover lamb has not been served at the Jewish Seder table for 1950 years because there is no longer a temple where it can be sacrificed.

In *Exodus 12*, various regulations are given concerning the Paschal lamb. On the tenth day of the month, designated as the 'head of the months' (so it says in Hebrew, *Exodus 12:2*), each family of 'all the community of Israel' is to take a lamb. It is remarkable that the Bible uses the word community for Israel here for the first time. With this command, Israel is forged into a community under God's commandments. One lamb per family, and if it is too much for a household, then two families.

As with all sacrifices, it must be a lamb without any defect. It must be a male one-year-old, and it may be either a goat or a sheep. The Israelites must then keep it in the house for four days. This means that the lamb must be examined carefully for defects that would make it unsuitable for the sacrifice. One explanation says that in the (later) sacrificial service, it was the general rule that a sacrificial animal was carefully examined for defects four days beforehand. This could also be done by the one who sold the sacrificial animal. But only in the case of the Paschal Lamb, the sacrificer must do this himself. By the way, the Jewish interpretation notes that the period of four days only applied to the first time in Egypt. Later it no longer had to be observed. At the end of *Exodus 12*, instructions are given for later celebrations.

Why a lamb of a goat or a sheep? The midrash, the classic rabbinic Bible explanation, explains that this symbolises the Egyptian deities. Israel had to renounce the Egyptian gods. With the lamb, they slaughtered the gods of Egypt and turned to the God of Israel.

In Jewish tradition, it is told as one of the Passover miracles: the Egyptians were, of course, furious when they heard that the Israelites were taking lambs (their gods) into their homes and tying them to the table leg, so to speak, in order to slaughter them. But they were not able to do anything against it because God protected Israel. The Paschal Lamb thus stands not only for the transition from slavery to freedom but also for the spiritual transformation from cultural and religious bondage to the service of the true God.

With the blood of the slaughtered lamb, the Israelites had to sprinkle the doorposts. "And the blood shall be for you



| Photo: Flash90

a sign" - for you, it says with some emphasis. It is a sign that the Israelites have renounced Egyptian idols and have become visibly obedient to God's commandment, even if their lives are in danger. But the Lord sees Israel's obedience and passes over their houses. That is the meaning of the word Pesach: to pass over or skip over. The destroyer (*verse 23*) has no chance.

The Paschal Lamb had to be slaughtered "between the two evenings", so the Hebrew literally says. That was understood as after noon when the sun is over its highest point and before sunset. It was then to be roasted whole

sacrificed daily both in the morning and in the afternoon as a symbol of devotion and meeting with God. But that must be distinguished from the Paschal Lamb.

The apostle Paul writes: "For Christ, our Passover also has been sacrificed" (*1 Corinthians 5:7*). It is in the context of a call to the believers in Corinth to purify their lives from sin, fornication, and idolatry.

Jesus died at the hour of the daily sacrifice in the temple. It was the afternoon of 14 Nissan, the time that the Passover lambs, too, were slaughtered. He died as a blameless sacrifice. None of His bones were broken (*John*

Jesus died at the hour of the daily sacrifice in the temple. It was the afternoon of 14 Nissan, the time that the Passover lambs, too, were slaughtered. He died as a blameless sacrifice. None of His bones were broken (John 19:36).

on the fire. Not one leg of it was to be broken. It was only meant for Israel. Those who were not circumcised were not allowed to participate. This continued to be the case later on. According to Jewish tradition, many Israelites in Egypt, therefore, had still to be circumcised. That is also why a period of four days was observed.

The Paschal Lamb is thus not a sacrifice for sin. There is sometimes confusion about this. In the sanctuary (first the tabernacle, later the temple), there were daily sacrifices for sin, including lambs. And a lamb was

19:36). According to John's Gospel, Jesus died for the nation, and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad (*John 11:51-52*). In other words, to bring back the exiles of Israel.

This year, 14 Nissan, the eve of Passover, coincides with Good Friday. Let us remember that Jesus' death is not just for our personal salvation, but first and foremost for the restoration of all Israel.

Matzah

In this series, 'Signs of Faith', objects that express Jewish faith are explained and discussed.

The *matzah* will be familiar to many. It is the flat, hard cake that is eaten during *Pesach* (Passover). The Hebrew word *matzah* can be translated as unleavened. What is unleavened? It is when the dough for the *matzah* is not allowed time to rise. In the Jewish teachings, preparation of the *matzah* is precisely defined. The entire baking process may not be longer than eighteen minutes.

The Bible speaks of the feast of the *matzot* (plural of *matzah*), as well as *Pesach* (*Leviticus 23:6*). It coincides with *Pesach* yet is distinct from it. The feast of the *matzot* lasts seven days. It starts with the removal of all leaven from the house. Leaven is *chametz* in Hebrew. Originally, it was a piece of old dough, sourdough, that caused the fresh dough to rise. All crumbs, all old flour, is all burnt. For seven days, nothing leavened may be consumed. All products that are leavened or risen are banned, also beer, for example.

The commandment to eat the *matzah* was given on the eve of the exodus from Egypt. It symbolised the haste with which the Israelites had to leave Egypt. Eating the *matzah* recalls the liberation from slavery of Egypt. "This is the bread of affliction (*Deuteronomy 16:3*) that our fathers ate in Egypt," says the Haggadah, the liturgy of the *Seider* (the Passover supper). Those who eat the *matzah* at the *Seder* table, at that moment, personally experience the affliction the fathers in Egypt underwent. It is as if you yourself are leaving Egypt. That is how you should celebrate the *Seider*, the Haggadah says.

As a matter of fact, the *matzah* appears earlier in the Bible, in a non-cultic context. Lot, Abraham's nephew, baked *matzahs* for the angels visiting him (*Genesis 19:3*). Abraham told Sarah to 'quickly' prepare bread cakes when the three men came to him (*Genesis 18:6*). Maybe here, too, we should think of *matzahs*.

For the grain offerings in the temple, too, *matzahs* were used. Other than the *matzahs* for *Pesach*, these were often prepared with oil.



| Photo: Shutterstock

Jerusalem Day

■ **Bryce Turner**
Christians for Israel New Zealand

As the world slowly re-opens following the ravages of the Covid pandemic and the pain of lockdowns and isolation starts to fade, residents of Jerusalem will soon commemorate 55 years since the end of a brutal separation.

Jerusalem day will be celebrated on 29 May this year, as Israelis, Jews and supporters all around the world remember the reunification of Jerusalem as a result of the Six-day war in 1967.

The Importance of Jerusalem to Judaism, Christianity and Islam

Jerusalem has been the epicentre of the Arab-Israeli conflict for the past century, largely due to its enormous religious significance to Judaism, Christianity and, more recently, Islam. The Temple Mount is sacred to Judaism, as it is believed to be the site of the three Jewish temples. The first, built by King Solomon, was dedicated in 960BC and destroyed by the Babylonians in 586BC. The Second Temple was dedicated in 516BC, built by Jewish exiles returning to Jerusalem. King Herod demolished this second temple in 20BC in order to build a much grander temple, which was done in an impressive 18 months. It was this third temple that the Romans subsequently destroyed in 70AD during the Jewish revolt.

For Jews, the Temple Mount is the holiest place in the world as the Divine Presence rests there forever. The Midrash (Rabbinic literature) states that the stone under the Dome of the Rock was the starting point of God's Creation. Since God created the world from this stone, it became known as the 'Foundation Stone.' According to Jewish tradition, the Temple Mount is also Mount Moriah, the site of Abraham's binding of Isaac on the rock.

Jerusalem was the capital of the Kingdom of Israel (1004-928BC), the capital of the Kingdom of Judah (928-586BC) and the capital of the Hasmonean Kingdom (167-63BC), over a thousand years before it became sacred to Christianity, and some 1700 years before it became sacred to Islam. Christianity also holds Jerusalem as the

Holy City, mostly because of the life of Jesus and much of His ministry that took place in and around the city. Jesus was tried and crucified at Jerusalem and, following His resurrection, ascended to Heaven from the Mount of Olives.

Despite not being mentioned in the Koran a single time, Jerusalem has also become sacred to the Islamic faith, being the third holiest place to Muslims. Based on the belief that the prophet Muhammad ascended to Heaven from the 'foundation rock', the structure erected in 691AD to commemorate this became a women's mosque in 1952.

Jerusalem Divided

Despite being the Jewish capital for over 3000 years, Jerusalem has in recent times been under various foreign controls. Following WWI, the Balfour Declaration and ultimately the British Mandate for Palestine, the international community finally agreed to the re-establishment of Israel. A proposal had been submitted to the General Assembly that carved up the Holy Land into two proposed countries, with Jerusalem under international rule for an initial period of ten years. Whilst this resolution was passed by the UN General Assembly and agreed to – albeit reluctantly – by the Jewish leaders, the Arabs flatly rejected it, preventing it from becoming a binding legal instrument. In conjunction with Britain's announcement that it was withdrawing from the mandate, Israel declared its independence, to the delight of Jewish communities all around the world. The ravages of war and the extreme anti-Semitism that had culminated in the murder of over six million Jews in the holocaust seemed to be over. The weary citizens began to relax just a little; the future started to look peaceful in the security of their own Jewish state.

Just days after Israel's independence was declared, the Arab nations breached all international treaties and attacked the new country. After a ferocious battle, the city of Jerusalem was left divided between Jordanian forces and Israel, a situation that lasted for some 19 years. During this period, the Jewish people, having survived

the horrors of Nazi Germany and then the fight to enter their own country, found themselves tantalisingly close to the Temple Mount and other Holy sites. With Jordan illegally holding control over most of Jerusalem, Jews found themselves essentially barred from these sites. Jordan, despite being the illegal occupier, denied Jews access to even the Western Wall, a cruel sequestration that wreaked untold pain on Jewish devotees. During this time, dozens of synagogues were destroyed or desecrated throughout Jerusalem, and other historical and religious sites damaged by the Jordanian occupiers.

Jerusalem United - the Battle

In 1967, with tensions at a peak, neighbouring Arab nations had begun to amass troops and military equipment in readiness for an attack on Israel. Arab leaders had made no secret of their desire to extinguish Israel altogether, to 'drive it into the sea.' Although Israel appealed to Jordan to stay out of the war, the Jordanian military fired artillery at Jerusalem and then attacked with ground troops, subsequently capturing and occupying the UN headquarters. Israel responded with a counterattack and ultimately forced the Jordanians across the west bank, after which IDF paratroopers managed to take control of the Old City, the Temple Mount and the Western Wall. The radio message received when IDF forces announced that they had reclaimed the Temple Mount has become a statement of national pride, fondly recalled with great passion by many who still remember that hugely significant moment.

Holiday

The Chief Rabbinate of Israel declared Jerusalem Day a minor religious holiday in recognition of regaining access to the Western Wall. Israel's biggest city, Jerusalem, is now home to people from a huge and diverse range of backgrounds. People of all religions and cultures are now able to visit even the most sacred of places under Israeli control – including the Western Wall – and experience for themselves the unique site of thousands of years of Jewish history.

Short News

Plan Mount of Olives Shelved



The Israeli Government plans to designate parts of the Mount of Olives as a national park. In Israel there are many important archaeological sites and nature reserves designated as national parks, as is the Temple Mount. But the various Churches on the Mount of Olives have expressed concerns about the plan, and organisations critical about Israel suspect Israel of expanding its sovereignty. Israel shelves the plan and will start a dialogue with the Churches. | Photo: Shutterstock

Books Digitised

The National Library of Israel is going to digitise 120,000 books. The digitisation is done by Google in Germany. It involves books in all kinds of languages. When the books are digitised, they are put online and everyone in the world can read them.

Free Land



To stimulate the Israeli agriculture the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture makes an offer to young people: a piece of agricultural land and a plot to build a house on. It is a plan to preserve the Israeli agriculture in Galilee and the Golan Heights. Many people have been moving away from these areas for years already, especially young people, because they consider the chances of getting a job better in the middle of the country. To break this trend, the Ministry presents this plan. | Photo: Flashgo

Import of Bullets Prevented

A shipment of 7,000 bullets meant for Gaza didn't reach its destination. Customs staff managed to intercept the cargo, hidden in rolls of insulation material. They also discovered weapons inside the shipment that was supposed to be transported to Gaza from Ashdod.

Free Supermarket

In Petach Tikva there is a supermarket filled with donated goods. Those in need can shop for free once or twice a month, by invitation via a WhatsApp group. There is only one condition: you are allowed to take only one item per product.

Facts Speak

2021 Aliyah

27,057 Jews moved to Israel in 2021



- Canada 400+
An increase from 2020
- USA 4,000+
30% increase from 2020
- Mexico 290+
10% increase from 2020
- Brazil 550+
72% increase from 2020
- Argentina 900+
55% increase from 2020
- United Kingdom 650+
22% increase from 2020
- Russia 7,500+
10% increase from 2020
- Ukraine 3,000+
10% increase from 2020
- France 3,500+
40% increase from 2020
- Ethiopia 1,636+
Thousands more following
- South Africa 550+
72% increase from 2020

Nowhere to Lay His Head

Kay Wilson
Israeli Tour Guide | Author | Cartoonist

What Churchill was to Britain with his command of the English language, Abba Eban was to Israel. Of all the Israeli statesmen, Abba Eban left a legacy of literary wit on every Israeli heart.

Among his most piercingly humorous and truthful sayings is the unforgettable: “If Algeria introduced a resolution that the earth was flat and that Israel had flattened it, it would pass by a vote of 164 to 13 with 26 abstentions.” His tongue was his most powerful weapon, and over his long career, he used it with astonishing effectiveness numerous times.

He first caught the eye of the world when he rose to address the General Assembly of the United Nations in May 1949. His very British appearance and his Oxbridge accent set him apart from the stereotypes that the assembly had of Israelis. No one moved in the hall as he delivered a two-hour appeal for the new state of Israel. His speech that year at the General Assembly was so moving that it led to Israel’s admission to the UN. His position assured, he retained his post at the UN until 1959, even becoming vice-president of the General Assembly for a number of years.

A brilliant scholar, Abba Eban was born in South Africa and given the name Aubrey Solomon Meir Eban. His family soon moved to England. His parents were not rich, and life was tough with four children on their hands. But proving to be a prodigy, he won scholarships to every school he attended and even Cambridge University.

During World War II, British Intelligence recognised his talent and sent him on a secret mission to Egypt to discuss ways in which the Arab nations could be involved in the British side in the war. He was soon serving as liaison officer at allied headquarters in Jerusalem, where he was



Prime Minister David Ben Gurion accompanied by Mr Abba Eban, Israel Ambassador to USA visits President Harry Truman, 1951. | Photo: Fritz Cohen

given the task of recruiting members of the Jewish population for the British army. Although the British wanted him to continue to serve in their forces after the war, with the horrors of the Holocaust now becoming known, Abba Eban joined the Jewish Agency instead and dedicated his life to Zionism.

In Israel, he invested his time in writing and in public speaking, becoming very involved in Israeli politics. Fluent in Arabic, he was always given the task of talking to Arabs. His British accent and exterior were a bonus to him and his country. Just like at the UN, both the Israelis and the

Arabs did not always equate him with being a ‘real’ Israeli. In the case of Arabs, it arguably made them more open to dialogue, but in the case of Israelis, sadly, Abba Eban felt very estranged. After all the incredible work Abba Eban also did for the British, even they shunned him. One of the finest British servicemen of his time, he is not even mentioned in any of their biographical dictionaries.

As an old saying goes, this man had nowhere to lay his head. Eban did not fit in anywhere, but his legacy lives on. His words, thoughts and pointed wit still amuse us and challenge us today.

Celebrating Israel’s Revival

Yaakov Hagoel
Vice-Chairman | World Zionist Organisation
Chairman | World Likud

Throughout history, no other people has held so strongly to the memory of their homeland no matter what country they lived in.

I was born in Israel to parents who were also born in Israel. However my grandparents had the merit to make *Aliyah* to Israel. Like many who are now reading this article, my grandparents left behind a house, a culture, and a language. Unfortunately, I will never experience the amazing challenge of liberating myself from exile and returning home to the promised land.

I will never deal with the difficulties of learning a new/old language and adapting to a new culture - an integral part of immigration. The phenomenon of *Aliyah*, which means to ‘arise to Israel,’ began nearly 4,000 years ago.

Under divine command, the patriarch of the Jewish nation was called to “leave thy country, and thy people, and thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show you” as it states in the book of *Genesis*. He embarked on a long journey, a journey that has not yet come to an end.

It is not at all simple to leave a land of plenty and come to a land that seems lacking. However Abraham’s complete faith in making this huge step has deepened within our people the importance of taking this step ourselves. The essence of our life is here and this is where we can fulfill the aspiration to establish a ‘model society’ as described by the Zionist visionary Theodor Herzl.

Throughout history, no other people has held so strongly to the memory of their homeland no matter what country they lived in. With prayer books in front of their eyes, Jews have been praying for thousands of years

facing the direction of Jerusalem. Despite not living in the land, Jews have always studied the laws that pertain to the land such as *shmittah* and the Jubilee year. Every year the Passover Seder ends with the words ‘next year in rebuilt Jerusalem.’

The renewed Zionist idea contains two basic concepts which cannot be separated: immigration and resettlement.

As Theodor Herzl, founder of the World Zionist Organisation wrote, “throughout the long night of their exile, Jews have never ceased dreaming of their kingdom. We read ‘next year in Jerusalem’ throughout all generations. Now the time has come to make that dream a reality.”

Yom HaAliyah was formalised as a national holiday in Israel to be marked on the 7th of Cheshvan. However according to tradition, Joshua led the children of Israel into the holy land on a different date, the 27th of Nissan. But it was no accident that the 7th of Cheshvan was chosen to mark the *Aliyah Day*. It is on this week every year, that we read *Parshat Lech Lecha* in synagogue on Shabbat. It is in this Torah portion that Abraham hears the divine call to leave the land of his birth and forge a new path to the land of Israel.

Yom HaAliyah, or *Aliyah Day*, reinforces the right of the Jewish people to the land of Israel. This date reminds us that despite the expulsion of the majority of the Jewish people from their homeland nearly 2,000 years ago, they remained faithful to the land throughout their Dispersion.

Throughout the generations, our ancestors aspired to immigrate to Israel. Many of us grew up seeing old photographs of immigrants ships, of Jews kissing the ground as they arrived in Israel, and of the *Ma’abarot* or transit camps with their rows of tents for homeless immigrant families.

Immigration to Israel in the days of our parents and grandparents was accompanied by a difficult transition. They came with little material possessions or money and lived in tent cities or development towns. They became a symbol both of the difficulty of making *Aliyah* yet the importance of doing it in spite of everything.

With the development of the State of Israel and its prosperity, the procedure of *Aliyah* and absorption has improved beyond recognition. The transit camps were replaced by apartments, poverty was replaced by an Absorption Basket, and language difficulties were replaced by the Hebrew Ulpan system.

From refugees of the Spanish Inquisition to those escaping the hardships in Africa and survivors from war-torn Europe steeped in blood, Israel has become the home of the Jewish people from all different walks of life.

In this new/old land, we have seen a new generation of scientists, artists, entrepreneurs, military experts, lawmakers, intellectuals, and religious leaders from countless different countries. They are now all part of this innovation nation called the State of Israel where immigrants from around the world share their talents in development, economics, high-tech and medical breakthroughs.

There are numerous challenges when it comes to being an immigrant. We must all recognise the importance of both absorption and integration into Israeli society, the removal of obstacles to success as well as maintaining ties with our brothers and sisters in the Diaspora.

The State of Israel is looking forward to the continued ingathering of the exiles from around the world, from South America from Australia from Europe from North America from Ethiopia and from all over the world.

Abridged by Managing Editor

The Moment to Act Fast

■ **Elena Kovarsky & Valeria Zacharov**
First Home in the Homeland

The moment requires us to act fast and create new vacancies for families all over Israel – on Sunday, 27 February; an urgent letter was sent out to all the kibbutzim asking the communities to organise apartments, equipment, vacancies for children, volunteers, etc. for the refugees from Ukraine as soon as possible – around 16 kibbutz applied and starting from this moment we are working hard trying to get new places ready for the arrival of new people as soon as possible and welcome about 20 families each month, every time in another region.

No one believed it could happen, but it did, and we all are witnesses of this invasion of Ukraine and massive exodus – “Get up! Get up! Flee from the land of the north,” declares the Lord (*Zechariah 2:6*) – the Jews that were not thinking about *Aliyah* are now privileged – they have their Promised Land – Israel that cares about them!

“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.” (*Psalm 56:3*).

This is what Nathan Sharansky shared earlier: “When I was growing up in Ukraine, in Donetsk, there were a lot of nations and nationalities. Some people had ‘Russian’, ‘Ukrainian’, ‘Georgian’, written on their certificate. It was not so important; there was no big difference, but one thing. It was important - if it said ‘Jew’, it was as if you had an illness.

We knew nothing about Judaism; there was nothing significant in our Jewish identity other than anti-Semitism and hatred towards us. So, no one tried to

replace the word ‘Russian’ with the word ‘Ukrainian’ in his ID card, for example, to be accepted to university, because it does not matter, but if it said ‘Jewish’, you could change it. Of course, the chances of being accepted were greater.

I was reminded of this this week when I saw thousands of people standing at the borders, trying to escape the tragedy in Ukraine. They stand there day and night, and there is one word that can help them get out of there: ‘Jew’. If you are a Jew - there are Jews out there who take care of you, there is someone on the other side of the border who is looking for you, your chances of leaving are high. The world has turned upside down. “When I was a child, ‘Jew’ was an unusual word for evil, no one envied us, and today on the Ukrainian border, a Jew is an unusual word for good, it describes people who have a place to go, and there is an entire people, which is their family, waiting for them outside.”

Preparing for the Refugees

The refugees will arrive in the coming days and weeks, mostly women with children. They will cross the Ukrainian borders and very soon come to Israel. The first group will go to the South. We urgently have to equip apartments for refugees from Ukraine. Christians for Israel have been with us for years, in good times and trying times. But we have not seen such a time as this. We hope that we can bring many people out of the war and fear to their home, to their first home in the homeland!

Please support the “First Home in the Homeland” Project. Any amount is welcome! To donate, complete the coupon on page 16.



Yuliya from Odessa and her children, Anastasiya (15 years old), Ilya (1 year old). Yuliya arrived alone as her husband had to stay in Ukraine.



Yelkina and her daughter Anastasia (3 years old) from Odessa arrived in Israel on 10 March and we welcomed them in kibbutz Mashabei Sade.

Overview of our projects

Part of our mission is to comfort Israel and the Jewish people through prayer and action. If you would like to support one of our projects you can complete the coupon on page 16 or make an online donation. Thank you very much for your support!

Aliyah

Aliyah is the Hebrew word for the return of the Jewish people to Israel. We support *Aliyah* mainly from Ukraine (and the former Soviet Union), but also from India and France. Furthermore, we help new immigrants (in Hebrew: *olim*) to integrate into Israeli society.



Hineni Soup Kitchen

We help the poor of Israel, by providing them with food. We do this in partnership with the Hineni Center in Jerusalem, headed by Benjamin Philip. Your gift for the soup kitchen goes directly to the purchase of food.



Holocaust Survivors

We support impoverished Holocaust survivors in Israel and Ukraine through various projects which provide assistance to survivors of the Holocaust. Those survivors are elderly and will not be among us for long, and there is a growing demand for practical assistance.



Christian Friends of Israeli Communities (CFOIC)

You can support the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, the heart of Biblical Israel. The main purpose is to encourage the people in the Biblical Heartland and to show them that there are Christians throughout the world who support them and share the belief that the areas of Judea and Samaria are part of Israel's inheritance.



Food Parcel Campaign Ukraine

We distribute food parcels amongst Jewish people in Ukraine. These parcels are handed out to Holocaust survivors, needy families, and the sick. Those food parcels are a sign of friendship that demonstrates your support for our Jewish brothers and sisters and that they are not alone.



Arab Christians

Life for Christians in Bethlehem is often not easy. Christians for Israel supports the First Baptist Church of Rev Naim Khoury in Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The members of this church spread the gospel among Arabs and share their love and heart for Israel and the Jewish people.



For country-specific or further information on our projects, go to our website, www.c4israel.org.nz

