

# ISRAEL

## & Christians Today

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CHRISTIANS FOR  
**ISRAEL**  
INTERNATIONAL

Understanding Israel and world events from a Biblical perspective

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Roger van Oordt, Director of Christians for Israel Netherlands

## Labelling 'Settlement' Products - More Politics than Law

The governments of France and the Netherlands are trying to compel importers of products made by Israelis in the 'West Bank' to inform consumers that they have been made in 'Israeli settlements'. These cases are testing the validity of the EU's policy that 'East Jerusalem' and the 'West Bank' do not belong to Israel.

The Israel Products Centre (IPC), a Dutch company connected with the non-profit organisation Christians for Israel that publishes this newspaper, imports a wider range of products from producers in Israel and sells them in the Netherlands and several other European countries. Amongst these are certain wines produced in a winery located in Hebron, south of Jerusalem in what is known as 'Area C' under the Oslo agreements.

The Dutch Food and Commodities Authority (NVWA) carried out a surprise 'investigation' at IPC's distribution centre in Nijkerk in mid-April 2019. Three inspectors came unannounced. At the end of the visit, they stated that IPC is breaching the law and can expect to receive a letter specifying the breaches and the required changes. Later, the NVWA sent a notice to IPC stating that the 'Product of Israel' labels on the 'Judea Winery' and 'Hebron Heights' wines (which are produced in Hebron) are 'misleading' within the meaning of EU Regulation 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers as implemented in the Netherlands. IPC must 'immediately' amend the labels and website in order to comply with this regulation.

The NVWA says it is required to comply with the 'Interpretative Notice' 2015/C 375/05 published by the European Commission on 12 November 2015 ('Notice'), and that therefore IPC is also bound by the Notice. The Notice was issued by former EU High Commissioner Mogherini to the Member States. She said she was just implementing EU policy that all territory outside the Green Line is 'not a part of Israel's territory'. According to the European Commission, the Notice was issued in order to clarify to consumers, market players and national authorities how EU legislation concerning the indication of origin applies to products 'from Israeli-occupied territories'.

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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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■ Andrew Tucker

International Editor | Christians for Israel

The Old City of Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria are often referred to by Jewish people as their ‘Biblical Heartland’. In the Bible, God refers to these areas (in *Ezekiel* 36) as ‘the mountains of Israel’. He said that these mountains would become ‘ruins and deserted towns’ and suffer ‘the scorn of the nations’, but that He would bring His ‘people Israel’ back to these mountains and settle them there again, never to be uprooted.

Since about 1950, these areas have been generally referred to as ‘East Jerusalem’ and the ‘West Bank’ – names which were deliberately chosen to avoid any suggestion of a connection with the Jewish people.

Yet these secular names cannot erase the fact that the mountains of Israel have a deep place in the hearts and souls of the Jewish people, and that they have always been at the heart of the Zionist dream of the return of the people to the land of their forefathers. When Theodor Herzl promoted the idea of the Jewish people returning to Zion, thereby formulating the tenets of political Zionism, it’s likely he was thinking of the territory including the Biblical Heartland.

The Biblical Heartland was part of the Mandate for Palestine (1922 – 1948), which was established after WWI to enable the reconstitution of the Jewish homeland ‘in Palestine’. No-one doubted then that territory known as ‘Palestine’ included the ‘Biblical Heartland’ and that the Jewish homeland would include the Biblical Heartland. But when the Mandate came to an end, and the State of Israel was established in May 1948, the Biblical Heartland was captured in an illegal attack on the new State by Jordan, who renamed this region their own ‘West Bank’. It was only in the Six-Day War in June 1967 that Israel (miraculously) evicted the Jordanians and gained control over the Biblical Heartland (and a lot more territory as well).

Since the early 1970s, many nations in the UN and other multilateral organisations such as the EU have taken the position that the Biblical Heartland of Israel – the Old City of Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria – does not, cannot and will not belong to Israel.

Today, the European Union and a majority of nations in the UN are determined to end Israel’s presence in these territories and ensure that these territories become part of an Islamic ‘State of Palestine’. The official EU position is expressed as follows:

**This is not only unfair and dishonest, and a fundamental breach of Israel’s right to be treated as a sovereign state and resolve its own border disputes without external interference. It is also a big mistake.**

*“The European Union, in line with international law, does not recognise Israel’s sovereignty over the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967, namely the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and does not consider them to be part of Israel’s territory, irrespective of their legal status under domestic Israeli law. The Union has made it clear that it will not recognise any changes to pre-1967 borders, other than those agreed by the parties to the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP).”*

Note the words: ‘in line with international law’ which are critical. They suggest that international law is very clear on this point. Nothing could be further from the truth. There are many divergent opinions among international law experts about this. Some say they belong to Israel, for various reasons such as (1) the 1920 San Remo resolution effectively conferred sovereignty on the Jewish people, or (2) the Mandate conferred rights on the Jewish people to settle the land, or (3) the international law principle of *uti possidetis juris* means that the administrative boundaries of the Mandate became the borders of the State of Israel

upon its creation in 1948. Others say they belong to the ‘Palestinian people’, or that they are (or will become) part of the ‘State of Palestine’. Others have argued that sovereignty over these territories is ‘in abeyance’. Some say these territories cannot be a part of Israel because they are ‘occupied’ or because Israel took them through the use of force (the UN Charter forbids the acquisition of territory by force). But whatever the relative merits of these arguments, the point is that there is no clear consensus on the legal status of

the Biblical Heartland, and there are no international tribunals who can make a definitive or binding decision on this. Not even the International Court of Justice can, without Israel’s consent, make a binding decision on the legal status of the Biblical Heartland.

It is important to understand that the EU and other nations are using references to international law to support what is, in essence, a political decision: they want the Biblical Heartland to be part of a State of Palestine. And in order to justify that view, they state that international law supports it. They are trying to enforce their own view on this issue, without regard for the views of Israel or of others who dispute their political perspective.

This is not only unfair and dishonest, and a fundamental breach of Israel’s right to be treated as a sovereign state and resolve its own border disputes without external interference. It is also a big mistake. The nations that continue with this policy of dividing the land will discover they are on a collision course with God, who is re-establishing His people Israel on the mountains of Israel – never to be uprooted.

Prayer Points

By Pieter Bénard

Israel

- *Isaiah 41:10*: “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was unable to form a coalition and Israel will go back to the polls on 17 September. The country faces several major challenges. Pray for Israel during this political crisis.
- Pray for a peaceful election campaign, that leaders of political parties will treat each other with respect and be honest towards the voters.
- Pray for a good summer period for Israel, that the many tourists who are planning to visit Israel this summer will be a comfort and blessing to the Jewish people.
- Summers in Israel can be very hot and dry. Pray that there will be no wildfires.

Israel & the Nations

- Pray for the Islamic countries surrounding Israel. Pray that many Muslims may come to faith and may see that God loves Israel and that the Jewish people are God’s chosen people.
- Pray for peace in the land of Israel. Pray that when Israel is threatened from all sides, Christians may form a wall of prayer around the country.

- Unfortunately, anti-Semitism is on the rise, especially in Europe. Pray that Jews from Europe who want to make aliyah have sufficient means to do so. Pray for God’s protection of the Jews in Europe.
- *Genesis 22:18*: “...and through your offspring, all nations on earth will be blessed because you have obeyed me.” Give thanks for this promise to Abraham’s descendants, the Jewish people.

Christians for Israel

- Pray for health and strength for all representatives of Christians for Israel around the world. Pray that they will have time and peace for this important work and spiritual inspiration.
- Give thanks that Christians for Israel can publish the newspaper ‘*Israel & Christians Today*’ along with several other publications. Pray for inspiration for the editors and that they will choose the right topics for the articles.
- *John 17:11*: “I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.” Pray for unity in the Church and unity among Jews and Christians.

For daily Prayer Points, go to our website [www.c4israel.org](https://www.c4israel.org)



## Short News

## Trees in Impact Craters



Traces of missiles are visible in the Israeli earth along the Gaza border. Impact craters are everywhere. Students of the pre-military academy Mieratim know what to do with them: they plant trees in them. "Then something good will come forth from this evil". | Photo: Unitedwithisrael.org

## Synagogue Collapses

In Pidhaitsy, Western Ukraine, stood an old synagogue from the sixteenth century. With an emphasis on 'stood'. The largely neglected and dilapidated synagogue was no longer able to resist the heavy rainfall at the beginning of May 2019. One of the pillars collapsed and with that the entire synagogue.

## Germany Backs Israel



The unfair treatment of Israel in the UN has been a known fact for years. But the German government has recently stated that the country is seriously concerned about this anti-Israel bias. On the 70th anniversary of Israel's UN membership (1949), the German Minister for Foreign Affairs Heiko Maas said that: "Germany will always dedicate itself to this cause, under which in the UN, that Israel's right to exist will never be brought up for discussion." | Photo: UN

## Aid for Developing Countries

Countries in Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia and South America can count on Israel's knowledge and expertise. The fact is that Israel is going to assist the World Bank in its efforts to promote digital security in developing countries. Israel joins the team of Japan, United Kingdom, Finland, Denmark and Norway, amongst others.

## Bulletproof Rucksack

The Israeli company Massada-Armour developed a rucksack - especially for school age children - that in just a few seconds can serve as a bulletproof vest. Both on the front and back they are protected against revolver shots, and in the advanced version against rifle shots as well. The rucksack weighs only 3kg.

## EU on Collision Course with Israel

The EU is undergoing a decisive transition, which seems likely to lead to increased EU criticism of Israeli policies, and escalating tensions between Brussels and Jerusalem.

Following the recent elections of a new European Parliament, in which a number of 'right-wing' parties gained significant influence, the most important top executive jobs are about to be handed over to a new generation of highly politicised Eurocentric bureaucrats. As Soeren Kern reports at Gatestone Institute:

"After weeks of frenzied backroom wrangling, European leaders on 2 July nominated four federalists to fill the top jobs of the European Union. The nominations — which must be approved by the European Parliament — send a clear signal that the pro-EU establishment has no intention of slowing its relentless march toward a European superstate, a 'United States of Europe,' despite a surge of anti-EU sentiment across the continent."

Of particular concern is the fact that Spanish Foreign Minister Josep Borrell has been nominated to replace Federica Mogherini as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Kern: "Like Mogherini, Borrell is a well-known supporter of the mullahs in Iran and is likely to clash with the United States and Israel over the nuclear deal with Tehran."

Borrell, who worked on a kibbutz in Israel as a young man, once spoke out strongly in favour of the right of Israel to exist as a Jewish state within secure borders. But in recent years, he has been an outspoken critic of Israel, and a supporter of the recognition of Palestinian statehood as a solution to the stalemate in negotiations between Israel and the PLO.

In a scathing op-ed on 18 May 2018, the Spanish Foreign Minister condemned Israel for its response to the riots on the Gaza border four days earlier, which coincided with the 70th anniversary of the creation of the State of Israel and the opening of the US Embassy in Jerusalem.

These celebrations were "covered in blood as this black Monday reflects the dehumanisation of the Palestinians by a large part of the Israeli political class and society," he wrote in the Spanish newspaper Republica.

It seems likely that, if he is confirmed as head of the European External Action Service – the executive arm of the EU Foreign Council of Ministers – Borrell will continue the European foreign policies set in place under his predecessor Mogherini. Two of those policies caused a major rift between Brussels and Jerusalem.

## Iran

The first is the EU position concerning Iran. For Israel, Iran – which finances and promotes terror groups throughout the Middle East, including Syria and Lebanon, aimed at the destruction of Israel and other western interests – is existential threat number one. As is well known, the EU has been the major proponent of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) negotiated in 2015 between the 'P5+1' (the five Permanent Members of the UN Security Council – US, Russia, China,



From left: Ursula Von Der Leyen, President of the European Commission; Charles Michel, President of the European Council; Christine Lagarde, President of the European Central Bank; and Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. | Photo: European Council

France and the UK – plus Germany), the EU and Iran, requiring Iran to scale down its nuclear program in return for lifting of certain sanctions.

The first sanctions against Iran were imposed by the United States in November 1979 after the start of the US Embassy hostage crisis following the Iranian Revolution in which the Islamic Republic was instituted under Ayatollah Khomeini. The sanctions imposed by the US included freezing about \$12 billion in Iranian assets, including bank deposits, gold and other properties, and a trade embargo. The United States imposed new sanctions in 1987 after Iran's actions from 1981-1987 against the US and other shipping vessels in the Persian Gulf and support for terrorism, and further expanded in 1995.

Israel has always been strongly opposed to the deal. PM Netanyahu stated at the time: "Iran is going to receive a sure path to nuclear weapons. Many of the restrictions that were supposed to prevent it from getting there will be lifted. Iran will get a jackpot, a cash bonanza of hundreds of billions of dollars, which will enable it to continue to pursue its aggression and terror in the region and in the world. This is a bad mistake of historic proportions." In April 2018, Mossad operatives managed to capture and ship thousands of hidden documents out of Tehran that proved Iran had previously pursued a nuclear weapons program. Trump cited the Israeli findings in his decision, a month later, to quit the JCPOA.

Brussels and the EU member states, especially Germany and France, were furious when the US pulled out of the deal. Josep Borrell has shown clearly that he will continue to promote the EU's cooperation with Iran and oppose both Israel's concerns about the deal and the current US Administration's confrontationist line of thinking.

In a February 19 interview with Politico, Borrell declared: "The Americans decided to kill [the Iran nuclear deal], unilaterally as they do things without any kind of the previous consultation, without taking care of what interests the Europeans have. We are not children following what they say. We have our own prospects, interests and strategy, and we will continue working with Iran. It would be very bad for us if it goes on to develop a nuclear weapon... Iran wants to wipe out Israel; nothing new about that. You have to live with it."

## The Two-State Solution

The other area of EU foreign policy in direct conflict with Israel's official position concerns Palestinian statehood. The official EU position for the last couple of decades is that the Palestinians have a right to statehood, with 'East' Jerusalem as its capital; the borders of the state are the '1967 lines' unless the PLO agrees otherwise; Israel is obliged to ensure the creation of the Palestinian state; and Israeli settlement policies are illegal and an impediment to the realisation of the 'two-state solution'.

This policy is arguably in direct conflict with the Oslo Accords, to which the EU is a signatory. In those Accords, the parties (Israel and the PLO) agreed that autonomy over the territories occupied by Jordan between 1949 and 1967 would be transferred gradually to the Palestinian Authority, subject to the achievement of certain conditions and milestones. In the meantime, Israel retains security control of Area B, and full control over Area C. The Oslo Accords – which have never been revoked – do not guarantee the creation of a Palestinian state. They also expressly state that certain 'permanent status' issues are the subject of further negotiation: (1) Jerusalem, (2) refugees, (3) settlements, (4) security arrangements, (5) borders, (6) relations and cooperation with other neighbours, and (7) other issues of common interest. The EU claims that Israel's expansive settlement policies since the collapse of the peace process and the outbreak of the First Intifada in 2000 have effectively prevented the creation of a viable Palestinian state. Israel, on the contrary, argues that Oslo does not prohibit the establishment of settlements, that settlements do not necessarily prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state, and that in any event, these are all a matter for negotiation.

The EU also alleges that Israel deliberately refuses or delays the grant of building permits to non-Israelis in Area C, and also strongly opposes Israel's policies of house demolitions and evictions in Areas A, B and C, as well as East Jerusalem. The EU has financed the construction of buildings for Bedouins in Area C – which Israel considers to be in breach of Oslo.

As Spain's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell promoted a motion in the European Parliament to recognise Palestine as an independent state, as a way of breaking through the negotiations stalemate.



# Triumph and Tragedy of Ethiopian Jews

Israel is a multi-cultural and very diverse society. There is perhaps no other country in the world that has been faced with the challenge of absorbing so many people from so many countries and cultural backgrounds in such a short period of time.

The total population in Israel today is about 8 million people. About 75% are Jews, who can be roughly divided into 'Ashkenazi' and 'Sephardi' Jews. They or their ancestors came to Israel over the last 100 years or so from about 100 countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, the Americas and Oceania. About 25% are often referred to as 'Arabs', but many of these are neither Arabs nor Muslims: the total number includes many different nationalities and religions including Arab Muslims, Bedouin, Druze and Ahmadiyya, as well as Arameans and other non-Arabs.

Of course, Israel is far from perfect, and as the story of Ethiopian Jews shows, there are many problems on the ground. These came to a head recently when 19-year-old Solomon Tekah was killed on 30 June in Haifa, by a bullet fired by an off-duty Israeli police officer.

According to The Times of Israel, the officer, who has been arrested, claims "that he was trying to break up a street fight and was set upon by three youths who hurled stones at him, endangering his life. The officer said he did not target Tekah and instead fired at the ground. A Police Internal Investigations Department probe found that the bullet ricocheted on the ground and hit Tekah, fatally wounding him."

The youth's death sparked off violent protests by Israel's Ethiopian community, which feels it has been the object of prejudice and discrimination. The government has announced the formation of a task force to tackle complaints of police violence against members of the community.

There are about 150,000 Ethiopian Jews in Israel. Most are immigrants and descendants of the immigrants from the Beta Israel communities in Ethiopia. Some are 'Falash Mura' – a community of Beta Israel who had converted to Christianity over the past two centuries but were permitted to immigrate to Israel upon returning to Judaism. Most of the community made aliyah to Israel in two waves of mass immigration assisted by the Israeli government: Operation

Moses (1984) and Operation Solomon (1991).

But the project of bringing the Ethiopian Jews home is far from finished. Many Ethiopian families in Israel are still separated from their loved ones back in Ethiopia. There are still several thousands of Jews in refugee camps in Addis Ababa and Gondar in Ethiopia awaiting aliyah.

Once in Israel, Ethiopian Jews face a massive challenge to integrate into a society completely different from where they came from. Shahar Golan reports in The Times of Israel: "The new arrivals from a rural, developing African country struggled to find their footing in an increasingly high-tech Israel. Throughout the decades, Ethiopians have suffered discrimination. In the late 1990s, it was discovered that Israel's health services were throwing out Ethiopian blood donations over fears of diseases contracted in Africa. Accusations have also been raised that Israel has deliberately tried to curb Israeli-Ethiopian birth rates. Today, Israel's Ethiopian community number ... some 2 per cent of the country's 9 million citizens. While some Israelis of Ethiopian descent have made gains in areas like the military, the police force and politics, the community continues to struggle with a lack of opportunity and high poverty rates."

Despite (or perhaps because of) the challenges, there are many examples of Ethiopian Jews who have achieved great success and made major contributions in public service, the arts, science and industry in Israel. One of these is Blue and White Knesset Member Pnina Tamano-Shata, a lawyer who became the first Ethiopian woman to be elected to the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) in 2013.

As a three-year-old, she fled the conflict in Ethiopia via refugee camps in Sudan to Israel. "We lived on an



Blue and White MK Pnina Tamano-Shata attending a Knesset committee meeting. | Photo: Flash90

extremely tight budget – my parents worked as cleaners – and they did everything in their ability to make us feel happy. When I was 11, I began cleaning in hospitals and old age homes – without my parents even knowing – and I encountered plenty of employers who took advantage of my age and didn't pay me for my work. These experiences served as an impetus for me to strive for bigger things."

After service in the IDF and earning a law degree, Ms Tamano-Shata became involved in civil service and later became a successful journalist and businesswoman. She has been an ardent activist against discrimination and racism and was awarded the Martin Luther King Award in 2016. "The more I became involved with other people, the more I realised that my experiences growing up as an Ethiopian in Israel had prepared me well to help others, too. I felt like I had a responsibility toward Israeli society to make things better. I began fighting against the racism that I'd experienced all my life. Soon enough, I found myself establishing the headquarters for the struggle for equal rights for Ethiopian Israelis."

The Israeli government faces a huge challenge to ensure the return of the Ethiopian Jews remaining in Ethiopia, and their successful integration into Israeli society.

*Continued from page 1*

"For products from Palestine that do not originate from settlements, an indication which does not mislead about the geographical origin, while corresponding to international practice, could be 'product from the West Bank (Palestinian product)', 'product from Gaza' or 'product from Palestine.'" (para 9)

"For products from the West Bank or the Golan Heights that originate from settlements, an indication limited to 'product from the Golan Heights' or 'product from the West Bank' would not be acceptable. Even if they designated the wider area or territory from which the product originates, the omission of the additional geographical information that the product comes from Israeli settlements would mislead the consumer as to the true origin of the product. In such cases, the expression 'Israeli settlement' or equivalent needs to be added, in brackets, for example. Therefore, expressions such as 'product from the Golan Heights (Israeli settlement)' or 'product from the West Bank (Israeli settlement)' could be used." (para 10)

The Notice is a strange document. It is not a separate piece of legislation and has no direct binding effect in the Member States. Its status is extremely unclear.

The Notice was the subject of much controversy in the Dutch Parliament in 2015. The then Foreign Minister Koenders, in response to questions, answered that the Dutch government regards the Notice as being applicable in the Netherlands.

IPC has rejected the NVWA's demand and refuses to change the labels until there is more clarity about EU law on this issue.

Director of Christians for Israel Netherlands, Roger van Oordt, issued a press release stating that the actions of NVWA are "simply anti-Jewish". "The EU's Notice makes a distinction between products produced by Jews and products produced by Arabs", he said. "Labelling was originally intended to ensure food safety. It has become a political instrument to put pressure on the Jewish State of Israel. That is unacceptable."

The Notice is also currently the subject of legal proceedings in France. The Notice has been implemented in French law. The Psagot Winery (whose winery is located in Benjamin, north of Jerusalem) instituted proceedings against the French Minister of Economic Affairs claiming that the Notice is invalid because it is in breach of European law. Particularly, it alleges that the notice is discriminatory because it applies to only one specific instance of 'occupied' territories, and not to other cases. The French court referred the question of the validity of the Notice to the European Court of Justice. In mid-June, the Advocate General Hogan issued his advice to the Court, in which he basically confirmed the validity of the Notice. In doing so, he adopted the faulty reasoning of the International Court of Justice in the Wall case (2004) about the status of the territories outside the Green Line.

The most concerning aspect of this is that the Advocate General completely ignores the Mandate for Palestine, and rejects out of hand (without giving any reasons) the possibility that Israel may have a legitimate claim to sovereignty over East Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria.

The Advocate General also states that the 'occupation' in itself is illegal. That is a false and misleading statement, as a belligerent occupation is not illegal under international law. But even assuming Judea and Samaria are 'occupied', he overlooks that the only thing that is possibly illegal is the Israeli policy to 'transfer or deport' Israelis into the 'occupied' territories (article 49(6) of the Fourth Geneva Convention). This means that in the case of the Hebron winery, the Dutch authorities would need to prove that the Israeli government enabled, facilitated or encouraged its establishment in Hebron - and that without the government's support, the winery would not have been established.

It is important to note that the AG did not address the arguments of Psagot that this labelling requirement is discriminatory and restricts trade. Further, as the lawyer for Psagot has noted, the AG's reasoning is very open-ended: the same requirements would have to be applied to all other cases of 'settlements' in 'occupied territories'. In fact, products from any country breaching any aspect of international law would need to mention the illegality on the label.

These cases are another example of 'lawfare' – the use of law and legal systems to impose a particular political view on others who are opposed to that view.



# Where is the Church?

■ **Rev Willem JJ Glashouwer**  
President | Christians for Israel International

A question that has been haunting me for many years is: “Where was the Church”? Today the question that is constantly on my mind is: “Where is the Church”? And that leads to a final question: “Where will the Church be”?

On 25-26 June 2019, I had the privilege to speak at the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast conference in The Hague. The theme of this meeting was: Anti-Semitism. Christian, Jewish and secular leaders came together to speak out publicly against the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe today, and reaffirm the importance of the Jewish people.

The opening session took place in the very impressive ‘Ridderzaal’ (‘Hall of Knights’) of the Dutch Parliament. Originally built in the 13th century, in a way this impressive building personifies European public life. Each year, the Dutch monarch delivers a speech in this place to the Parliament. This is the very location in which the Nazi leadership installed the Austrian Arthur Seyss-Inquart as Reichskommissar in Nazi-occupied Netherlands in 1940, leading to the slaughter in the next few years of over 70% of the Dutch Jewish population in the Nazi concentration camps – the highest percentage in Europe. So it was highly significant that the Jewish people could be honoured here, eighty years later.

Europe has an appalling history of anti-Semitism. Just read Simon Wiesenthal’s book: *Every Day Remembrance Day: A Chronicle of Jewish Martyrdom*. This chilling calendar of horrors brings together over a thousand entries detailing atrocities committed against Jewish people over the past 2000 years. Items from diverse centuries are clustered under the dates on which they occurred: on August 23, for instance, we find the massacre of the Jewish population of Koric Ukraine in 1648, and a Gestapo shooting of 16 Jews in 1942.

Often the question is asked: “Where was God”? One of the leading ‘God is dead’ theologians once said: “Since Auschwitz, I cannot believe in God any more. At least, not in a concept of God as a personal reality Who is involved in the history of this world”. One day a Jewish rabbi answered her: “Maybe even after Auschwitz I still can believe in God, but I cannot believe in Man anymore.”

My question after 2000 years of Christian anti-Semitism is not: ‘Where was God’? But my question is: ‘Where was the Church when the Jewish people needed her’?

One of the most famous Dutch theologians Dr Hans Jansen (1931-2019) once said: “The verbal attacks and boycott calls by a variety of Western Protestant, mainly liberal, denominations, as well as the World Council of Churches, have raised new interest in the origins of Christian anti-Semitism and in particular its Protestant version.

“Among the Protestants’ founding fathers, Martin Luther was particularly anti-Semitic. His writings were precursors of twentieth-century National Socialist texts. Adolf Hitler, Joseph Goebbels, and Julius Streicher gladly quoted from Luther’s works, even if he never recommended the physical destruction of the Jews. Luther did, however, advise burning synagogues in honour of God and Christianity, confiscating Jewish books, and expelling Jews from Christian countries. In 1985, the World Federation of Lutheran Churches distanced itself from these statements of Luther.

Other sixteenth-century Protestant reformers such as John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli, and Philipp Melanchthon also considered Judaism archaic but were against drawing operational conclusions from this. Another reformer, Martin Bucer, took a more favourable position toward the Jews – that is, to support the Jews.

Now that anti-Semitism is rearing its ugly head again today, my question is: Where is the Church? What is the Church doing to counter anti-Semitism?

I suspect that in the current anti-Israel positions of liberal Western churches, non-theological influences are probably more important than theological influences. Blaming Jews is for many of them a question of protecting their own spiritual welfare and of avoiding having to look into the mirror at our own past.

For several decades there has been in many Jewish circles the impression that Christian anti-Semitism was declining and would fade away in the course of a generation or two. This perception stemmed mainly from the major post-Holocaust policy change by the Roman Catholic Church in its attitude toward the Jews. But the



Inside the Ridderzaal, The Hague | Photo: Shutterstock

churches have taught antipathy to Jews for two thousand years. It is a mistake to think this can be overturned in a few decades. The new expressions of Christian hatred toward Israel reflect deep psychological processes. Somehow, aversion to Jews (and therefore aversion to a Jewish State) is ingrained in our thinking in Europe.

So my concern is: Where will the Church be tomorrow when the Jewish people need our help? This is a real, existential question for the Church. Jesus will ask us when He comes back in glory as it is written in *Matthew 25:31-46*. “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on His right and the goats on His left...”

Then He will say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink, I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in, I needed clothes, and you did not clothe Me, I was sick and in prison, and you did not look after Me...”

Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did not do for Me. Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

# Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

■ **Marie-Louise Weissenböck**  
Christians for Israel Austria

A few days before Shavuot (Pentecost), from 4-6 June 2019, the third Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast (JPB) was hosted in Jerusalem, Israel.

The JPB is a prayer movement that exists to gather government leaders and key individuals to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and the prosperity of Israel in alignment with *Psalms 122*.

Initiated and chaired by the former Knesset member and chairman of the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus,



JPB Director, Albert Veksler opens the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast 2019 with a word of greeting. | Photo: Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast

Robert Ilatov, the JPB is co-chaired by former United States Congresswoman Michele Bachmann and administered by the JPB director Albert Veksler.

The inaugural breakfast was first held in Jerusalem in June 2017 to celebrate and commemorate 50 years of a reunited Jerusalem. Since then the JPB each year has brought together Christian leaders, rabbis, Israeli officials and MPs from around the world. This year the JPB hosted around 650 delegates from over 60 countries.

A letter from President Trump was read at the gathering, in which he reaffirmed the United States’ longstanding commitment to future peace and security for the region., as well as the fact that Jerusalem is Israel’s capital.

Netanyahu expressed to all participants his thanks for their dedication and lasting friendship in a letter of welcome: “At a time when efforts are being made to deny the Jewish people’s 3,000-year-old connection to Jerusalem, we appreciate your efforts to recognise history and to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.”

Rabbi Aryeh Lightstone, senior advisor to the US Ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, urged the participants “to pray harder”. “Your prayers are going straight to heaven. SO much more needs to be done for Jerusalem.”



MK Robert Ilatov and Albert Veksler greet the participants of the JPB 2019 | Photo: Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast

Rabbi Tuly Weisz, head of Israel 365 and a keynote speaker at the event, emphasised the political importance of what was essentially an interfaith gathering. “The people who attend do so in the knowledge that prayer is the way to push plans forward,” he said.

The rabbi cited Ruth as the archetypal non-Jew praying for the Jewish people. To conclude the event, Rabbi Weisz led the participants in a recitation of *Ruth 1:16*: ‘But Ruth replied, “Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God.”’ (*The Israel Bible*).



## Short News

Church of the Nativity  
in Bethlehem Saved

The UN cultural authority says that the Church of the Nativity of Bethlehem is no longer considered a World Heritage Site 'at risk', thanks to extensive restoration work. The UNESCO World Heritage Committee decided to take the church and the nearby pilgrim's path from the list of endangered places, due to the "high quality of work" on the leaking roof, broken windows, damaged columns and grass-covered mosaics. The church was built in the 4th century over a cave in which the Virgin Mary is said to have given birth to the baby Jesus. The extensive renovation under the leadership of the Palestinian Authority has been ongoing since 2012. At times almost the whole church was scaffolded. | Photo: Pravmir.com

## Arab Runs Bank Leumi

Israel's largest bank, Bank Leumi, has appointed Samer Haj Yehia as Chairman of its Board of Managing Directors. The 48-year-old has been a director at Leumi since 2014. He thus became the first Arab chairman of an Israeli bank. His appointment is still subject to approval by the Bank of Israel, said Leumi. Haj Yehia is a board member of a number of companies, including Hadassah Medical Center and Strauss Group. He holds a PhD in Economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was Vice President of Fidelity Capital Markets from 2006-2012. Since 1990, Haj has been a senior lecturer at universities such as MIT, Harvard and Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

## Israeli Flag in Space



What do you take along in a spacecraft as an American astronaut? An Israeli flag! It doesn't sound logical, and yet that is exactly what Jessica Meir will do when she goes on a mission in space in September 2019. The Israeli president Rivlin extended a special word of thanks: "Thank you for taking us along on your world tour in space. We are so proud of you." | Photo: flickr

A Cruel Assignment  
- Psalm 2 - Part 6b

Ancient pot of clay from the First Temple period found in 2016. This gate-shrine from the First Temple period (eighth century BCE) is perceived by archeologists as compelling evidence of King Hezekiah's efforts to abolish worship there, the Israel Antiquities Authority said. | Photo: Flash90

■ **Johannes Gerloff**  
Theologian, Journalist, Lecturer & Author

**This article is the sixth instalment (split into 2 parts) in a series of contributions to the interpretation of Psalm 2.**

## The Coming Messiah...

According to the testimony of the New Testament, it is first of all the exalted Messiah, who, two thousand years ago, went His way from the crib to the cross as suffering Christ and in the near future will come back as ruler of the world in order to govern the nations. In *Revelation 1:16*, He is the One 'out of whose mouth a sharp, double-edged sword' comes, with which He will smite the Gentiles. In principle, John the seer paraphrases *Psalm 2:9* in *Revelation 19:15*: "He shepherds them with an iron rod. He stamps the winepress of the wine of the fierce wrath of the Almighty God."

With this, the New Testament picks up what the prophets of ancient Israel had seen. Isaiah describes the "sprig from the trunk of Isaiah" as the one who "strikes the land with the rod of his mouth". "With the spirit of his lips, he kills evil" (*Isaiah 11:4*). In *chapter 49*, Isaiah describes the Servant of the Lord, whose mouth God has set "like a sharp sword" (*verse 2*). Strangely blurry – and we keep that as observation for the following – the prophet explicitly identifies this Servant of the Lord, who as an individual person has been called "from the womb of his mother" (*verse 1*) with the collective nation of Israel (*verse 3*).

The German Old Testament scholar Franz Delitzsch wrote in the 19th century: "The office of the Messiah is not only that of Saviour but also of Judge. Redemption is the beginning and the judgment the end of His work... The Lord himself frequently refers in the Gospels to the fact of His bearing side by side with the sceptre of peace and the shepherd's staff, the sceptre of iron also, *Mat. xxiv. 50 sq.*,

*xxi. 44, Luke xix. 27*. The day of His coming is indeed a day of judgment – *Apoc. vi. 17*."

Undoubtedly, *Psalm 2:9* describes the process *Zechariah 9:9-10* tells us about, where the One who two thousand years ago entered Jerusalem "poor" "on a donkey, on a donkey's foal," will destroy "the chariot from Ephraim" and "the horse from Jerusalem" – that is, the most powerful weapons systems imaginable at that time. He summarises: "The bow of battle will be eradicated." When the messianic king commands peace to the Gentiles who rebel against Him, then the first step may be a smashing, as *Psalm 2* describes it. In the end, it will lead to a situation in which "His rule will stretch from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the land."

If we have the five hermeneutical levels of *Psalm 2* in mind, it is conceivable that the regional policy of King David three thousand years ago mirrored on a small scale this scenario, which today has global proportions.

## ...His People Israel...

*Psalm 110:2* says that "the Lord will send out the rod of His power from Zion". *Micah 4:13* gets more concrete by requiring: "Get up and thresh, daughter Zion. Because I make your horn of iron, I make your hooves bronze. You will crush many nations." *Isaiah 41:15-16* and *Zechariah 12:6* are further texts describing a similar scenario in which the nation of Israel is used by God to judge Gentile peoples.

## ...and us?

No, I do not want to read any instructions for action from this text to the Jewish people or its modern State of Israel – and most certainly I do not wish to justify any injustice committed in war. I am not entitled to do so. Nor would it help in any way those who became or will become guilty in the turmoil of armed conflict.

But what if these prophetic texts predict scenarios in order to prepare us to do the

right thing at the right moment?

Undoubtedly, the biblical context sees the eschatological messianic king as not only judge for the nations, but also His people Israel as a tool of judgement. And the *Book of Revelation*, which mentions the sword of judgement for the nations twice in viewing the exalted Christ (*Revelation 12:5; 19:15*), also sees it once in the hand of a victorious follower of Messiah. In *Revelation 2:26-27*, the Risen One says: "He who overcomes and keeps my works to the end, to him I give authority over the Gentile nations. He will shepherd them with an iron rod; he will smash them like pots of clay."

This does not mean that we, as followers of Jesus, should take the sword out of the hand of our returning Lord and hit out – certainly not ahead of time. But the Bible shows us that the Lord involves the people of Israel and us in His dealings with this world, not only in grace but also in judgement.

As a stimulus for further thought: The second part of the book of Isaiah repeatedly suggests a similar scenario as here in *Psalm 2*. I myself have experienced war several times and personally know soldiers who suffer from terrible feelings of guilt in the framework of war. No one who goes to war will get away without trauma. That's why I've become very careful not to envy anyone because he is chosen, or even to wish for election myself.

*Isaiah 40* begins with the words, "Comfort, comfort my people!" The prophet speaks of an end to "military service" (Luther translated 'bondage') and does not trivialise guilt and failure in any way. God rarely reveals anything to us unless it concerns us directly. Therefore, the question arises: If *Psalm 2* speaks into our time, what is our mission?

**The full text of this article, including extensive footnotes, can be found at [www.cqisrael.org/teaching-articles/](http://www.cqisrael.org/teaching-articles/)**



# Inauguration of C4I Solomon Islands

## ■ Ian Worby

Regional Director | Christians for Israel Oceania

After attending this year's Christians for Israel (C4I) International Biennial Forum in Israel, and the Study Tour to Israel, Pastor Geoffrey Alakey, representing the local 'Awakening the Nations', invited International President Rev Willem Glashouwer to speak and officially launch C4I in the Solomon Islands.

Plans were coordinated for both Rev Willem Glashouwer and newly appointed C4I International Executive Director, Rev Cornelis Kant, to come via Brisbane to Honiara, the capital of the Solomons, for a three-day 'Signs of the Times' conference from 14-16 July.

Unfortunately, just days before the event, Rev Glashouwer took ill and was unable to travel. Fortunately for us, Rev Cornelis Kant, Keith Buxton (C4I Australia) and Ian Worby were available to fill the speaking events.

Keith Buxton is an ordained pastor with years of experience working in the islands of Papua New Guinea and Australia. Keith was the former National Director for 'Bridges for Peace', a similar pro-Israel Christian organisation, for over ten years. He has led many tours to Israel and has a very unique teaching style using short video clips to show the

modern-day miracle of the regathering and rebirth of Israel.

After a welcome dinner, we had several morning events, with Keith and Ian speaking at Bibleways Church and Cornelis speaking at another church.

Sunday evening was the official launch of the conference by the Prime Minister Hon. Manasseh D. Sogavare, who gave a powerful address of his support for Israel and why it is an important challenge for Christian leaders to decide whom they will stand with. We pray that the Solomon Islands will continue to be a 'sheep nation' when they vote in the UN. To this end, Cornelis Kant presented the Secretary-General and the PM's Private Secretary with Andrew Tucker's new book, *Israel On Trial* as a valuable resource in answering many of the lies and propaganda against Israel.

The opening event started with a flag ceremony of all the nations of Oceania and closed with a very moving flag ceremony, this time with the Israeli flag symbolically leading the way. Over 300 people, including many Christian pastors and civic and government leaders,



From left: Keith Buxton, Geoffrey Alakey, Rev Cornelis Kant, PM Manasseh D. Sogavare, Ian Worby and Ronald Fugui, PM's Secretary

attended the events, with many travelling some distance to attend from Cook Islands, Fiji and Papua New Guinea.

A lot of people purchased Willem's new book, *The Signs of the Times* and *Why Israel?* books, DVDs and study guides. Over 200 newspapers were distributed as valuable teaching aides in fulfilment of C4I's three main activities: Inform, Inspire and Comfort. We hope to return to the Solomon Islands with more teaching and development of the fledgling new Christians for Israel chapter in the islands of Oceania. Please continue to pray for the local team.

## Visit 'Down Under' Rev Kant Visits Kiwis



From left: Rev Cornelis Kant, Mr Chew, Rudy Oie, Eric Belcher, Robert & Katherine Steele and Katherine Chew

## ■ Rev Cornelis Kant

Executive Director | Christians for Israel International

After being the director of Christians for Israel International for a year, it was high time to visit our Australian team. It was heartwarming to meet all the volunteers at the office in Springwood (Brisbane) and see their dedication to the ministry.

In the studio of Vision Radio, I had an interview about Christians for Israel with Matt Prater, an enthusiastic radio presenter with humour. Listeners could call the Vision studio to ask questions. Many of them did and asked questions like: "Will the Temple literally be rebuilt in the future?", or "Do we as Christians have to obey the Old Testament law?"

In Sydney, I had a meeting under the leadership of Pastor Paul Kim, and we had a profound conversation about the genesis of replacement theology in church history. "What is the spiritual significance in our times of Christians so divided about Israel's place in God's plan and our Christian faith?" This was a question one of them asked us, which touched us all. We agreed about the huge importance of

spreading the message about Israel in our churches.

In Melbourne, Pastor Enoch Lavender and I spoke at the Shalom Israel Conference. What a blessing when you witness and discover the evidence of Israel being a Sign of the Times according to the prophetic Word of God in both the Old and New Testaments. "*Israel and Christians Today* is the best newspaper about Israel I've ever seen", a woman told me during a coffee break of the conference. How impressive. For us, the newspaper is so familiar. Let us hope and pray God may bless the spreading of the newspaper in Australia, so that many people may be inspired and encouraged.

I was invited by Pastor Phil Mercer to preach about Israel in the Trinity Presbyterian Church. I told the visitors about our wonderful experience in the Solomon Islands, where we inaugurated a new Christians for Israel team (see Ian Worby's article above). After the church service, three elderly people told me: "Long ago our father was a missionary on the Solomon Islands and they were challenging times." How wonderful, because now we could witness how blessed their work has been.



From left: Denis Smith, Cathy Eksteen, Cathy Coldicutt, Graham Simpson, Cornelis Kant, Robert Siakimotu and Bryce Turner

## ■ Bryce Turner

Executive Director | Christians for Israel New Zealand

Following the Solomon Islands and Australia, Rev Cornelis Kant was able to fit in a brief but busy three-days in New Zealand. Arriving in Auckland late on Monday 22 July, Cornelis had a solid day of meetings and engagements on Tuesday with the team from Christians for Israel NZ. While modern technology allows almost effortless communication; it is quite different to be able to meet with people in person. Meeting with the Christians for Israel NZ Board gave Cornelis a great opportunity to see firsthand how the NZ affiliate operates, to share in the plans and projects for the future, and to gain an even deeper understanding of the Christians for Israel branches throughout the South Pacific. The work of Christians for Israel is growing steadily in the Pacific Islands with a wonderful team of dedicated local leaders in each island nation, who are supported by the New Zealand office. Cornelis also met with the team who, together with an international editorial panel, produce *Israel and Christians Today*. Having regularly communicated via email,

Cornelis was finally able to meet managing editor Cathy Coldicutt in person. After a gruelling schedule of meetings, Cornelis then joined the entire Christians for Israel NZ team and their families for dinner on Auckland's spectacular waterfront.

Visitors come from all over the world to see New Zealand's unique landscape and, of course, the Shire. Cornelis enjoyed a brief break from his busy schedule to visit Hobbiton, before returning to Auckland to speak at a public meeting.

Cornelis' final day in NZ included a visit to the Chief Rabbi of the Auckland Hebrew Centre, and coffee with Perry and Sheree Trotter, directors of Shadows of Shoah. A time of great encouragement to the New Zealand team, it was great to have Rev Cornelis come to visit us.



C4I NZ team and their families enjoying dinner



# Exceptional Kathmandu Conference

**■ Chan Siew Fong**  
Christians for Israel Asia Regional Trainer with input from Ms Shanti Pandey Adhikari



The Christians for Israel International 6th Asia Pacific Leadership and Training Conference held in June 2019 in Kathmandu, Nepal was exceptional in at least two ways.

Firstly, the conference took less than three months from conception at the Christians for Israel (C4I) Forum in Israel in March to implementation from 3 to 5 June. This was possible because of the amazing work of our hosts, Message of Hope Ministry, the organising committee and staff helmed by Reverend Dr Simon Pandey, C4I Representative in Nepal, who was introduced to the C4I family by Ian Worby, C4I National Leader for Australia.

Secondly, the initial response of 50 participants grew from 50 to 200 over the few days before the conference began, so the venue – Hankook Inn, at Lalitpur – was filled to overflowing. Among the local conferees, there were more than 60 participants from outside Kathmandu. International participants included delegates from Australia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Nepali conferees were astonished at the revelations they received from our speakers concerning Israel, having never heard from this perspective before. Leaders from Tikapur in



From left: Rev Dr Pandey, Ian Worby, HE Ambassador Omer, Rev Glashouwer, Shanti Pandey, Rev Cornelis Kant, Rev Dr Wilson Ng and Rev Dr Lumahan

the far west of Nepal, who had bussed almost 16 hours to Kathmandu for this milestone conference, were among those who attested to the fresh insights received. The Christians for Israel teaching team was headed by Reverend Willem Glashouwer and Reverend Cornelis Kant and supported by C4I Asia Regional Trainers, Reverend Dr Conrado Lumahan, Brother Kuen Yoon and Sister Siew Fong. Organisational powerhouses, our indefatigable C4I Asia-Pacific Director, Reverend Dr Wilson Ng and Sister Shanti Pandey Adhikari from Message of Hope Ministry, smoothed out all aspects of the conference programme.

Excited whispers permeated the hall on the third morning in anticipation of the arrival of Israel's ambassador to Nepal, His Excellency Benny Omer. His half-hour address touched on Nepal's longstanding relationship with Israel as well as initiatives of organisations in Israel to mentor young Nepalis in agriculture and education. For example, local youths may intern in Israel and return to run farms to grow the economy. By helping Nepalis to operate sustainable businesses, Israel can help to stem the brain drain of bright Nepalis to other countries. Ambassador Omer won the

hearts of all who were present with his warmth and understanding of the nation's challenges, effectively building a bridge between the Embassy and the Christian community represented at the conference. Ambassador Omer was gifted with books by Reverend Glashouwer, a copy of *Israel and Christians Today* newspaper and a copy of the *Israel 70 Years* magazine.

The two-and-a-half-days conference ended with prayers for Israel by national leaders, followed by photo-taking, with requests and assurances of further training and dialogue.

The organising team has received many letters and messages from participants expressing their gratitude for inviting them to this conference. Many pastors and church leaders were blessed by the conference sessions. Several have requested audio recordings of Reverend Willem's teaching. Participants are looking forward to receiving the Nepali version of Reverend Glashouwer's *Why Jerusalem?* and *Why End Times?*, and to attend the next Christians for Israel conference.

# Israel Gives Hope to Nepali-Speaking Refugees

**■ James E. Patrick**  
National Representative | Christians for Israel UK

**The European Nepali-Speaking Christian Network was established in 2015, to bring together Nepali believers with Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees from all over Europe who are coming to Christ in large numbers.**

Their conference on 25-27 July 2019, attended by between two and three hundred people from ten countries, was initiated and planned by Bimala Sada in her home town of Bradford, England, after a surprising encounter with Israel just a few months earlier this year.

Bimala had travelled to Israel to visit friends who work with CMJ, but being a Christian from a Hindu background, she had rejected the common Hindu worship of holy places, so did not expect Israel to be special. But she was surprised by the presence of God in the Garden of Gethsemane and at the Western Wall, and heard Jesus tell her that He had truly been there. This is a big difference with Hindu religious stories that never actually happened. She asked Garth Gilmour of CMJ if he could come and speak about Israel to Nepali-speakers, but he recommended James Patrick in his place, knowing that James was the UK representative of Christians for Israel.

In James' message on the Friday morning, he was translated into Nepali by Bimala. He told the story of

Israel's calling to live with God in the land as a blessing to all nations, and yet how Israel's sin had resulted in their exile among all nations. He quoted Jesus' promise, as the prophets said, to gather both exiled Jews and others from all nations and restore them to God as one flock. He encouraged them that God has appointed times and boundaries for every nation, and when Jesus has united believers of all nations to help the Jewish people return, then when He comes again, every nation will dwell in peace in its own land under God. The God of Israel fulfils His promise to regather the exiles from all nations, and Israel is the pattern.

Many of the Bhutanese refugees are illiterate, and Bimala explained that this would have been the first time they had ever heard about Israel. But copies of Rev Willem Glashouwer's book *Why Israel?* translated into Nepali, that were provided by Christians for Israel, were eagerly



Dr James E. Patrick with conference organiser and translator Bimala Sada. | Photo: James E. Patrick

received by those at the conference, including many church leaders. A large number of English-speaking Nepali young people were also present, and they had many good questions for James afterwards. There is now an open door to return and speak more in future.



# Jerusalem in a Nutshell

■ Sara van Oordt  
Christians for Israel Netherlands



Jerusalem is one of the most complex places on earth. We asked Chaim Silberstein (left) from Keep Jerusalem for a straight-forward explanation of

what we need to know about the city to understand the current situation.

“Let me just start with this: there is nothing straightforward about Jerusalem. But I will explain it plainly with an example. Imagine Jerusalem is a five-story building. The first floor is the geography – the ground level, so to speak. They are simply understanding where the borders of Jerusalem are. Where are the city limits? Where is the east, where is the west, the north, the south? What was part of the city before 1967 and what was part of it afterwards? That is the base. Then you have the next floor up – demographics, population. For example, how many Jews, Arabs, and Christians live in Jerusalem? Where do they live? That is an important aspect of understanding Jerusalem.

“Now we move up to the third story. This is the legal floor. Many people in Europe accuse Israel of building illegally in East Jerusalem or illegally occupying

Palestinian land. But whose is Jerusalem really according to international law? We, as religious people, believe that God gave us this land. It says so in the Bible.

“The fourth floor is security. Which security challenges and threats face Jerusalem? How do we deal with them, and where do they come from?

“These floors, which we have built up one by one, bring us to the penthouse at the top – understanding the strategic challenges facing Jerusalem. In other words, what should we do about the future of Jerusalem? Where are we going? If you want to understand the options for the future of Jerusalem (should Jerusalem remain united, should it be divided, what will bring peace), if you want to understand these incredibly difficult questions, you need to understand the bottom few stories.”

### Jerusalem Floor by Floor

“Let’s take the building that is Jerusalem apart and take a closer look at each floor. We’ll start at the bottom, the geography. In 1967, during the Six-day War, Israel was attacked by Jordan. Thank God, we were able to defeat Jordan, and East Jerusalem was liberated after nineteen years of Jordanian occupation. Jerusalem was reunited. As a result, the Israeli government moved the limits of Jerusalem to the limits as we know them today. That is geography. Now let’s move on to the demographics, [the second floor]. Approximately 890,000 people live in the city. Of these roughly 300,000 are Arab – living primarily in the eastern part of the city, and roughly 550,000 Jews – about half of which live in the eastern part of the city and half

in the western part. If you look at the total population of the city, about forty per cent is Arab. This is the reason for concern because in recent years, the number of Arab residents has increased, and the number of Jewish residents has decreased. Jews can no longer afford to live in the city, and job options are limited, so they move to other places with more affordable housing and better employment opportunities.

In contrast, Arabs are moving into Jerusalem. They usually build [housing] illegally and can find work. If this trend continues, they would be able to ‘take over’ the city council. After all, they can vote.

“As we go on to the third floor, the law, we see another problem. Arabs often think that we, the Jews, stole the land. That is not true. If someone who believes this would become mayor, however, and maybe make Jerusalem a sort of caliphate or Hamas state, it would be very bad for Israel and freedom and democracy, as well as for Christianity.”

### Lack of Knowledge

“If you dig a little deeper and get to know the history a bit, you will see that we never stole someone’s country. The people who say that we claim Palestinian land as our own are either misinformed or subconsciously antisemitic. Only a minority are antisemitic and wants to drive us out of our land. The large majority of people who think that we are on Palestinian land are simply misinformed or ignorant of the facts.”

# Over 250 Jews Arrive in their homeland: Israel

On 17 July, over 250 Jews arrived in Israel from France, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina and Russia. So far it is the largest group of *olim* (Jewish immigrants) that came to Israel this year. It is the start of a new ‘season’ of Jews exchanging their native country for their new homeland. The youngest to arrive was two months old, the oldest 79 years old.

### Fleeing Anti-Semitism

The seven immigrants from Venezuela fled a country disrupted by violence, a failing economy, lack of food and massive protests. The country’s previous president often used anti-Semitic language to criticise the country’s financial situation. This anti-Semitism convinced many Jews to leave, and the current crisis is only contributing to this.

### Warm Welcome

It was a warm welcome. Literally, because a heat wave plagued Tel Aviv. But also the enthusiasm of all present was heart-warming: Hundreds of family members were present to welcome the travellers. Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef, Minister Yoav Galant of Aliyah and Integration, and Jewish Agency Chairman Isaac Herzog were present. And a few representatives of Christians for Israel were also there to welcome the new immigrants on your behalf.



New immigrants arrive at Ben Gurion Airport.  
| Photo: David Vandeputte, Christians for Israel Belgium



New olim arrive at Ben Gurion airport and receive their Israeli passport.  
| Photo: David Vandeputte, Christians for Israel Belgium



UN Building, New York City | Photo: Shutterstock

# India Votes with Israel

■ Jackson Richman  
JNS | Article courtesy of Unitedwithisrael.com

For the first time ever, India voted in June with Israel at the United Nations against granting observer status to a Palestinian human-rights organisation named ‘Shahed’.

The motion at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was rejected by a 28-14 tally.

“Thank you India for standing with ‘Israel in UN’ and rejecting the request of terrorist organisation ‘Shahed’ to obtain the status of an observer in UN. Together we will continue to act against terrorist organisations that intend to harm,” tweeted Maya Kadosh, deputy chief of mission at the Israel embassy in India. “This is a good sign... India was the first country to support us amongst the Asia group, so we are very happy.”

“This is a truly historic vote. By taking a principled stand at the United Nations, India has finally broken a voting pattern reminiscent of the Cold War era,” Vijeta Uniyal, founder of Indians for Israel, told JNS. “In my opinion, the position taken today by Prime Minister Modi’s government finally reflects the long-held of wishes and attitudes of the Indian people.”

*In the coming months, thousands of Jews will return to Israel. Thanks to your support, we can help. Will you join us in offering these people a hopeful future in the promised land?*

*For US \$170 you help one Jewish man or woman home from Ukraine and the former Soviet Union. You can donate by completing the coupon on the back page.*



Jewish Festivals

Shabbat Chazon

Shabbat before Tish’a B’Av

10 August 2019

Shabbat Chazon (*Sabbath of vision*) takes its name from the Haftarah that is read on the Shabbat immediately prior to the mournful fast of Tisha B’Av, from the words of rebuke and doom coming from Isaiah in the *Book of Isaiah 1:1-27*. It is also referred to as the Black Sabbath due to its status as the saddest Shabbat of the year.

Tish’a B’Av

The Ninth of Av, fast commemorating the destruction of the two Temples

11 August 2019

Tish’a B’Av is an annual fast day that commemorates the destruction of both the First Temple and Second Temple in Jerusalem, which occurred about 655 years apart, but on the same Hebrew calendar date, according to tradition.

Tu B’Av

Jewish Holiday of Love

16 August 2019

Tu B’Av is a minor Jewish holiday. In modern-day Israel, it is celebrated as a holiday of love, similar to Valentine’s Day. It has been said to be a ‘great day for weddings’.

Shabbat Nachamu

Shabbat after Tish’a B’Av

17 August 2019

Shabbat Nachamu (*Sabbath of comforting*) takes its name from the haftarah from Isaiah in the *Book of Isaiah 40:1-26* that speaks of ‘comforting’ the Jewish people for their suffering. It the first of seven haftarahs of consolation leading up to the holiday of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.

Leil Selichot

Prayers for forgiveness in preparation for the High Holidays

21 September 2019

Selichot are Jewish penitential poems and prayers, said in the period leading up to the High Holidays, and on Fast Days. In the Ashkenazi tradition, it begins on the Saturday night before Rosh Hashanah. If, however, the first day of Rosh Hashanah falls on Monday or Tuesday, Selichot are said beginning the Saturday night prior to ensure that Selichot are recited at least four times.

Rosh Hashanah

The Jewish New Year

30 September - 1 October 2019

Rosh Hashanah (literally *head of the year*) is the Jewish New Year. It is the first of the High Holidays or Yamim Noraim (*Days of Awe*), celebrated ten days before Yom Kippur. Rosh Hashanah is observed on the first two days of Tishrei, the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is described in the Torah as Yom Teru’ah, a day of sounding (*the Shofar*).

9<sup>th</sup> Thesis: Jerusalem



Yevgeny Vuchetich Sculpture: Let Us Beat Swords into Ploughshares, UN Headquarters. | Photo: flickr

Kees de Vreugd

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

In this article, we continue our discussion of the ‘Twelve Theses of Faith on Israel’ published by Christians for Israel.

**Thesis 9:** We believe that the City of Jerusalem is the place where the Lord again will make His Holy Name dwell.

**Elaboration:** In eager expectation we are looking forward to the moment that Jerusalem will be the praise in all the earth. Then the nations will go up to the mountain of the Lord, for Torah will go

out from Zion, the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Finally, peace and righteousness will cover the earth, and the nations shall train for war no more (*Isaiah 2:2-4*).

**Clarification:** The aforementioned hope is based upon the words of the prophet *Isaiah 2:2-4* and *Micah 4:1-4*. It is expressed magnificently in the statue made by Evgeny Vuchetiv that has been given its proper place in the garden close to the United Nations building in New York. Without a shadow of doubt this can be an inspiration for those in the United Nations who are trying to come to the proper decisions with regard to world peace. But unfortunately, there is no mentioning that such will only be the case if and when Torah shall go forth from Jerusalem!

Hizki Laluyan

Christians for Israel Indonesia

**Comment:** What does it mean to me? What is the importance of this belief?

My faith is strengthened, believing that Jerusalem will be the place where the Lord will again make His holy name dwell, as the prophet Isaiah prophesies (*Isaiah 2:2-4*). I truly believe that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob always fulfills what he has said.

The city of Jerusalem has always been significant to Christians. The Bible has nearly 800 references to Jerusalem as the city of our God. It is recorded that in Jerusalem, Jesus ministered, was crucified,

was resurrected and ascended to heaven.

We know from *Romans 11:17* that we Gentiles, who are believers in Yeshua, are grafted into the ‘olive tree’, namely the people of Israel for whom the city of Jerusalem is central to their identity. As a result, the national history of Israel becomes a part of our spiritual history.

Sadly, in my findings, throughout church history, Christians had little regard for anything Jewish because they saw themselves having replaced the Jewish people as God’s chosen people. Instead, they were focused on the heavenly Jerusalem. I must admit, I used to have similar thoughts as well.

Last March, I visited Israel for the first time. I stayed in Jerusalem for two nights and had time to explore the city.

I began to understand more clearly why Jerusalem is so important. The prophet Isaiah envisioned Jerusalem being the world’s centre where the nations will be taught the Law of the Lord, will beat their swords into ploughshares, and learn war no more. This new, deeper understanding of Jerusalem helps me to stand for Israel and the Jewish people. It gives me peace as well, knowing that the concept that Christians have replaced the Jews as the chosen people, is not correct.

If we are truly aiming for world peace, then we must not forget the importance of Jerusalem as the place where the Prince of Peace shall come.

Book Review



When you love reading and language, a well written, well-composed story is a joy to read. Just as you can marvel at the beauty of a building or a musical

composition, you can appreciate the way an author has woven language into a story, how he or she describes details, uses certain words or expressions and chooses metaphors. With such kind of joy have I read Kay Wilson’s book ‘*The Rage Less Traveled*’. And this strangely eases the gruesome story she tells.

“Over what sounds like soup bubbling, birds twitter and flies hum. It is a bewitching noise that woos me to close my eyes. Eternal sleep, kind and tender, is beckoning me. Warm and at peace, my mind drifts, thinking pleasantly how, once-upon-a-world-ago, I went for a walk in a beautiful forest. That was then. And then is gone.

While thinking this, I gaze lazily at a soggy mass of maroon in the bushes. Kristine. That’s Kristine!”

On December 18, 2010, Israeli tour guide Kay Wilson and her American Christian friend Kristine Luken went for a hike through the Matta Forest, near Beit Shemesh. There, two Arab

terrorists ambushed them and butchered them with machetes, murdering Kristine. Kay, however, barely survived. Stabbed 13 times, gagged, bound and barefoot, she managed to stumble back through the woods until she reached a recreational area where people helped her and called an ambulance.

‘*The Rage Less Traveled*’ is Kay’s vivid recollection of these events and the process that followed. The period of recovery, of dealing with trauma, of facing her killers in court and meeting Kristine’s parents. It’s a journey that no one who hasn’t stared terror in the eyes can really relate to. Yet, Kay manages to tell it in such a way that you’ll begin to understand what coping with trauma really means.

“Hearing the replay of Kristine’s whimpers began the night I spoke to her father in hospital. It came from nowhere and has not left me since. Neither the chatter of my friends, talk radio, a barking dog, a boiling kettle, nor any other noise, mutes this tinnitus of death. For hours on end, I swivel my fingers in my ears and try to gouge out her cries. Soon there is a squelch. My ears are warm and wet. When someone pulls out my fingers, they are covered in waxy blood.”

Kay’s ‘lifelong road to recovery’, as she puts it in her foreword, is a bumpy road, filled with moments of

desperation, disbelief and survivor’s guilt. In telling how she faced all this, she’s frightfully honest, painting her darkest thoughts in bright colours.

“They’ve found Kristine’s body.”

She flings her face into the mattress and sobs. I, on the other hand, let my eyes drift up to the curtain rings. (...) Each time I count, I come up with a different number. I can’t concentrate. With her incessant ‘I’m so sorry I’m so sorry’ and never-ending howling, Hannah is disturbing me. How very inconsiderate.

Finally, she stops. Thank God for that.”

And yet, Kay’s story is filled with subtle humour, which makes her book a light read, despite the heavy subject. Her descriptions of the people involved, the little flashbacks that she uses to introduce her friends, the way she warmly describes Kristine Luken, it all attests to Kay’s choice of life over death.

In the end ‘*The Rage Less Traveled*’ is an amazing testimony of love for life, of hope and resilience. A testimony echoing the history of the Jewish people, who, throughout the ages, have always chosen life in the face of death.

**The Rage Less Traveled; Kay Wilson, \$14.99 can be ordered from amazon.com. ISBN: 978-1733752206. An audiobook read by the author will be available soon.**

By Ruben Ridderhof



# Bible Versions and Israel

## ■ Rev Cornelis Kant

Executive Director | Christians for Israel International

Over the last decades, numerous versions of new Bible translations have been published. Bible Societies want to translate the Bible as a more and more understandable book for a broader public. But translating also means interpreting. Does the original meaning of the text in its Hebrew or Greek language remain, or has it been replaced by something else? Let us see what happened with two Bible passages that explicitly speak about Israel: *Romans 11:28* and *Galatians 6:16*.

### Romans 11:28

“As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but concerning the election, they are beloved for the sake of the fathers” (*New King James Version*). The Jewish people are called “enemies for your sakes”. So their enmity concerning the gospel has a divine purpose – it is for our sake, that is, to benefit the Gentiles spiritually. But concerning the election, they remain beloved. In *verse 32*, Paul concludes about the Jewish people that God will have mercy upon all. So their being “enemies” is limited, instrumental and temporary. But how do the more recent Bible versions translate this passage?

Good News Translation (*GNT*) says: “Because they reject the Good News, the Jews are God’s enemies for the sake of you Gentiles. But because of God’s choice, they are his friends because of their ancestors.” Here suddenly the Jews are being called: “God’s enemies” That’s a huge allegation. The original Greek text does not say enemies “of God”. That is really an addition. By using the word ‘enemies’ Paul indicates some kind of enmity between the gospel and the Jewish people, but he does not call them enemies of God. That would be something totally different, and of a deeper dimension. The *GNT* also mentions the reason why: “Because they reject the Good News”. That is not a translation, but an interpretation and addition. And what implications are such additions intended to have in the minds and heads of the readers?

Are the translators trying to put the Jewish people in a negative light and suggest that their role has been played out?

Further, “beloved” (from the Greek *agapè*) has been degraded to “friends”.

The New Revised Standard Version (*NRSV*) also calls the Jews: “enemies of God”.

The English Standard Version (*ESV*) also has a so-called ‘Anglicised Version’ (*ESVUK*), and this version also translates this passage as “enemies of God”.

### Galatians 6:16

“And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God” (*New King James Version*). Paul warns his readers in this chapter not to “boast in your flesh”, but “in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ”. He emphasises it is all about being “new creation in Christ” Then Paul says: “as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them”. And then he follows saying: “and upon the Israel of God”. So by using the word “and” Paul makes a distinction between those who follow this rule and Israel of God. Both receive peace and mercy. So the church as the body of Christ and Israel are distinct, and both receive peace and mercy. Israel has not been replaced by the church. But how do the more recent Bible versions translate this passage?

The New International Version (*NIV*) says: “Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule—to [b] the Israel of God”. The word “and” (the Greek *kai*) has been removed. So “the Israel of God” is now not any more distinct but only a description or a specific indication of “those who follow this rule”. Only in a footnote, they add the word “and” as another option. This can be interpreted as if the church is now the new Israel.

The Revised Standard Version (*RSV*) says: “Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God.” Here the word “and” has also been removed, by



| Photo: Lightstock

which the Israel of God has been reduced to just a description of the former.

Good News Translation (*GNT*) says: “As for those who follow this rule in their lives, may peace and mercy be with them—with them and with all of God’s people!” Here even “Israel” has disappeared and been replaced by “all of God’s people”, whoever that may be.

You don’t need to be a theologian to conclude that those translators had something in mind concerning Israel. Making the Bible more understandable and accessible for a broader public is a very good intention. But concerning Israel and the Jewish people, passages have been changed, and words have been removed, which have nothing to do with making the Bible more understandable.

So we have to be cautious in our choice of which Bible version to use. I suggest the following test: “Does my favourite Bible version honestly reflect the meaning of the original Hebrew or Greek text?”

# Walking in the Dust of Our Rabbi - Part 1

## ■ Mandy Worby

Christians for Israel Australia

Throughout the centuries, different countries have pictured Jesus through the lens of their own culture. An artist in Peru would paint Him with dark braided hair and a poncho with a Peruvian face, while artists in Europe have painted Him with blond hair and blue eyes and the Ethiopians portray Him as a tall black man. None of them ever stop to ask what a Jew from 2000 years ago would have looked like.

An example is Leonardo da Vinci’s famous painting of the Last Supper. That painting influenced much of Christendom’s understanding of that event, but most people are unaware of the fact that it is culturally and biblically wrong in almost every detail. The ‘Last Supper’ was actually a Passover Feast but the painting shows the meal taking place during the daytime. Passover meals always take place at night; the people in the painting are white Caucasians instead of Semitic people with darker skin and dark hair; there are none of the necessary elements of the Passover meal on the table; there is ordinary leavened bread like bread rolls instead of unleavened Matza, and the meal of what appears to be grilled eels and oranges is completely non-kosher so would not have been eaten at any time, and certainly not during a Passover meal. They were sitting on chairs at a table, whereas during the actual event, they would have reclined on soft cushions around a low table on the floor. It is important for us to look at Jesus and what He said

and did, through the Hebrew cultural eyes of those living in Israel 2000 years ago. Jesus’s teachings were life-changing, and to His first followers what He taught was astounding.

The disciples left all their earthly belongings and risked their relationships in order to follow Him. Yet, as earth-shattering as Jesus’s teaching was 2000 years ago in a Jewish cultural context, we modern readers react to His words and actions with a ho-hum attitude sometimes because we don’t understand the context and setting. We simply read words on a page, quickly passing over their significance. But what if we were to scrub away the past 20 centuries of western influence and thinking and look at the original context of what Jesus said and did. While His words would not change, they would carry greater insight and significance.

During Jesus’ lifetime, the environment and cultural setting consisted of rabbis, synagogues, nomads, farmers, shepherds, despotic kings, brutal oppressive regimes, and distinctive traditions, rituals and ceremonies.

The very first church, birthed in Jerusalem, included many eyewitnesses who had seen all Jesus did. They knew the people involved in the events that happened around Him. When you read the first chapters in the book of Acts you can almost feel their excitement and passion. Their honesty and faith is very evident in their prayers. They were joyful when they met together, and they were incredibly generous toward each other.

Most people do not realise that the very first church in

the *Book of Acts* was made up entirely of Jews who continued to study Torah. (Remember that the New Testament hadn’t been written at that time.) They worshipped in the Jewish Temple, maintained the celebration of the feasts and recognised Jesus as the fulfilment of every aspect of the feast; and they kept the Sabbath. In fact, the church didn’t have any contact with Gentiles until Peter had his vision of the unclean animals in the sheet when he was staying in Jaffa. He then promptly went to the house of the Gentile, Cornelius, at Caesarea. That was almost a decade after the events listed in *Acts chapter 2*!

When you compare the conduct of the Jewish congregations with Gentile congregations it is obvious that the Jewish church was in a far healthier condition because they already had an amazing understanding of the Bible – they’d been raised in it their whole lives. The Gentile church at Corinth, for example, was a mess. They were selfish, greedy, immoral, self-indulgent and they were proud of it. But the Jerusalem church – all Jews – were for the most part, thoughtful, generous, selfless, moral and righteous in their behaviour. The Jewish church wasn’t given to the same level of worldliness that the Gentile church was because they already understood the precepts of God as laid out in the Torah – the Jewish Scriptures.

**Part 2 will be published in the October Israel & Christians Today. These studies are based on the book ‘Walking In The Dust Of Rabbi Jesus: How The Jewish Words of Jesus Can Change Your Life’ by Lois Tverberg. [www.ourrabbijesus.com](http://www.ourrabbijesus.com)**



# Palestinians Miss Another Opportunity

■ **Andrew Tucker**  
International Editor | Christians for Israel

It was former Israeli diplomat Abba Eban who once famously stated: “The Arabs never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity”. Today, an increasing number of Arab leaders are realising they may have a unique opportunity they should not miss. It is the Palestinians who are missing yet another opportunity to achieve the independence for which they yearn.

In late June a conference was held in the Bahraini capital Manama to launch the United States ‘Peace to Prosperity’ initiative. The conference was attended by some Arab finance ministers, heads of international financial organisations, and private sector business executives and investors from dozens of states.

The \$50 billion ‘Peace to Prosperity’ plan envisions a global investment fund to lift the Palestinian and neighbouring Arab state economies. It aims in 10 years to create a million new jobs, slashing unemployment and improving living standards in the West Bank, Gaza and across the Middle East.

US President Donald Trump’s son-in-law and senior adviser Jared Kushner said his plan for the Middle East was “the opportunity of the century” for the Palestinians, but their acceptance was a precondition to peace.

“Agreeing on an economic pathway forward is a necessary precondition to resolving the previously unsolvable political issues,” Kushner said. “To be clear, economic growth and prosperity for the Palestinian people are not possible without an enduring and fair political solution to the conflict — one that guarantees Israel’s security and respects the dignity of the Palestinian people.”

“My direct message to the Palestinian people is that despite what those who have let you down in the past say, President Trump and America have not given up on you,” Kushner said. “For too long the Palestinian people have been trapped in an inefficient framework of the past,” said Kushner, criticising the “conventional wisdom” about peacemaking. “In meeting after meeting and conference after conference I hear the same broken record of negativity about why progress is not possible,” he said. Meanwhile, the Palestinian people were being left behind. He said his goal was to encourage those assembled to “begin thinking about these challenges in a new way.”

The proposal has been rejected by the PLO because it does not include a framework for resolving their conflict with Israel.

The Palestinian political leadership utterly rejects normalisation of relations with Israel. At one extreme, the radical Islamic parties such as Hamas utterly reject



White House senior adviser Jared Kushner giving a speech at the opening of the ‘Peace to Prosperity’ workshop in Manama, Bahrain. | Photo: AFP

the existence of a Jewish political entity of any kind and openly seek the violent annihilation of the State of Israel. The more secular PLO/Fatah elite based in Ramallah demands the creation of a Palestinian state within the ‘1967 borders’, even at the expense of economic advancement of their people (hence their boycott of the Trump-sponsored ‘Peace to Prosperity’ initiative).

“We don’t need the Bahrain meeting to build our country, we need peace, and the sequence of (the plan) – economic revival followed by peace is unrealistic, and an illusion,” Palestinian Finance Minister Shukri Bishara explained on the sidelines of a meeting of Arab finance ministers in Cairo. “First of all, give us our land and our freedom.”

US Palestinian businessman Sam Bahour called the Bahrain conference a ‘circus’ and defended the Palestinian boycott. ‘How many more attempts will it take to convince people that Palestinians’ rights are inalienable and not for sale?’

I personally witnessed the PLO’s intransigence a few weeks ago, when I participated in a meeting with the PLO’s Negotiation Affairs Department at the PLO headquarters in Ramallah, together with a delegation of lawyers from Singapore, Australia and the Netherlands. At the meeting, the PLO representatives presented the PLO’s case. Essentially, they argued that the Israeli occupation is the sole cause of Palestinian suffering. Remove the occupation, and their problems will be resolved. They refused to condemn Palestinian terrorism or to acknowledge any Palestinian responsibility for their own plight. The cause

of their problems is the existence of the State of Israel, and the only solution is full Israeli withdrawal to the ‘1967 lines’ (with a possibility of land swaps).

Despite the Palestinian boycott, the Bahrain conference may nevertheless bear fruit. According to Jeffrey Sonnfeld, who moderated many of the sessions in Bahrain, the Bahrain conference was – perhaps because of the absence of the Palestinians and Israelis – a greater success than generally acknowledged. “The Bahrain summit’s projection of a spirit of hope, from Palestinian and Israeli business leaders and their peers around the globe, provides a welcome response to the growing dismay among younger people in the region - and a counter to growing cynicism about the failures of Israeli and Palestinian political leadership. Weary of decades of violence, younger people are demanding change and are open to a direct appeal from their Arab neighbours. The plans discussed in Bahrain offer younger people a path to become relevant and effective.”

There are many divergent opinions and aspirations within Palestinian society. Many ordinary Palestinians, while desirous of Palestinian autonomy, are frustrated by the corruption and intractable political ‘rejectionism’ of their leaders, and would like to see closer cooperation (economic, political and personal) between Jews, Palestinians, Israelis and Arabs.

**For more information about the Palestinians, we recommend you read *The Palestinians – Myths and Martyrs* by Johannes Gerloff, available from amazon.com. ISBN: 978-3944603124.**

## Israel’s Story in Maps

### ■ Map 6| Second Partition, 1947

UN proposes partition - Israel accepts; Arabs reject and go to war

On 29 November 1947, the UN voted on a proposal to partition the territory of Mandate Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state. 33 countries voted for the plan, 13 against (including the Arab countries), and 10 countries abstained. The Jews accepted the decision and worked towards implementing it. However, the Arab leadership in the area, the Arab League and other Arab states rejected the offer outright.

Thus, it never became a binding agreement. Following that rejection, the Arabs immediately took up arms and began fighting the not-yet-born State of Israel. The partition idea died in infancy because the Arab side rejected it. In May 1948, after the British Army left the Land of Israel, 7 Arab armies and other irregular forces invaded the newly created State of Israel with the goal of destroying it. They failed.



### ■ Map 7 | Map of Israel - 10 June 1967

In 1951, Jordan had annexed Judea and Samaria, a move which was not recognised by the international community nor the Arab League. During the Six Day War, Israel urged Jordan not to join Egypt and Syria in the fighting; however, King Hussein opened fire on Israel. During this war, Israel conquered Judea, Samaria, the Golan Heights, Sinai and the Gaza Strip and assumed administrative control over these areas.

In 1967, the Israeli Knesset extended Israel’s legal and administrative jurisdiction to all of Jerusalem and expanded the city’s municipal borders. In 1981, Israel extended its legal control of the Golan Heights and all the Sinai was returned to Egypt in 1982. Egypt rejected the offer to regain the Gaza Strip. In 1988, Jordan’s King Hussein declared that Judea and Samaria were not part of the Jordanian kingdom, leaving Judea and Samaria a legal ‘no-man’s land’. In 2005, Israel unilaterally withdrew from the Gaza Strip, expelled its Jewish population and destroyed all the Jewish communities there.





# Take a Hike!

There is no shortage of natural beauty in Israel. There are plenty of hiking trails too, but if you can't read or understand Hebrew, it can be difficult to find useable trail maps. The Israel National Trail is a gorgeous long-distance hiking trail from the north to the south of Israel – or the other way around. However, it is not ideal for hiking the trail without the Hebrew brochure and trail map.

This problem has now been solved for all hikers who don't understand Hebrew but do have a decent grasp on English. Now you can follow the route and read information about sights along the way in 52 maps – one for each segment of the trail. "There was a growing demand for an English version of the map from tourists who come to Israel and want to hike", says Motto Shitrit of The Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI).

### Practical Brochures

The map brochures are well designed. Each map is lightweight and easy to bring with you. The 1,070-kilometer route has been divided into 52 segments so that you can easily hike a single segment or just go for a weekend trip.



Each segment has its own separate brochure - you can leave the segments you do not need at home.

### Epic Trail

The increased demand for information about this trail in English is not surprising. In 2012, National Geographic magazine named the trail in their list of the 20 most epic hikes in the world. "The trail powerfully connects to something that often gets lost in all the headlines – the sublime beauty of the wilderness of the Middle East."

For more information about the Israel National Trail and to purchase the maps, go to <https://www.natureisrael.org/INT>

# Neil Armstrong Walked on Jerusalem

## Christians United for Israel

When Neil Armstrong walked in Jerusalem, he said: "I am more excited stepping on these stones than stepping on the moon."

Fifty years ago, on 20 July 1969, man first stepped foot on the moon. Whilst many would describe this moment as one of the greatest steps in human history, they were not the greatest steps to the man who made them.

Neil Armstrong, the first man to ever walk on the moon, said he was more excited to walk where Jesus walked in Jerusalem than he was making the steps for which he is most famous.

Thomas Friedman wrote in *From Beirut to Jerusalem*:

"When American astronaut Neil Armstrong, a devout Christian, visited Israel after his trip to the moon, he was taken on a tour of the Old City of Jerusalem by Israeli archaeologist Meir Ben-Dov. When they got to the Hulda Gate, which is at the top of the stairs leading to the Temple Mount, Armstrong asked Ben-Dov whether Jesus had stepped anywhere around there."

"I told him, 'Look, Jesus was a Jew,'" recalled Ben-Dov.

"These are the steps that lead to the Temple, so he must have walked here many times."



| Photo: Christians United for Israel

Armstrong then asked if these were the original steps, and Ben-Dov confirmed that they were. "So Jesus stepped right here?" asked Armstrong. "That's right," answered Ben-Dov. "I have to tell you," Armstrong said to the Israeli archaeologist, "I am more excited stepping on these stones than I was stepping on the moon." Armstrong was the first to utter the famous phrase, "One small step for man... one giant leap for mankind."

Whilst many will see these astronaut's achievements as being one of the most important events in human history, we would argue that Christ's birth, ministry, death and resurrection are the most important for mankind. Neil Armstrong understood this, and that is why God blessed his path. <https://www.cufi.org.uk/news/when-neil-armstrong-walked-on-jerusalem-i-am-more-excited-stepping-on-these-stones-than-stepping-on-the-moon-2/>

## Israel

In this new series, I would like to introduce you to biblical names and their meanings.

In the Bible, names are often meaningful. A name tells us something about the person who carries that name. In this new column, I will explore biblical names and their possible meanings. I start with the name Israel.

When David Ben Gurion in 1948 declared the independence of the Jewish state and revealed the name to be the State of Israel, he appealed to Biblical history and the Biblical rights of the Jewish people. The name Israel is a programme.

In the Bible, the name of Israel is given to the patriarch Jacob. He is one of the

forefathers of the People of Israel. The name reveals what this nation is, following the example of its ancestor. *Genesis 32* tells how Jacob wrestled near the Jabbok river: "A man wrestled with him" (*verse 24*). Jacob appears to be the stronger. Therefore, his attacker gives him a new name: "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome" (*verse 28*).

The Hebrew name Yisrael contains the word El, meaning God. Yisra is interpreted as 'he struggles'. Usually, within such names that bear a reference to God, God is the subject. That would mean: God struggles. If that was its intended meaning, then the form of the word would be different. *Verse 28* points

to Jacob as the one who is struggling. Based on this verse, one could render the meaning of the name: 'a God's struggler'.

The King James Version has a different approach: "For as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Jacob has behaved like a prince. His princely behaviour becomes clear in his perseverance in the struggle and his victory. This would lead to a rendering of Israel as 'Prince of God'. Yisra, then, is derived from the Hebrew word *sar*, meaning 'prince' (compare Sarah, 'princess').

The two interpretations are interrelated. Looking at the story, the meaning 'struggle' seems to be obvious. However, in ancient days, was it not the task of a

prince to lead his army in the battle?

Last but not least: who is struggling with whom? It is also possible to translate *verse 28* as: "You have struggled with gods and men." By gods, we have to think of heavenly beings. For example, the patron angels of the nations (compare *Daniel 10:13*, the prince of the Persian kingdom and Michael, the archangel, one of the chief princes, who is the prince of Israel). This would mean that Jacob has fought with divine beings and with humans. Jacob fights with the God of Israel against gods and men as powers that rise against God and His fighter. With the God who fights for Israel, Israel can overcome this spiritual battle. That sheds particular light on our time, too.



Short News

Never Lose a Sock with BT Beacon Tags



An Israeli startup, Wiliot, founded in 2017 by three Israeli entrepreneurs, has developed a technology to keep you from losing socks in the wash. This is just one of dozens of examples that the R&D team from Caesarea-based Wiliot is spinning to promote the benefits which its battery-free Bluetooth beacon tags may bring to consumers and manufacturers, starting as early as 2020.

Wiliot's main product is a postage stamp-sized Bluetooth beacon that can be attached just about anywhere – on clothing, on medicine bottles, inside appliances, even behind wallpaper. Bluetooth beacons, essentially tiny radio transmitters, generate a signal that can be read by another device – say, your phone or refrigerator. The small beacons can track how often you wear a garment or report if something is missing in the fridge or a medicine is running out. | Photo: Shutterstock

Baptismal Font Discovered

In the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem, archaeologists discovered a late antique baptismal font during restoration work. Experts around the globe are now analysing the baptismal font, located within the existing baptismal font. The stone material is the same as that used to build the columns of the Church of Nativity. The experts suspect that the baptismal font dates back to the church's construction period.

Vandalism in Prague



The Prague memorial monument for the Jewish children who managed to escape the Nazis has been vandalised. The monument commemorates Sir Nicholas Winton who managed to bring 669 Jewish children to the United Kingdom by train. The vandals removed a window from the monument and then vandalised it. | Photo: antisemitism.org.il

The Valley of Hope



View of the modern city of Jericho. | Photo: Wikimedia Commons

■ Rev Henk Poot  
Christians for Israel Netherlands

We started our journey in the north of Samaria, at Ebal and Gerizim, where Abram entered the land. From there we continued along the ancient route of the patriarchs towards the south, through the hills of Manasseh, Ephraim and finally the territory of the tribe of Benjamin. Our last stop there was Bethel, where the Mount of Olives came into sight in the distance.

To the east, between the rugged mountains and valleys of Samaria and the Jordan, lies the Jordan Valley. This valley is approximately ten kilometres wide and 80 kilometres long (roughly six miles wide and fifty miles long), marked by Jericho in the south and Beth Shean in the north. It is devastatingly hot. In the summer, temperatures here soar to over 50°C (122°F), and it rains for no more than a few weeks per year. With this in mind, it is amazing to see that the valley has become a beautiful agricultural area. Plantations of date palms and other crops stretch as far as the eye can see. This was the territory of the prophets Elijah and Elisha and also where the Israelites entered the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua.

The Valley of Achor

In Jericho, you can still see part of the burnt walls of the biblical city of Jericho. There is not much left of them. It reminds you of the famous story: for seven days, the people walked around the city,

according to God's command. On the seventh day, they walked around it seven times. Then the priests began to blow their shofars, Israel shouted, and the impenetrable walls of Jericho collapsed. Beyond Jericho, the people set up their tents on an enormous plain. But when they went up to Ai in the hills of Benjamin they were defeated, much to their surprise.

As a result, the plain came to be called the Valley of Achor, which literally means 'misfortune valley' or 'valley of sorrow'. The cause of this defeat was the sin of Achan, who had taken some of the riches of Jericho for himself. Because of this, God's anger was over Israel as a dark shadow. Joshua lay on his face before God and pleaded with Him, and the Lord pointed him towards Achan. When the judgement on Achan was completed, God opened a new future after all, and during a new campaign, Ai was defeated.

A New Beginning

In Hosea, we come across the name of the valley again (*Hosea 2*). When God punished His people with failed harvests and hunger because they had chosen to worship Baals, God made way for a new beginning in the middle of all the suffering. God will lead you into a desert, Hosea told the people, but it is there that God will speak to your heart again. Then you will love Him again, and He will make you His bride for eternity. The Valley of Achor will become a door of hope, a *petah tikva*.

I am standing on the edge of the plain, with the Jewish village Yitav just behind me. Here the children of Jews from the former Soviet Union have made a new beginning. It was not easy. Especially the older residents are still Russian to the bone and have held on to habits from the hard life of their past. There are many social problems, and many children struggle to keep up in school. But it is great to see that there are initiatives. A few young teachers are working hard to help their students catch up and excel, and we, in turn, help where we can to reopen a door of hope in the valley of sorrow.



Beautiful hill formations in the Jordan Valley. | Photo: Flash90



Kassan at Yitav, at the edge of the Valley of Achor. | Photo: Flash90



# Ambulance Wheelchair Minibus for Aleh

■ **Marijke Terlouw**  
Christians for Israel Netherlands

“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.” (1 Corinthians 13:13). You could almost post it as a motto on the plaque near the entrance of Aleh. But even if it is not posted on a plaque, it is abundantly present everywhere: love. Here in the heart of Jerusalem is a home, school, health care centre and so much more, for the children who need love desperately: both physically and mentally handicapped children.

**“These people have a sense of belonging too. We want them to experience as much of the same things as anybody else”**

Just when I walk into Aleh, the place is buzzing with comings and goings. Rush hour at Aleh. It is the end of the afternoon. Some are in a hurry because something needs to be fixed quickly, but for the rest it is a kind of pleasant chaos. Everyone is going somewhere, home or maybe to another club or association. I take a quick glance into a sort of classroom. A couple of women are sitting on the floor, engaged with young children. They are doing exercises, they laugh with the children, talk to them – they don’t worry that everything is not neat and tidy. That seems to be the case everywhere here: you almost think that you are in a chaotic household, but nothing could be further from the truth. Everything has its rhythm and place.

In a slightly quieter place, I hear more about Aleh and about their request. The children are taken to and from Aleh with specially adjusted minibuses. These minibuses are used intensively. And they have to be replaced from time to time. Could Christians for Israel possibly help

with a special minibus, a kind of ambulance? A minibus fitted with not only a lift but also fitted with medical equipment so that the children who need help while in transit can reach their destination safely as well.

**Special Transport Needed**

Shraga Evers from Aleh explains: “Our residents need help with just about everything, 24 hours a day. They need help with daily activities like eating, washing and sitting. The children are facing all kinds of challenges and serious medical issues such as epilepsy, breathing problems, severe physical disabilities and orthopedic complications. Some need special seats, others can only be fed with a tube. From time to time they need treatments we cannot provide and for which they have to go to a clinic or a medical centre. And then unfortunately there are acute medical situations as well.

These children cannot be transported in any kind of wheelchair van. They need a bus that is equipped like an ambulance so that they can be taken to their place of destination, safely and with the best possible care.”

**Can’t You Call a Real Ambulance?**

“For emergency situations we always can, although it still can be difficult, because ambulances are not equipped for special wheelchairs. We are talking about children for whom you need everything close at hand, for example, oxygen. But also, there are practical issues with the construction of a bus. Think about special safety belts and a floor on which you can secure all kinds of different wheelchairs.

We would like to deploy the bus for normal outings of our residents. Just like you and I, they like to go out on an excursion. Then we take them to a shopping mall to eat pizza. Or we go for a moment of relaxation in a park or on a beach. A lovely picnic, that sort of thing. Just like everybody else. These people have a sense of belonging too. We want them to experience as much of the same things as anybody else.”



Four years ago, we helped Aleh department in Gedera with an ambulance minibus too. Today this minibus is still gratefully used. Will you help to provide a special minibus to the Aleh department in Jerusalem as well?

**On Behalf on Aleh’s Children...**

Shraga Evers concludes: “So, my question to the friends of Christians for Israel is: can you help with this special ambulance wheelchair minibus? I am not asking for myself, I am asking on behalf of the eighty children who live with us in Jerusalem and almost the same number of children who come to our special school and health care centre. I am sure that there will be a lot of happy faces when these children can go out on a field trip. It would also give peace of mind to parents knowing that we are providing suitable and safe transportation whenever their son or daughter has to go to a specialist for treatment.

We know that your help is appreciated enormously. Whenever you are in Israel and feel like visiting Aleh or joining us as a volunteer, you are more than welcome.”

**Your donation for the ambulance wheelchair minibus is welcome, you can donate by completing the coupon on the back page.**

# Israeli Days in the Far East

■ **Orly Wolstein**  
First Home in the Homeland | Jewish Agency for Israel

What if instead of following the prophecy and gathering in Israel, Jews would go somewhere else... let’s say to the Far East... and try to build there a Jewish State? Indeed, history knows such attempts, some of them on the international level, but one unique story is a story of Jews from Birobidzhan, Russia.

The Soviet plan of creating a homeland for Jews in Birobidzhan at the back of beyond in Siberia seemed to be such a great idea. It consisted of shipping 100,000 Jews off to create an autonomous nation within the union of Soviet nations under the rule of Comrade Stalin. It was a great plan to get rid of the prominent Jewish politicians and scientists and send them off to the far Chinese border. On the other hand, thousands of Jews, who had a painful longing for Home, took up this idea with great enthusiasm. Many of them moved of their own free will away from other parts of the USSR, but also from the USA, Canada and Argentina to make their dream of a homeland after centuries of diaspora, come true. Yiddish is still today an official language there; it is taught at schools and the University. There is also a newspaper *Birobidzhaner Stern* published in two languages: Russian and Yiddish.

The majority of the Jewish population left there, just after the fall of the ‘Iron Curtain’ in 1991, but some are still there, in the far Taiga forests on the eastern border of the Russian Federation.

That’s why the Jewish Agency of Israel and Ofek Israeli organised an *aliyah* seminar. 11,000 km away, two flights and 7 hours difference – this is what I have to go through to see with my own eyes the miraculous Jewish Autonomous District, and its capital Birobidzhan. In my family it was told by my grandparents in Ukraine that they were about to be sent off to the Chinese border. The trains were already prepared, and neighbours were discussing who would take what from their belongings, but then Stalin died (exactly on Purim, 5 March 1953) and the plan was never fulfilled. Otherwise, maybe I would have been born there.

This long trip was definitely worth it! So many Jewish people that only now have got a chance to reveal their Jewish identity... Lev from Birobidzhan, 22 years old, applied for the seminar simply out of curiosity and on the way found out that his grandfather was a prominent rabbi. Alina from Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk had to take a flight together with her daughter to get to the seminar. This city is located on Sakhalin island, on the Japan border. There is no other way to get out of there except a plane. In general, distances here on the other side of the globe are so different. People travelled some hundreds of kilometres to listen to us about the Land of Israel.

I explained to them about the First Home in the Homeland, the absorption programme that would be happy to welcome them in Israel. The idea of a kibbutz is very familiar to these people. Their grandfathers and grandmothers, exactly as the kibbutz pioneers, arrived at



a far land to develop it and to make it Home. The difference is... 11,000 km and God’s blessing for the Promised Land. Thank you for your support of *aliyah*, this miracle that goes on right now in front of our eyes!

“Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west. I will say to the north ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’ Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth.” *Isaiah 43:5-6*

**In these seminars Jewish families get full information on how to make aliyah and what they can expect in Israel. Christians for Israel supports these Aliyah seminars and the absorption programme of First Home in the Homeland in Israel. You can donate by completing the coupon on the back page.**



# Help a Widowed Grandmother to Make Aliyah

■ Michael Freund  
Founder | Shavei Israel

In recent years, Christians for Israel has supported the efforts of Rabbi Michael Freund, the founder and Chairman of Shavei Israel, an organisation which has brought more than 4,000 Bnei Menashe on *aliyah* to the Jewish state.

Shavei Israel will be bringing a large group of 250 Bnei Menashe immigrants to Israel later this year, including Esther Haokip, who has been separated from the rest of her family for decades.

That day is now rapidly approaching, and with your assistance, we can make it happen.

In this article, Michael explains how we can help Esther and her family, and others like her to return to the land of their forefathers.

This autumn, after many years of waiting, Esther Haokip will finally get to embrace her two Israeli-born grandchildren whom she has never met.

Esther, a widow, is a member of the Bnei Menashe Jewish community of northeastern India, who are descendants of one of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. She has longed for the day when she could make *aliyah* and be reunited with her relatives in the Holy Land.

Esther resides in the Indian state of Manipur, along the borders with Burma and Bangladesh. “My husband Yishai passed away in 2009, and his dream of making *aliyah* was lost and unfulfilled,” she says. “However, I never abandoned my dream nor my longing to return to my homeland, the Land of Israel,” she adds.

In 2007, Esther bade a tearful farewell to her daughter, Chedva, who made *aliyah*. Stuck in India, Esther has not seen her daughter in more than 12 years. She missed attending Chedva’s wedding in 2011 and has not yet held



Esther Haokip and her three sons | Photo: Shavei Israel

Chedva’s offspring, her only grandchildren.

Before that, in 1998, Esther’s parents, brother and sister moved to Israel. “I’m very happy for them. But I miss them a lot. We have been separated for 21 years,” she says.

Esther’s painful separation from her loved ones has been very difficult for her. And since the death of her husband, she has had to take care of her three sons who live with her.

But the timing of Esther’s move to Israel, along with the other 249 Bnei Menashe who will make *aliyah* with her, depends in part on funding. The cost per immigrant is just US \$1000, which covers airfare and transportation from India to Israel as well as some of the initial absorption costs. For every \$1000 that is raised,

Esther or another Bnei Menashe will be able to make the long journey home to Zion.

“My sons and I believe that life in Israel would be an opportunity to reconnect with our roots and our forefathers,” Esther says, adding, “but we need help to go home to Zion.”

By supporting the Bnei Menashe Aliyah, you can be part of fulfilling the Divine Will by bringing the Lord’s children back from exile.

*Please give generously so that Esther Haokip’s tears of longing can, at last, be transformed into tears of joy when she is reunited with her family in Jerusalem. You can donate to Bnei Menashe Aliyah on the coupon below.*

## YES! I Want to Support Christians for Israel

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- ☐ Christian Friends of Israeli Communities (CFOIC)
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- ☐ Bnei Menashe Aliyah

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