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The man charged with leading and defending Israel is Binyamin Netanyahu. So far he has resisted U.S. and Palestinian calls to extend the settlement freeze, but he made a public appeal for Mr. Abbas to continue in the peace talks.

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The perils of diplomatic theater

By Caroline Glick

The current flurry of diplomatic activity is deeply disturbing. It isn't simply that the Obama administration has strong-armed Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu into participating in diplomatic theater with the PLO whose successful completion will leave Israel weaker and less defensible. It isn't merely that the newest "peace process" diverts our leadership's attention away from Iran and its nuclear weapons program.

The most disturbing aspect of the latest round of the diplomatic kabuki is that Israel's leaders and Israel's staunch friends in the US are enthusiastically participating in this dangerous project.

True, Netanyahu is in an unenviable position, situated as he is between US President Barack Obama's rock and hard place. Instead of standing up to this hostile American leader, Netanyahu is desperately seeking a magical concession to get Obama off his back.

Netanyahu's preference for appeasement is both ironic and destructive. It is ironic because he has turned to appeasement at the very moment that the notion it is possible to appease Obama has self-destructed.

Ten months ago Netanyahu found what he hoped was a magic concession. Capitulating to Obama, the Jewish state's leader prohibited all Jewish building in Judea and Samaria for a period of 10 months. This unprecedented move to discriminate against Jews was supposed to get Obama off Netanyahu's back. It didn't.

Obama's public demand that Netanyahu extend the abrogation of Jewish property rights shows he will not be appeased.

There is no magic concession. Every concession to Obama – like every Israeli concession to the Arabs – is considered both permanent and a starting point for further concessions.

And so Netanyahu concedes more. Not only has he effectively agreed to extend the discriminatory ban on Jewish rights, Netanyahu has moved on to even more outrageous concessions.

According to the Lebanese media, Netanyahu has agreed to surrender large swathes of the Golan Heights to Iran's Arab puppet, Syrian dictator Bashar Assad. According to the reports, Netanyahu empowered Obama's emissary George Mitchell to present his offer to Assad in Damascus and even furnished Mitchell with detailed maps of his proposed surrender.

If Netanyahu thinks that this move will diminish US pressure for a full withdrawal from Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria, he is in for an unpleasant surprise. Mitchell said the "two tracks can be complementary and mutually beneficial if we can proceed to a comprehensive peace on more than one track."

In plain English that means that the administration feels perfectly comfortable pressuring Israel to surrender to the Syrians and to the Palestinians at the same time.

Leaving aside the strategic insanity of surrender talks with Syria, it cannot be said too strongly that the talks with the Palestinians have absolutely no upside for Israel.

Many observers have pointed out that PLO leader Mahmoud Abbas is unlikely to make a deal. And this is probably true. With Hamas in charge in Gaza and widely supported in Judea and Samaria, Abbas will probably not risk signing a peace deal with Israel that will likely serve as his death warrant. But the same observers who bemoan the poor chances for a treaty ignore the fact that the alternative – that Abbas signs a peace deal with Israel – would be a disaster for Israel. Any deal Israel signs with the PLO will make the country weaker. We know this because we have already signed deals with the PLO. And all of those deals made Israel weaker.

All the agreements between Israel and the PLO have been predicated on Israeli territorial surrenders and Palestinian promises of moderation.

Israel has implemented its commitments and surrendered land to the PLO. The PLO has never abided by its commitment to moderate its behavior. To the contrary, the PLO's response to every agreement has been to escalate its political and terror war against Israel.

The Palestinian terror war that began in September 2000 was the direct result of the Oslo "peace" agreement of September 1993 that created the framework for Israeli land surrenders to the PLO, and the framework agreement's followon agreements. The terror attacks that have killed and wounded thousands of Israelis would never have happened – indeed they would have been inconceivable – had Israel



Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and US President Barack Obama

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not withdrawn from Gaza, Judea and Samaria in accordance with peace deals it signed with the PLO. The track record of the past 17 years demonstrates that withdrawals are dangerous. But still the "peace deal" now on offer is predicated on withdrawals.

Obama and his advisers claim that these talks will improve Israel's relations with the wider Arab world. But again the last 17 years expose this claim as fatuous and wrong. Israeli land surrenders in exchange for pieces of paper have not convinced the Arab League member states to accept Israel as a permanent state in the Middle East. They have convinced Israel's Arab neighbors that Israel is weak and getting weaker. This in turn has signaled to the wider Arab world that its best bet is to join forces with the likes of Hamas and fund and otherwise actively support the war against the Jewish state.

Engaging in the phony "peace process" isn't only bad because there is little prospect for reaching a deal or because any potential deal would be a disaster for Israel. There are three additional reasons the government's decision to engage in this diplomatic psychodrama is terrible for Israel.

First, there is great harm in talking. Talking to Abbas and his deputies legitimizes a Palestinian leadership that is wholly committed to Israel's destruction. As Abbas and his mouthpieces make clear on a daily basis, they do not accept Israel's right to exist. They do not condemn or oppose the murder of Israelis by Palestinians. They will not accept a deal with Israel that leaves Israel in control of sufficient land to defend itself from Palestinian or other Arab attacks in the future.

And they will never end or abate their diplomatic war against Israel. The very act of legitimizing the likes of Abbas expands their ability to wage diplomatic war on Israel.

Second, just as Netanyahu's magic concessions to the Americans are but a starting point for further magic concessions, so Israel's willingness to engage in talks with its Palestinian adversaries forces our leaders to concede still more important things to maintain them. For instance, today, in the face of a clear Hamas terror offensive that has already claimed the lives of four Israelis and sent tens of thousands running for cover in bomb shelters, Israel is compelled to sit on its hands. An effective campaign against Palestinian jihadists would weaken the PLO because most Palestinians support the jihad against Israel. In the interest of "peace," Hamas is allowed to attack at will.

So simply by agreeing to talk with the Palestinians, the government has made it all but impossible to carry out its primary function – defending the country and its citizens from aggression.

The third reason that the talks are inherently against Israel's interests is because they undermine Israeli democracy. Consistent, multiyear polling shows that the public overwhelmingly rejects more withdrawals. The public rejects any compromise in Jerusalem. The public rejects maintaining prohibitions on Jewish building. The public rejects expelling Jews from their homes. And the public rejects withdrawing from the Golan Heights.

Recognizing this, the Obama administration has insisted

that the content of the current talks remain hidden from the public. As far as Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Mitchell are concerned, they are better judges of the prospects and wisdom of these talks than the Israeli public that will have to live with their consequences. By agreeing to these demands, Netanyahu is collaborating with a project that is inherently anti-democratic and harmful to Israel's political order.

There is another aspect of the current diplomatic season that is upsetting. This aspect involves the negotiations' deleterious role in shaping Israel's position and options in the US.

When Netanyahu announced he was caving in to White House pressure and barring Jewish construction in Judea and Samaria last November, his defenders argued it was necessary given Obama's relative political strength at the time.

But a lot has changed in the past 10 months.

Today Obama is deeply unpopular. The Democrats are likely to lose their control of the House of Representatives, and at a minimum, their hold on the Senate will be diminished.

Today Israel has nothing to gain and much to lose by bowing and scraping before Obama.

True, Obama's positions on issues relating to Israel are not likely to substantively change after November 2. But Obama's ability to implement his policies will be seriously constrained. Indeed, the anticipated Republican resurgence has already incapacitated him.

By playing along with Obama's sham peace talks, Netanyahu has made it difficult for Israel's supporters in the US to explain why these talks are dangerous and offer a counter-policy that is based on experience and reality. Even worse, Netanyahu has encouraged Israel's friends to support what Obama is doing.

This much was made clear by an article penned last week by syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer titled, "Your move, Mr. Abbas."

Krauthammer is widely perceived by the American public as a firm supporter of Israel. His many readers – who by and large are not close observers of Middle East events – defer to his judgment. Unfortunately, his latest column shows that trust is unfounded. Krauthammer wrote, "No serious player believes [Israel] can hang on forever to the West Bank."

Not only do many serious players believe Israel can – and indeed should – hang on forever to Judea and Samaria, most close observers of events in the Middle East recognize that the central lesson of the past 17 years is that Israel must hang on to Judea and Samaria. The partial territorial surrenders Israel conducted in the 1990s led to the murder of more than a thousand Israel. Ceding these areas entirely would imperil the country. Even Clinton acknowledged this week that the current situation can continue for 30 years. And as all close observers and serious players in the Middle East know, 30 years is tantamount to forever.

(Source: www.carolineglick.com - Originally published in *The Jerusalem Post*, September 17, 2010)

Sukkot: Feast of Tabernacles & Feast of Harvest

By Rev. Willem J.J. Glashouwer

Sukkot (Feast of Booths, Feast of Tabernacles) is a Jewish holiday celebrated on the 15th day of the month of Tishrei (late September to late October), only 5 days after the Day of Atonement. It is one of the three biblically-mandated Shalosh regalim on which Jews made pilgrimages to the Temple in Jerusalem. The holiday lasts seven days, including Chol Hamoed and is immediately followed by another festive day (the 8th day, known as 'Shemini Atzeret'). The first day and the day after Tabernacles are considered to be sacred assemblies, or Sabbaths (Leviticus 23:36,39).

The Hebrew word *sukkōt* is the plural of *sukkah*, "booth, tabernacle". The *sukkah* is intended as a reminiscence of the type of fragile dwellings in which the ancient Israelites dwelt during their 40 years of wandering in the desert after the Exodus from Egypt. It is a festival to celebrate God's goodness, in the past, present and future. It is the most joyful and festive of all Israel's feasts. The people were to live in booths, filled with fruits and vegetables, and rejoice before the Lord with branches (Leviticus 23:33-43); there were to be many daily sacrifices (Numbers 29:12-39) and in a sabbatical year, the Law was to be read publicly (Deuteronomy 31:10-13).

According to the prophet Zechariah, in the messianic era Sukkot will become a universal festival and all nations will make pilgrimages annually to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast there.

It was during the Feast of Tabernacles that the Shekinah Glory of the Lord descended from heaven to light the fire on the altar and fill the Holy of Holies. We read in 2 Chronicles 5:13-14:

"The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang: "He is good; His love endures forever." Then the temple of the LORD was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of God." (Compare 1 Kings 8, 2 Chronicles 7:1-10).

This Feast is also called the Feast of Ingathering and the Feast of the Harvest (Exodus 23:16, 34:22). But the Bible speaks also about the Harvest as being the final judgement when Israel and the nations are gathered in. Malachi 4:1-4 says:

"Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire," says the LORD Almighty. "Not a root or a branch will be left to them. But for you who revere My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall. Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I do these things," says the LORD Almighty. "Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel."

Revelation 14:14-16 speaks about the reaping of the earth's harvest:

"I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one "like a son of man" with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the



temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested." (See also Joel 3:13, Matthew 13:39b, Hosea 6:11a).

One day Messiah will gather His people, the remnant of Israel back to her Promised Land. Isaiah describes this event as the harvesting of olives, where rods beat tree branches and the olive berries were gathered once they had fallen on the ground: Isaiah 27:12-13 says: *"In that day the LORD will thresh from the flowing Euphrates to the Wadi of Egypt, and you, O Israelites, will be gathered up one by one. And in that day a great trumpet will sound. Those who were perishing in Assyria and those who were exiled in Egypt will come and worship the LORD on the holy mountain in Jerusalem."* (Read also Isaiah 11:11-12, Jeremiah 23:7-8).

The righteous among the Gentile nations will be gathered in as well to worship the King: *"Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain"* (Zechariah 14:16-17). The nations who do not come to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem will not get any rain.

Finally the Lord will 'tabernacle' among His people. Ezekiel 37:27-28 says: *"My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. Then the nations will know that I the LORD make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever"* and Revelation 21:3 says: *"And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God."*

The Shekinah will be present again. Isaiah 60:1,19,22 say: *"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you... The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end. Then will all your people be righteous and they will possess the land forever. They are the shoot I have planted, the work of My hands, for the display of My splendour. The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation. I am the LORD; in its time I will do this swiftly."*

The man with the measuring line in Zechariah 2:1-5 symbolizes the hope of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a restored people: *"Then I looked up-and there before me was a man with a measuring line in his hand! I asked, "Where are you going?" He answered me, "To measure Jerusalem, to find out how wide and how long it is." Then the angel who was speaking to me left, and another angel came to meet him and said to him: "Run, tell that young man, 'Jerusalem will be a city without walls because of the great number of men and livestock in it. And I myself will be a wall of fire around it,' declares the LORD, 'and I will be its glory within."*

Therefore Israel has to return from all the corners of the earth, and so Zechariah 2:6-13 speaks about the future joy of Zion and many nations: *"Come! Come! Flee from the land of the north," declares the LORD, "for I have scattered you to the four winds of heaven," declares the LORD. "Come, O Zion! Escape, you who live in the Daughter of Babylon!" For this is what the LORD Almighty says: "After He has honoured me and has sent me against the nations that have plundered you-for whoever touches you touches the apple of His eye- I will surely raise My hand against them so that their slaves will plunder them. Then you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me.*

"Shout and be glad, O Daughter of Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you," declares the LORD. "Many nations will be joined with the LORD in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. The LORD will inherit Judah as His portion in the holy land and will again choose Jerusalem. Be still before the LORD, all mankind, because He has roused Himself from His holy dwelling."

Isaiah 4:2-6 speaks about the renewal of Zion: *"In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel. Those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem. The Lord will wash away the filth of the women of Zion; He will cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire. Then the LORD will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night; over all the glory will be a canopy. It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain."*

And Ezekiel sees the Shekinah return to the Temple. He says in Ezekiel 43:1-7a: *"Then the man brought me to the gate facing east, and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory. The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when He came to destroy the city and like the visions I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown. The glory of the LORD entered the temple through the gate facing east. Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. While the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speaking to me from inside the temple. He said: "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place for the soles of My feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites forever."*

The Future Destiny of National Israel

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon and Horatius Bonart

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (June 19, 1834 – January 31, 1892) was a British Particular Baptist preacher who remains highly influential among Christians of different denominations, among whom he is still known as the “Prince of Preachers”.

Born in Kelvedon, Essex, Spurgeon’s conversion to Christianity came on January 6, 1850, at age fifteen. On his way to a scheduled appointment, a snow storm forced him to cut short his intended journey and to turn into a Primitive Methodist chapel in Colchester where “God opened his heart to the salvation message.” The text that moved him was Isaiah 45:22 - “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else.”

Later that year, on April 4, 1850, he was admitted to the church at Newmarket. His baptism followed on May 3 in the river Lark, at Isleham

In his lifetime, Spurgeon preached to around 10,000,000 people, often up to 10 times each week at different places. His sermons have been translated into many languages. Spurgeon was the pastor of the congregation of the New Park Street Chapel (later the Metropolitan Tabernacle) in London for 38 years.



Charles Spurgeon

Spurgeon maintained a fervent interest in the Jewish people and particularly their being reached with the gospel. Preaching on Ezekiel 24:26 in 1855, just prior to the rise of modern Zionism, he plainly declared:

Not long shall it be ere they [the Jews] shall come – shall come from distant lands, where’er they rest or roam; and she who has been the off-scouring of all things, whose name has been a proverb and a bye-word, shall become the glory of all lands. Dejected Zion shall raise her head, shaking herself from dust and darkness, and the dead. Then shall the Lord feed His people, and make them and the places round about his hill a blessing. I think we do not attach sufficient importance to the restoration of the Jews. We do not think enough of it. But certainly, if there is anything promised in the Bible it is this. I imagine that you cannot read the Bible without seeing clearly that there is to be an actual restoration of the children of Israel. “Thither they shall go up; they shall come with weeping unto Zion, and with supplication unto Jerusalem. “May that happy day soon come! For when the Jews are restored, then Jesus will come upon Mount Zion to reign with his ancients gloriously, and the halcyon days of the Millennium shall then dawn; we shall then know every man to be a brother and a friend; Christ shall rule with universal sway.”

Speaking on Ezekiel 37:1-10 in 1864 at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in aid of funds for the British Society for the Propagation of the



2004 photo of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London

Gospel amongst the Jews, Spurgeon declared,

This vision has been used, from the time of Jerome onwards, as a description of the resurrection, and certainly it may be so accommodated with much effect... But while this interpretation of the vision may be very proper as an accommodation, it must be quite evident to any thinking person that this is not the meaning of the passage. There is no allusion made by Ezekiel to the resurrection, and such topic would have been quite apart from the design of the prophet’s speech. I believe he was no more thinking of the resurrection of the dead than of the building of St. Peter’s at Rome, or the emigration of the Pilgrim Fathers...

The meaning of our text, as opened up by the context, is most evidently, if words mean anything, first, that there shall be a political restoration of the Jews to their own land and to their own nationality; and then, secondly, there is in the text, and in the context, a most plain declaration, that there shall be a spiritual restoration, a conversion in fact, of the tribes of Israel... Her sons, though they can never forget their sacred dust of Palestine, yet die at a hopeless distance from their consecrated shores. But it shall not be so forever... They shall again walk upon their mountains, shall once more sit under their vines and rejoice under her fig-tress. And they are also to be reunited. There shall be not two, not ten, nor twelve, but one – one Israel praising one God, serving one king, and that one king the Son of David, the descended Messiah. They are to have a national prosperity which shall make them famous; nay, so glorious shall they be that Egypt, and Tyre, and Greece, and Rome, shall all forget their glory in the greater splendor of the throne of David...

If there be meaning in words this must be the meaning of the chapter. I wish never to learn the art of tearing God’s meaning out of his own words. If there be anything clear and plain, the literal sense and meaning of this passage – a meaning not to be spirited or spiritualized away – must be evident that both the two and the ten tribes of Israel are to be restored to their own land, and that a king is to rule over them.”

Spurgeon derived a very different meaning from the Old Testament with regard to national Israel than that of Augustine and Calvin. Indeed, when we read Jeremiah 32:4, it is obvious that Spurgeon’s understanding of this passage is fundamentally different from that of Calvin. So in 1887 he declared,

We cannot help looking for the restoration of the scattered Israelites to the land which God has given to them by a covenant of

salt: we also look for the time when they shall believe in the Messiah whom they have rejected, and shall rejoice in Jesus of Nazareth, whom today they despise. There is great encouragement in prophecy to those who work among the seed of Israel; and it is greatly needed, for all the mission fields it has been commonly represented to be one of the most barren, and upon the work the utmost ridicule has been poured. God has, therefore supplied our faith with encouragements larger than we have in almost any other direction of service. Let those who believe work on! Those who believe not may give up. They shall not have the honor of having helped to gather together the ancient nation to which our Lord himself belonged; for be it never forgotten that Jesus was a Jew.”



Horatius Bonart

Horatius Bonart (December 19, 1808 – May 31, 1889) was a Scottish churchman and poet. He was born and educated in Edinburgh. In 1839 he joined a Mission of Enquiry to the Jews in 1839 in which he toured the Holy Land for the purpose of reporting the findings back to the Church of Scotland. In 1843 he married Jane Catherine Lundie and five of their young children died in succession.

Bonar earned in 1853 the Doctor of Divinity degree at the University of Aberdeen. In 1883, he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. He was a highly popular author and served as the editor for “The Quarterly journal of Prophecy” from 1848 to 1873, and his writings concerning Israel came from a heartfelt love for the Jewish people:

Let us speak reverently of the Jew. Let us not misjudge him by present appearances.

He is not what he once was, nor what he yet shall be.

Let us speak reverently of the Jew. We have much cause to do so. What, though all Christendom, both of the East and West, has for nearly eighteen centuries treated him as the off-scouring race? What though Mohammad has taught his followers to revile and persecute the sons of Abraham?

Nay, that though [the Jew] may have a grasping hand, and a soul shut up against the world, a world that has done nothing but wrong and revile him? What though he may inherit the crookedness of his father Jacob, instead of the nobility of Abraham, or the simple gentleness of Isaac?

Still, let us speak reverently of the Jew, if not for what he is, at least for what he was, and what he shall be, when the Redeemer shall come to Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Isa. 59:20; see Rom. 11:26).

In him we see the development of God’s great purpose as to the woman’s seed, the representative of a long line of kings and prophets, the kinsmen of Him who is the Word made flesh.

It was a Jew who sat on one of the most exalted thrones of the earth; it is a Jew who now sits upon the throne of heaven.

It was a Jew who wrought such miracles once on our earth, who spoke such gracious words. It was a Jew who said, “Come unto me and I will give you rest;” and a Jew who said, “Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me.”

It was Jewish blood that was shed on Calvary; it was a Jew who bore our sins in His body on the tree. It was a Jew who died, and was buried, and rose again.

It is a Jew who liveth to intercede for us, who is to come in glory and majesty as earthly judge and monarch. It is a Jew who is our Prophet, our Priest, our King.

Let us, then, speak reverently of the Jew, whatever his present degradation may be. Just as we tread reverently the level of platform of Moriah, where once stood the holy house where Jehovah was worshipped; so let us tread the ground where they dwell whose are the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and of whom, concerning the flesh, Christ came. That temple hill is not what it was. The beautiful house is gone, and not one stone is left upon another. The seventeen sieges of Jerusalem, like so many storms rolling the waves of every sea over it, have left few memorials of the old magnificence. The Mosque of the Moslems covers the spot of the altar of burnt-offering; the foot of the Moslems defiles the sacred courts... But still the ground is felt to be sacred; the bare rock on which you tread is not common rock; the massive stones built here and there into the wall are witnesses of other days; and the whole scene gathers round it such associations as, in spite of the rubbish, and desolation, and ruin, and pollution, fill you irresistibly with awe...

So it is with the Jew, I mean the whole Jewish nation. There are indelible memories connected with them, which will ever, to anyone who believes in the Bible, prevent them from being contemned; nay, will cast around them a nobility and a dignity which no other nation has possessed or can attain to. To Him in whose purposes they occupy so large a space, they are still “beloved for their fathers’ sake (Rom. 11:28). Of them, as

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concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever.”

I am of those who believe in Israel's restoration and conversion; who receive it as a future certainty, that all Israel shall be gathered, and that all Israel shall be saved. As I believe in Israel's present degradation, so do I believe in Israel's coming glory and preeminence.

I believe that God's purpose regarding our world can be only understood by understanding God's purpose as to Israel.

I believe that all human calculations as to the earth's future, whether political or scientific, or philosophical or religious, must be failures, it not taking for their data or basis God's great purpose regarding the latter-day standing of Israel.

I believe that it is not possible to enter God's kind regarding the destiny of man, without taking as our key or our guide His kind regarding the ancient nation – that nation whose history, so far from being ended, or nearly ended, is only to begin.

And if any one may superciliously ask, What can the Jews have to do with the world's history? – may we not correctly philosophize on that coming history, and take the bearing of the world's course, leaving Israel out of the consideration altogether? We say, nay; but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Art thou the framer of the earth's strange annals, either past or future? Art thou the creator of those events which make up these annals, or the producer of those latent springs or seeds of which they arise?

He only to whom the future belongs can reveal it. He only can announce the principles on which that future is to be developed. And if He set Israel as the great nation of the future, and Jerusalem as the great metropolis of earth, who are we, that, with our philosophy of science, we should set aside the divine arrangements, and substitute for them a theory of man?

I believe that the sons of Abraham are to inherit Palestine, and that the forfeited fertility will yet return to that land; that the wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad for them, and the desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose.

I believe that, meanwhile, Israel shall not only be wanderers, but that everywhere only a remnant, a small remnant, shall be saved; and that it is for the ingathering in of this remnant that our missionaries go forth. I believe that these times of ours (as also all the times of the four monarchies (Daniel 2) are the times of the Gentiles; and that Jerusalem and Israel shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. I believe that, with the filling up of these times of the Gentile pre-eminence, and the completion of what the apostle calls the fullness of the Gentiles, will be the signal for the judgments which are to usher in the crisis of earth's history, and the deliverance of Israel, and the long-expected kingdom.

How Jewish history shall once more emerge into its old place of grandeur and miracle, and how it shall unwind from itself the bright future of all nations, I know not. But as it is fore-written, “What shall be the reconciling of them be, but life from the dead?” (Rom. 11:15). “Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit” (Isaiah 27:6).

(Source: “Future Israel” by Barry E. Horner, ISBN 13: 978-0-8054-4627-2)



Netanyahu, Clinton and Abbas

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Bible prophecy on target

By Earl Cox

How close are we to the end of time as we know it? According to Bible prophecy, we could be very close. Actually, the Bible does not say that the world itself will end, but that this “time” or “age” will end and a new time or age will begin.

So we need to ask: what has happened in the last two years to contribute to this “end of times” progression? Well, the election of the current American President focused on “change.” But it appears that both the old and the new administrations are following the same route to attempt to fix the problem of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict - that is, to force a two-state solution.

The pursuit continues, in spite of the clear reality that for 60-plus years this highly heralded two-state solution has run into insurmountable obstacles. It has not worked and will not work until the Muslim Arabs accept Israel as a sovereign state and recognize its right to exist. The Muslim Arab mindset of hatred for the Jewish people goes back some 4,000 years to the rivalry between Isaac and Ishmael.

Bible prophecy tells us that one day this hatred is going to erupt in an attempt, through war, to destroy the Jewish nation and people. This event seems to be more and more imminent.

The world community has failed to acknowledge the biblical significance of the State of Israel. The fulfillment of biblical prophecy about the return of the Jewish people to their ancient homeland and the rebirth of the ancient nation of Israel virtually launched the “end of times.” Nor do world leaders seem to understand that their policies in regard to present-day Israel have accelerated the end-times events that the Bible describes.

The leaders of the world's nations do not realize that we are living in a most important time in prophetic history. Ironically, even most Christians and Jews, who base their religious beliefs on the Bible, don't really comprehend Bible prophecies. Most Christians and Jews don't seem to understand the biblical significance of the nation of Israel - or of the Middle East, Russia, Iran, the European Union and other nations of the world. Most of the priests, reverends and rabbis believe that the biblical end-times prophecies are allegorical, not literal.

The Vatican and the World Council of Churches have joined the international political community in calling on Israel's Jewish people to leave and give away to the Palestinians part of the land that God gave to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as an everlasting possession. This view, of course, is in direct opposition to God's divine policy as revealed in the Bible - unless, of course, the majority of the Palestinians are of Jewish descent as discussed in a recent (fall 2009) *Jerusalem Post Christian Edition* magazine article.

The international Quartet, made up of the United Nations, the United States, the European Union and the Russian Federation, are willing to sacrifice the best interests of the nation of Israel for the sake of peace. But they should know that serving up Israel sacrificially would not bring peace to Israel or the rest of the Middle East. The “land for peace” efforts previously tried have only brought more violence and disorder because of the unabated mindset of Muslim Arab hatred for the Jews.

True to form, much of the United Nations continually raises its fist against Israel. The demand is always on the table for Israel to commit to the formation of a Palestinian state as soon as possible and freeze all Jewish settlement construction. The world in general seems so completely biased that it ignores the Palestinians' failure to make any substantive efforts to implement what they promised in signing the Roadmap agreement several years ago.

The first step in the agreement was for the Palestinians to halt all their terrorist activities against Israel and for their leaders to disarm and dismantle all the terrorist groups. Not only has this first step not been taken, but nothing else has been implemented which the Palestinians have promised to accomplish. Yet President Obama, Hillary Clinton and UN leaders want Israel to give the Palestinians a state anyway, even though they have broken their word and have not yet created the stable infrastructure necessary to warrant the creation of a state.

All this global pressure on Israel has only led to increased animosity toward Israel from other nations in the Middle East, most prominently Iran. The whole world knows that the leader of Iran has incessantly declared his intention “to wipe Israel off the face of the map.”

Interestingly, Bible prophecy describes this very Middle East scenario and places it in the framework of the “end of times.” The prophet Ezekiel clearly declared that in the end times, Persia (today's Iran) would form a military coalition with Russia and several other Arab-Muslim nations, with the intent of annihilating the Jewish nation. This Iranian-Russian alliance is already in place and, with Iran boasting of its nuclear weapons development, a nuclear attack on Israel is, in my opinion, likely.

The Bible calls this scenario the Gog-Magog War. However, the prophecy goes on to declare that the God of Israel will intervene - and this will begin with the coming of the promised Jewish Messiah. Remember, nothing is as sure as the promises of God in the Scriptures. Armed with these facts, would you agree that Bible prophecy is on target?

(Earl G. Cox has been active in the political arena for over 30 years having served in senior level positions in the administrations of four U.S. Presidents)

The Age of Absurdity

By Jerrold L. Sobel

Has anyone out there heard of Darfur? The questions get tougher now. Do you know where it is? And finally, who is Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir? Well, for those of you hanging on the edge of your seats; Darfu is a region of western Sudan about the size of Texas. Since 2003 it's been in a civil war where the Muslim military government led by Omar Ahmad al-Bashir has by U.N. estimates massacred more than 300,000 civilians, displaced 2,500,000, and have forced another 200,000 to seek refuge in neighboring Chad. Recently the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague charged al-Bashir with three counts of genocide. Earlier, in March of this year he was also charged with five other genocidal counts including; holding two and a half million refugees in Auschwitz like internment camps.

Not surprisingly, at last year's Arab League Summit conference in Doha, Qatar, this monster was universally praised by the participants; one in particular was Israel's "Partner for Peace," Mahmoud Abbas, who offered acclaim and abutment with the following statement; "We reiterate solidarity with Sudan and our rejection of the measure of the ICC against his Excellency." This comes on the heels of a little blurb in the July 9th edition of the Jewish Press regarding his eulogization of Mohammad Oudeh, better known as, Abu Dahoud, the mastermind of the mass slaughter of 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972. Abbas is quoted saying, "He will be missed...."

He was one of the leading figures of Fatah and spent his life in resistance and sincere work." By this statement you would think this coward charged a battalion of Israeli troops rather than massacre a bunch of innocent kids. That's some eulogy from a guy President Obama praised for his "Commitment to peace."

In the July 9, 2010 Washington Post article entitled, "Obama Praises Abbas As Committed to Peace." Our President further paid homage to the Palestinian leader for showing "restraint"....in recent months in handling long-standing conflicts with Israelis." That's quite laudable. Perhaps Israelis should thank him for moderating and no longer blowing up school buses of children or exploding bombs in restaurants this year. While dealing with absurdity, we can't pass up the recent "summit conference" at the White House between Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Obama.



To be honest, It was such a love fest I couldn't help but feeling warm and fuzzy inside. Everybody was holding and touching, agreeing with each other. It was wild. For a moment there I thought they would don kippas and put



on Tefillin. This one reiterated, "the bond is stronger than ever," the other one affirmed the U.S. "commitment to Israel," but all in all, most people were left wondering, "where's the beef?"

As has become his custom, Netanyahu with hat in hand thanked the President for imposing additional sanctions and his unwavering support on Iran. My question is, sanctions? How are they going to prevent those Holocaust denying fanatics from getting nuclear weapons? If these two guys are actually serious and think sanctions are going to slow the Ayatollahs down, they're both crazy. What's next, an embargo on ice cream and water pipes? In my view, a "don't cross the line" joint statement aimed at the Iranians might have a much greater effect than ineffectual sanctions.

Perhaps I'm actually the crazy one but it seems this show was more for the upcoming elections in the U.S. and to placate the left in Israel than it was for substance. About two months ago, Israel's new best buddy, Obama, called out Israel for not signing on to the Non Proliferation treaty; that certainly wasn't the act of a friend. Joining the chorus for an investigation of the flotilla nonsense also hasn't endeared Obama to Israelis and many Jews here either. The Washington Post article saved the best for last when they quoted the White House saying that Obama and Abbas "discussed ways to revive direct talks in the near future." It makes you wonder if our President ever considered coaxing the Palestinians into recognizing Israel's right to exist as a Jewish State for starters?

It's quite astonishing how many people do not realize Israel is the only party in this dispute that has given something tangible for peace, but has yet to receive anything in return? By his recent actions, outlined at the beginning of this essay, does Abbas seem like a viable peace partner? Forgetting his complicity in the '72 Olympics massacre, or his admission of being the mastermind of the Achille Lauro ship jacking in which 69 year old Leon Klinghoffer was shot and thrown overboard. But just by his recent actions alone is it plausible this baneful man has had an epiphany? For that matter, by his sudden reversal in rhetoric just prior to the Fall elections, can it be believed Obama has had one as well? Netanyahu would have to be a pretty good handicapper to take that bet on either of them.

Speaking of Netanyahu, let's look at his background compared to the other two and ascertain what his motives might be.

Far from the serene walls of Harvard Law School, Netanyahu joined the Israeli Defense forces in 1967 and

commanded an elite commando unit known as the Sayreret Matkal. In 1972 he was part of a 16 man contingent led by future Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Barak which stormed a hijacked Boeing 707 passenger jet in Tel Aviv, killed the 4 terrorists on board, and rescued the passengers. The following year he served with distinction in the Yom Kippur War and before being discharged attained the rank of Captain. Upon leaving the military, he became a rising star in the Likud party and served four years as Ambassador to the United Nations; 1984-1988. Subsequent to that position he honed his diplomatic skills as Foreign Minister in the Sharon Administration, a post which he eventually left due to objections over the Gaza Disengagement Plan; a plan which called for and led to the evacuation and displacement of thousands of Israeli's from their homes in Gaza. No doubt many in Israel today rue that fateful 2005 decision. A debacle all should remember when pressure today is applied on Israel for a continuation of the absurd "land for peace" non-starter.

In 1996 as the Chairman of the Likud party, Netanyahu ran and defeated incumbent Labor candidate Shimon Perez to become the 9th Prime Minister of Israel. On March 31, 2009 he was again sworn in for his second term as Prime Minister.

As if one period in Israel can be more daunting than another, Netanyahu came into office under the most dire of times. Israel today faces a combination of united enemies far more bellicose than anytime subsequent to the Six Day War. She does this within a back drop of world wide anti-Semitism not seen since the Second World War. But the enigma hidden deep within the puzzle is what strategy if any does he have moving forward under the circumstances just mentioned? That's the \$64,000 question. Does Netanyahu truly trust Obama based upon his pronouncements or does he weigh his actions of the past 18 months? In the crucial time ahead, how much faith does the Prime Minister really have in sanctions stopping the unthinkable, Iran getting a nuclear weapon? Subsequent to U.S. elections in the Fall, is he comfortable that Obama will stand with the Jewish State if Israel is forced to go to war with one or all of her enemies? If such a scenario plays out, how much political cover can Israel expect from this Administration? It's funny, in some circles Netanyahu is denounced as a "right winger;" as if that's a bad thing in of itself. Yet the most land Israel has relinquished with nothing to show for it has been under the leadership of military heroes; Ehud Barak in Southern Lebanon and Ariel Sharon in Gaza. It remains to be seen if Netanyahu joins that club.

(Source: Israpundit)

Israelophobia in Ireland

By Kevin Myers

Trying to argue Israel's case to the Irish is no longer the futile burden of Zion Evrony God help his successor in just about the worst assignment an Israeli diplomat can ever get

The Israeli Ambassador Zion Evrony is returning home: his time in Hell is done. Now it is the turn of some other poor guy in the Israeli diplomatic service to come over and meet the conjoined forces of hatred, ignorance, blindness, hysteria and prejudice that the name 'Israel' invariably inspires. Short of Hamas opening up a few death-camps for Jews now, rather than after they've finally defeated Israel, I'm not sure what would destroy the irrational Israelophobia that is so powerful in Ireland.

Critics of Israel deplore its origins within the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which committed the British to making a homeland for the Jews. So do I. It was not British land, and no British government had any right to make any promises about it. But I cannot revisit the past and restore the Hapsburg Empire, or overthrow Bolshevism. Many things resulted from that terrible time. One of those was the formal creation of a homeland in Palestine for Jews. The forces that erupted across Europe in the following decades produced an entirely new world order, in which Israel took its place, as thousands of Palestinians either fled, or were forced to flee, their homes.

But comparable things happened across the world around the same time, in the Punjab and Bengal, East Prussia and Sudetenland, the Baltic and Tartary. And so we must deal with the world that history has bequeathed us. We cannot endlessly undo events or 'return' people to the land their ancestors once inhabited – either in Kashmir or in Kansas.

But this is where the world religio-cultures divide. For most Muslims do not accept that such historical processes are irreversible. They believe that once land is Dar al-Islam – the abode of the faithful – it can never be relinquished. If taken by non-believers, it then becomes Dar al-Harb:



Israeli Ambassador Zion Evrony

the abode of war, and shall remain so until it is restored to Islam. And so Israel has for the past 62 years been Dar al-Harb.

Indeed, neither the 'secular' PLO nor the Islamicist Hamas sees a long-term resolution in the Middle East that will genuinely include the state of Israel. Even for many 'moderate' Palestinians, the twin-state solution is the merely the stepping-stone to the status quo ante the Balfour Declaration. Palestine will thus be restored to the Dar al-Islam and the Caliphate.

Now, if you oppose the right of Israel to exist, that's clear enough: you want the Jews of Israel either dispersed or killed, so there's not much to discuss, other than train timetables, methodology (gas or gun?) and corpse-disposal. It's been done before; maybe this time, you'll get it right.

But if you support the right of Israel to exist, but condemn Israeli methods for coping with Palestinian terrorism, then how do you propose to deal with the volleys of thousands of Hamas rockets into Israeli towns from Gaza? You want a proportionate response? Very well, tell us what is proportionate. If you are against suicide bombers, but are opposed to the wall that has successfully prevented suicide bombers from entering Israel from the West Bank, then what is your realistic and efficient

alternative to the wall?

Emoting over the plight of the Palestinian refugees – a fond pastime in this country – begs the question: why are they still refugees? Why haven't they been absorbed by their Arab neighbours as the Muslims of the Indian Punjab have been in Pakistan; as the Hindus of Lahore have in Amritsar; as the Germans of Danzig have been in Hamburg?

Why? Because, quite simply, most of Israel's neighbours don't want a permanent, irreversible peace with the Jewish state. They want Dar al-Harb by terrorism and political instability until the day of jihad arrives, after which the Dar al-Islam will be restored. If this means keeping the people of the Gaza Strip confined in an open-air madhouse, so be it. Thus, Gaza is the paradise where Shariah law rules, where it is illegal for girls to ride bikes, where honour-killings are legitimate and where all the members of the 'secular' Fatah movement have been butchered by Hamas. And if Islamic fundamentalists do that to their fellow Palestinians, what have they in mind for the Jews, whom the Koran calls "pigs and monkeys"?

One-hundred-and-fifty Irish 'artists' have announced they are boycotting Israel. What, 150? That's about 140 more than I thought we had. Poor Israel! Being boycotted by Irish daubers it's never even heard of. Yet strangely enough, these 'artists' don't condemn the totalitarian Islamo-Nazism of Hamas, or the emerging Fourth Reich of Iran. No, instead, they obsess over the misdeeds of a democratic state the size of Munster in a democracy-free, Arab landmass as big as the US.

Ah well. Trying to argue Israel's case to the Irish people is no longer the bitter, futile burden of Zion Evrony. So, safe home, my friend, and God help your successor, in just about the worst assignment an Israeli diplomat can ever get. The only local consolation I can draw from this endless tragedy is that without it, the modernist composer Raymond Deane, who is also the leader of the Ireland-Palestinian Solidarity Campaign, might otherwise be writing even more of his 'music'. So thank you for that, Israel: and shalom, Zion.

(Kevin Myers is an Irish journalist and writer. He writes for the Irish Independent)



Protests in Ireland during visit Israeli Ambassador

Hamas vows to continue fight against Israel

The political leader of Hamas said in an interview 27 September 2010 that the Islamist group will continue to fight what he called Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory, declaring the group's resistance "a legitimate and just cause, and therefore we will win no matter what."

Khaled Meshaal's comments on CNN International's "Prism" came amid a turning point in recently renewed peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians. New construction began at settlement sites in the disputed West Bank territory Monday, just hours after the expiration of a 10-month Israeli government moratorium on building.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas publicly urged Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to extend the moratorium "for three or four months while there are negotiations under way."

Hamas, a rival to Abbas' Fatah Party, is not participating in the talks, and Meshaal dismissed the negotiations as another publicity move by an American president.

"Every president in his first term promises the Palestinians and the Arabs that he will work on making sure a Palestinian state will be formed in two or four years ... but the outcome is always the same," he said.



Khaled Meshaal

"Their presidential term is over and nothing happens – instead we get the very exact opposite. The Palestinian cause gets diminished and the Israeli leaders immerse themselves in building more settlements, changing the land's identity, killing and arresting our people, and biting off more of

our Palestinian land. This is a trick that no one believes in any more."

He warned that Palestinian tolerance for failed peace talks is waning.

"The international community must realize that Palestinians may get to that moment when they know that the policies of

the international community will not bring them justice and will not force the Israelis to respect the borders," he said.

The Palestinian people will seek their own right and let the whole world deal with the consequences of that Palestinian decision."

Meshaal also defended Hamas attacks on Israelis, including an incident earlier this month by the group's military wing that left four Israeli settlers dead.

"Hamas is practicing its legitimate right – we are defending our own people," he said. "Why does the international community get upset when we kill illegal settlers on our land? ... It is clear that the presence of settlers in the West Bank is illegal."

Yigal Palmor, a spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Ministry, scoffed at Meshaal's statements saying it's "not possible to talk to those who refuse systematically to talk to you and who will only address you with guns."

"We hope that when we reach a peace treaty with Palestinians that are willing to negotiate ... then Palestinians at large will see this as the great opportunity for them and they will naturally reject Hamas as an option and the organization as a whole," Palmor said.

(Source: CNN)

SEVEN WONDERS OF JEWISH HISTORY (Part 1)

By Rabbi Motty Berger and Rabbi Asher Resnick

Imagine an alien landing on this planet. On his first day there, he witnesses two events: the parting of the Red Sea and the birth of a baby. Which would he say is the greater miracle?

Most aliens would say that the birth of a child seems a greater miracle than the parting of the waters. However, if we asked you whether the birth of a child is a miracle, you might not agree. Why is that?

Because childbirth happens all the time, about every seven seconds or so in this country. When something happens all the time, we take it for granted and think it's natural. But when we look at it, as an alien, we can see what an incredible miracle it is.

Now let's look at Jewish history from a similar perspective, putting aside any prior knowledge we have. Do the events of our nation throughout the past 3000 years seem like ordinary events, or is something unique and perhaps miraculous going on here?

As a matter of fact, let's pretend we've never even heard of the Jewish people. And let's decide: Are these events coincidental or providential?

King Louis XIV once had an interesting discussion with the famous 17th century Roman Catholic philosopher and mathematician, Blaise Pascal. The king asked Pascal to show him evidence of the supernatural, and Pascal responded. *"The Jews, Your Majesty, the Jews!"*

Everyone who studies Jewish history perceives that there's something unique about it. What many people don't know, however, is that the unusual and illogical course of Jewish history was predicted in detail in our Torah. Let's examine seven phenomena unique to Jewish history and seven prophecies precisely forecasting these phenomena.

WONDER #1: THE JEWISH PEOPLE ARE ETERNAL

In Bereishis (Genesis) 17:7, God promises Abraham that the Jewish people will be eternal. God says:

"And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you, throughout the generations, an eternal covenant to be your God, and the God of your descendants after you."

Now we all know that treaties are only as good as the two sides who keep up their part of the bargain. If one party bails out, the treaty is void. What will happen if the Jews don't keep their covenant with God? Take a look at this prophecy in Leviticus:

"Yet even so, even while they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject or spurn them, lest I break My covenant with them by destroying them, for I am their God. I will remember them because of the covenant I made with their forefathers, whom I brought out of the Land of Egypt under the eyes of the nations, so that I might be their God." (Vayikra 26 vs 44-45)

In other words, even when things go sour, even when the Jewish people stop following the Torah, the covenant will not be breached. God promises that this relationship will exist forever.

Now if you're at all familiar with world history, you'll notice right away that this is a very strange prediction. After all, nations rise and fall. They don't exist forever. Do you know any Edomites personally? Anyone have a good friend who's a Moabite? History has seen the rise of many powerful civilizations: the Persians, the Babylonians, the Moabites, the Edomites, the Romans. But they've long since disappeared.

Why would the Torah predict eternal survival for the Jewish people? Even more strange, how is it that the Jews, a civilization way older than the Persians or the Babylonians, are, indeed, still around?

Many people have noticed this strange phenomenon. One of the most famous is Mark Twain who wrote an essay called "Concerning the Jews" (The Complete Essays of Mark Twain, p. 249):

"The Egyptian, the Babylonian, the Persian, rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dreamstuff and passed away. The Greek and the Roman followed, made a vast noise and they are gone. Other peoples have sprung up, held their torch high for a time, but it burned out and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew



Natan Sharansky & Sofa Lanver with French olim

photo@Isranet

saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal, but the Jew. All other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?"

Leo Tolstoy, a believing Christian, also wonders about this. He writes (Jewish World, London, 1908):

"The Jew is the emblem of eternity. He whom neither slaughter, nor torture of thousands of years could destroy, he whom neither fire, nor sword, nor inquisition was able to wipe off the face of the earth; he who was the first to produce the oracle of God, he who has been for so long the guardian of prophecy and who transmitted it to the rest of the world. Such a nation cannot be destroyed. The Jew is as everlasting as eternity itself."

Have you heard of a book called: *"The Protocols of the Elders of Zion"*? The Protocols is a book that claims to be the minutes of secret meetings held every hundred years by Jewish rabbis around the world, for the purpose of plotting the course of world history for the next hundred years.

The Protocols, by the way, has sold more copies than any other book in history, except the Bible. Why do people swallow it? People have hated blacks, people have hated Orientals, but you don't find books called *"The Protocols of the Elders of Motown."* Somehow, *"The Protocols of the Elders of Zion"* makes sense in people's minds. People read the book and think, "Yes! Those Jews get together every hundred years and plan out world history!"

Somehow, in their collective consciousness, the world has noticed that we Jews are always around.

Paul Johnson, a non-Jewish historian, wrote a bestseller called *A History of the Jews*. At the end of the book, he gives us a thesis as to why the Jews have survived so long: *"The Jews believed that they were a special people, with such unanimity and passion, over so long a span of time, that they became one."* In other words, it's a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Two problems immediately emerge. First of all, does anyone here think Jews can believe *anything* with unanimity? You've heard the expression, "Two Jews, three opinions"?

(As a matter of fact, we were once in Phoenix, Arizona, and a teacher said, "You know how it is - two Jews, three opinions...." when a gentleman raises his hand and, in all seriousness, says, "Rabbi, I heard it was *three* Jews, *four* opinions." The teacher looked at him and said, "Thank you, Sir. You've just proved my point!")

Second - does it make sense that only the Jews willed themselves into becoming an eternal nation?! And all the other nations thought, "Nah, that's okay. We've gone on long enough. Suppose it's about time to get conquered and become extinct..."

Finally, even if the Jews *did* believe they were an eternal people, does simply believing something make it so?

If I just keep *believing* I'm a doctor, will I eventually become one?

Obviously things don't work that way. Nations don't will themselves into destruction. Neither do they will themselves into becoming an eternal nation.

Prophecy #1: The Jewish people are eternal

We have seen the Jewish People survive for more than 3000 years. This was predicted beforehand in Jeremiah!

"Thus says God, 'Who establishes the sun to light the day, the laws of the moon and stars to light the night, Who stirs up the sea into roaring waves, Whose name is the Lord of Hosts? If these natural laws should ever give away before Me,' says God, 'only then shall the offspring of Israel cease to be a nation before me for all time.'" (Yirmiyahu 31:34-36)

WONDER #2: DISPERSION

The fact that we are an eternal nation becomes even more amazing when we consider that the Jews don't even possess the basic characteristics that define a nation: Land, Language, History.

Do the Jewish people have a land in common? Well, for 2000 years, the vast majority of the Jewish people never set foot in the land of Israel. All other nations in the world had a land in common that they settled and lived in, but for the majority of our history, the Jews never had a land to call their own. Israel was a common dream, yes, but not a common land.

Now how many of you speak Hebrew? How many speak it well? For the vast majority of our history, most Jews didn't speak the language. Sure, the Torah portion was read aloud in Hebrew, in shul, but the spoken languages were Aramaic, Ladino, Yiddish, French, English and many others.

How about a common history? Well, you've got to go pretty far back in time to get to one.

Continued on page

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For the last several centuries, Jews have been scattered across the globe. We certainly don't have a history in common.

So, not only are the Jewish people poor candidates for being an eternal nation - without a common land, language or history - we're hardly candidates to be any kind of nation at all!

Prophecy #2:

Dispersion

Rule number one of world history is that if you're going to scatter a nation all over the globe with no common land or language or history, they're going to lose their identity! And yet we are eternal.

This dispersion was predicted beforehand in Ezekiel!

"That they shall know that I am God, when I scatter them among the nations and disperse them over foreign lands." (Yechezkel 12:15)

WONDER #3:

ANTI-SEMITISM

Let's look at the flip side. What are the three factors that cause nations to disintegrate and disappear?

First, they're conquered by another nation and eventually they assimilate into the dominant culture. But what happens between conquest and assimilation?

Persecution.

The stronger nation comes in and says, "We don't like that you dress differently, speak a different language, worship differently... We think you should be like us."

Sociologists call this *"The dislike of the unlike."*

Eventually, someone figures out, "Hey, you know why we're being persecuted? It's that 'dislike of the unlike' business! Let's drop our differences and we'll be treated better.

And it works. The more they drop their differences, the better they're treated. Before you know it, they've been absorbed into the conquering nation.

You ever hear anyone say there's too much Edomite influence in the government nowadays? The Babylonians are controlling the media? Of course not. These nations have long since lost their identities. That's what happens when nations assimilate into the dominant culture.

So what happens when the Jews try to assimilate?

Where do we find that the Jews, en masse, try to assimilate into the surrounding culture?

Germany. In Germany, 150 years ago, we find one of the most concentrated attempts on the part of masses of Jews to assimilate into German society. After generations of intolerance and persecution, the Enlightenment came and many Jews thought they finally had a way out. "Now's our chance to get rid of all this 'dislike and unlike,'" they said. "The Germans say they hate us because we eat differently, dress differently, worship differently, don't marry their daughters. So we'll drop all our differences and become just like them!"

And what happens? A historical anomaly. For the very first time in history, instead of the dislike of the unlike, suddenly it's the dislike of the like! The Nazis say, "We don't hate you because you're different; now we hate you because you're trying to become like us!" And they respond with the most vicious brutality the world has ever seen.

What's going on here? The more we drop our differences, the easier it's supposed to be to blend in with the dominant culture! The Holocaust was completely contrary to all normal rules of history!

Why is it that, in some strange way, all the rules of history are overturned when it comes to the Jews?

It's a basic law of physics that the colder something is, the denser it becomes and therefore the heavier. Heat causes molecules to expand and therefore become lighter. For example, hot water rises and cold water, being heavier, falls to the bottom.

If you stand in a bathtub, for instance, you'll notice that the warmer water is at the top and your toes are probably colder because the cold water has sunk to the bottom.

What's the coldest water possible? Ice. Take a look at the cup of soda when you put ice cubes in. Have you ever wondered why the ice flows to the top? Of course not. It just does.

What happens in the winter when a lake freezes over? Where does the ice form? At the top! Isn't that strange? If ice is the coldest form of water, it should naturally be more dense and sink to the bottom.



photo@Isranet

Ask any physicist, why is it that ice floats? And he will tell you that it's a fundamental law of physics. The molecules in water become denser as they get colder, until they reach a degree and a half above freezing, whereupon the molecules suddenly start to expand and get lighter. So when it turns to ice, it naturally floats.

But *why* does the law of physics work that way? *Why* does water suddenly become lighter when it was previously getting heavier?

And your friendly physicist has an explanation for that too. He will say, "Because it's an exception."

We have a different answer. The physicist didn't create the laws of physics. God did. Now, God may not care if ice floats to the top of your soda cup, but he does care that ice floats to the top of a lake.

What would happen if all the ice sunk to the bottom? All plant and animal life in the seas and oceans would freeze and die, and when the ice defrosted in the spring, the waters of the earth would be putrid and vile. So God says, "I did not make a world to be uninhabited. In the case of ice, I'll just overturn the natural law."

Similarly, God says to the Jews, "I did not make a world for the Jews to become extinct. You are to be an eternal nation. So, in your case, the laws of history are going to be overturned. For every other nation ever persecuted, there will be 'the dislike of the unlike.' They'll drop their differences and disappear. But when you Jews try to shed your national identity, I will not allow it to happen. Instead of assimilation easing your persecution, you'll be hated all the more for it."

God controls history the same way He controls physics, science and nature. If God promises the Jews that they will be an eternal people, then the laws of nature will just have to cooperate.

How would you fill in the following blank? "The Wandering ____."

Did anyone write "The Wandering Italian"? "The Wandering Ecuadorian"? We Jews are known throughout the world as the nation that wanders. We've lived most of our national life in exile, dispersed throughout the globe.

Can you think of anything less conducive to being an eternal nation?

We're intelligent people here; let's try to figure this out logically. What characteristic could this nation have that will keep them unified despite their dispersion?

How about this: The Jews will be so beloved in the eyes of the entire world that the nations will make sure they continue to exist, no matter where we are. "Ah, those wonderful Jews, we must keep them alive and well, forever."

Oh, yeah?

This reminds me of a story. A new electronics store opened up in Texas and announced that it would give away free TV sets to the first hundred people who walked into the store. Already the night before, there were about three hundred people in line. At the front of the line was this huge Texan, so excited he could hardly wait. Suddenly this little Jew comes walking up from the back of the line and, without so much as a glance around, goes right up to the front.

The Texan looks at him and says, "Where the heck do

you think you're going?" The Jew says nothing; he just keeps walking. The Texan picks him up, punches him in the face and knocks him out on the floor. The poor little Jew struggles to his feet, dusts himself off and again starts walking towards the front. The Texan says, "I said, where do you think you're going?" The Jew doesn't say a word. The Texan picks him up and knocks him down again.

Suddenly, a policeman comes by. "What's goin' on here?" he says to the Texan.

And the Texan says, "Ah been waitin' heah all night. I'll be darned if I'm gonna let this little Jew get in front of me!"

The cop turns to the Jew and says, "And what's your story?"

The Jew says, "If this guy knocks me down vun more time, I don't open up de store.

Are we so beloved by the world that they've made sure of our continuing existence?

I don't think so.

No matter where they go, the Jewish people suffer from a hatred the likes of which the world has never seen. It's not just: "We don't want these people in our country club." It's not just: "We don't want them in the front of the bus." It's: "We don't want these people *alive*."

Not only is anti-Semitism *intense*, it is also *irrational*. We're the only religion that absolutely prohibits the eating of any kind of blood, yet we are plagued with blood libels. They say we're poisoning the wells of Europe, yet they completely ignore the fact that we're drinking from the same wells! Anti-Semitism is a hatred unbelievably intense, totally irrational and *absolutely universal*.

In Israel, in 1987, there was a colloquium on anti-Semitism, commissioned by President Chaim Herzog. Professor Michael Curtis of Rutgers University spoke on the irrationality of anti-Semitism:

"The uniqueness of anti-Semitism lies in the fact that no other people in the world have ever been charged simultaneously with alienation from society and with cosmopolitanism, with being capitalistic exploiters and also revolutionary communist advocators. The Jews were accused of having an imperious mentality, and at the same time they're the people of the book. They're accused of being militant aggressors, at the same time as being cowardly pacifists. With being a chosen people, and also having an inferior human nature. With both arrogance and timidity. With both extreme individualism and community adherence. With being guilty of the crucifixion of Jesus and at the same time held to account for the invention of Christianity... Everything and its opposite becomes a reason for anti-Semitism."

This is how irrational anti-Semitism is. Whatever you hate, that's what the Jew is.

Prophecy #3:

ANTI-SEMITISM

We have survived thousands of years of turbulent exile. This was predicted beforehand in Deuteronomy!

"Among those nations, you shall find no respite, no rest for your foot, for there the Lord will give you an anguished heart and wasted eyes and a dismayed spirit. You will live in constant suspense, and stand in dread, both by day and by night, never sure of your existence." (Devarim. 28:65-67)

Number 176520

The Story of Paul Argiewicz, a teenage Holocaust survivor

By Deanne L. Joseph

Paul Argiewicz was a young Jewish boy growing up in Bielsko, Poland, when the Nazis came to power. Forced to leave his home and his schooling – and ultimately his family – by the unfolding horrors of anti-Semitic violence, he eventually was arrested and transported to a concentration camp. Argiewicz spent nearly five years living by his wits in slave labor camps from Auschwitz to Buchenwald. Surviving WWII and the Holocaust against all odds, he lived to tell his story to the world. His account of perseverance and faith in the face of the relentless depravity of Hitler's Third Reich and a society gone mad is an inspiring and cautionary tale that is both historic and timeless.

Deanne L. Joseph's moving new memoir, *Number 176520 – The Story of Paul Argiewicz, a Teenage Holocaust Survivor*, poignantly recounts one child's journey through the terrors. With a preface and historical documentation provided by renowned Holocaust scholar, Professor Kenneth Waltzer (Director of Jewish Studies, Michigan State University), *Number 176520* is quickly becoming an invaluable resource for students of the Holocaust.



Following is an excerpt from the book:

Paul and his family lived in the ghetto for about a year. In spite of the dire circumstances, his boyish, adventurous nature remained. He removed the identification patch from his clothing and sneaked out of the ghetto through an opening in the barbed wire fence. It was an act of defiance that would have landed him at the end of an executioner's gun had he been caught, but somehow he was able to pull off this rite two to three times a week.

Being the gregarious child that he was, he made friends with some gentile children on the "outside." They did not seem to mind that he was Jewish, and some of their parents even tried to help him in small ways. The father of one of his new friends owned a bakery. The man's sympathetic conscience obliged him to turn a blind eye, allowing Paul to steal freshly baked bread from his store twice a week. The ritual continued for a year. Sometimes the determined young scavenger managed to find potato peels or other small provisions of vegetables and was always faithful to rush his smuggled goods back to his hungry family behind the fence.

Eventually, Paul became so comfortable in his excursions that he inadvertently lowered his guard and came face to face with disaster. Returning to his family with a pair of stolen loaves of bread, he was approached by two SS officers.

"Where did you get that bread?" they demanded. Paul had never been so close to the enemy. He stood, accused and frozen.

"Come with us!" The order was stern and curt. They snatched the bread from his hands. The pounding of his heart intensified until he thought it would surely break

through his chest. He could barely breathe. He felt a hard, squeezing pressure on his arm — the grip of a Nazi. He had the sensation of walking very quickly, although he was unable to feel his legs. Were his feet touching the ground? Were they even moving? He heard only the sound of the officers' boots clacking with each step on the hard street beneath their feet. His eyes burned as if on fire, and blurred images of his family flashed through his rattled brain. What would they think? Would he ever see them again? Were these men going to kill him? Paul fought to restrain the tears pooling in his eyes. He was only a child — his life was supposed to be ahead of him, not behind.

They arrived at their destination: an old schoolhouse that had been converted into a transitory evaluation and detention center, the *Durkankslager*. He was taken downstairs to the basement, the "dungeon." It was filled with people standing in lines. Everywhere were the familiar Jewish identification patches. The Nazis pushed him into place with the others. He looked around at the detainees, predominantly grown men. He did not see any other children in the crowded space.

An SS officer sat upright on a stool at the front of the room, one leg raised and bent at the knee with his booted foot confidently perched on a table. Behind him was a desk filled with papers. As each of the accused men made his way to the front of the line, he was questioned by the man on the stool, evaluated, and sent into a group either to the right or to the left. Paul was not sure why the men were being divided, but as he drew closer to the evaluating officer, he was overcome with a sense of doom. His mind fired rapid, disconnected thoughts. *I'm only a child . . . perhaps if I tell them I'm only 11 years old . . . maybe they will have pity and let me go back to my parents.*

Without warning, a man behind him in the line kicked the back of his leg. He leaned into Paul's ear and spoke quietly but firmly.

"Don't tell them your real age. Tell them you're 18."

How did he know what I was thinking? Paul wondered.

He arrived at the head of the line. No longer did anyone stand between him and the "judge."

"Name?" "Paul Argiewicz." "Age?" "Eighteen."

The words rolled off his lips in perfect Bavarian German. The officer looked up. His dusky eyes examined the youth before him. His brow furrowed, and he observed the boy for a moment. Paul felt as though he had been suspended in space and time. The moment seemed to last an eternity. Surely, he was exposed . . . guilty . . . he had lied . . . to an SS officer! The penalty for such an offense was execution.

"You speak German?" The officer seemed amused. "Yes," he responded once more in the language he had learned from his playmates.

"You speak with a Bavarian accent. Why?" "My mother is from Bavaria," he lied again. For another endless moment, the man's eyes pierced him. Paul was able to manage a convincing expression. Finally, the harshness of the Nazi's sharply featured face faded, yielding to a smile and a chuckle.

"Go over there," he said, nodding his head to his left.

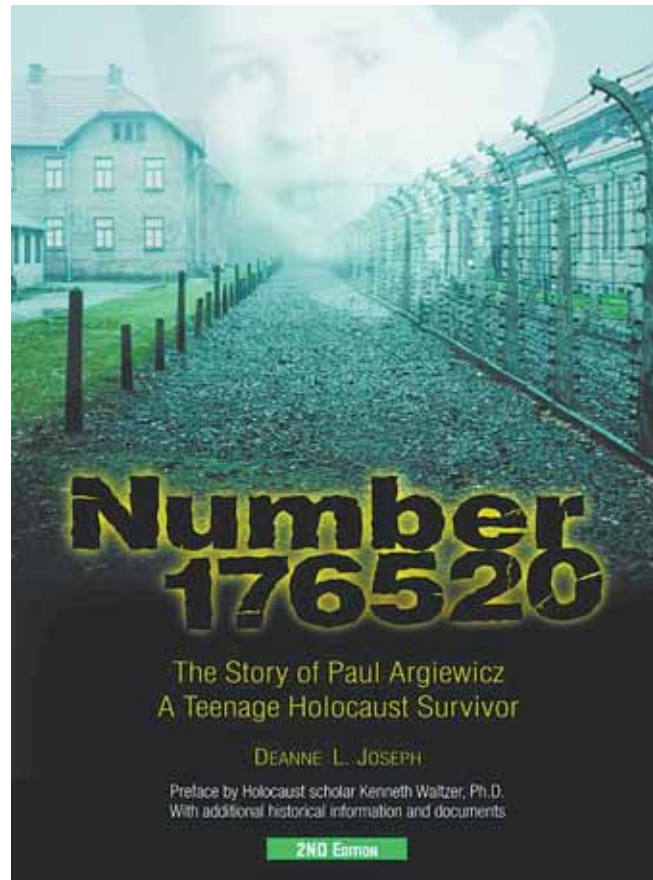
Paul moved in the direction of the nod, but he did not understand the purpose of separating the men. Would he be sent to work or to the grave? None of the men seemed to know the fate that awaited them.

They remained in the detention center for a few more days. Each day they were given small rations of bread and a



cup of water. Paul allowed his mind to escape into a place of refuge and peace. He comforted himself with thoughts of his family, memories of good times they had shared, life in Phella's beautiful home, and the hope that maybe he would soon be returning there.

In the corner of his eye, Paul perceived movement through a window in the damp stone wall. He turned his head to look through the dusty glass. Just beyond the tall barbed-wire fence, his father stood, his eyes scouring the room through the wire and glass. Noah's eyes found Paul's. His hand flew over his head waving to his son, his familiar penetrating eyes filled with longing. He held his hand still for a moment and then let it fall limp to his side. He stood motionless, his gaze fixed on his child.



Paul's heart raced within him. An overwhelming urge demanded that he jump to his feet and run to the window. He dared not. To do so would jeopardize not only his fate but also now his father's. Separated by brick and mortar, barbed wire and guns, and the merciless cruelty of the human heart, father and son looked upon each other for the last time. In that sacred moment, they knew that the bond they shared was beyond man's reach; it was a bond protected and preserved in eternity. Still, the 11-year-old was overcome by the realization that he might never again feel the loving touch of his father's strong hands or hear the sound of his voice.

On the cold, hard floor, Paul covered his face and wept. His father was gone.

(To learn more about Paul's story or to obtain a copy of the book, *Number 176520*, visit www.paulsstory.com)

I Am a Refugee

By Danny Ayalon

As a sitting member of a democratic government, it might appear strange to declare that I am a refugee. However, my father, his parents and family were just a few of the almost one million Jews who were expelled or forced out of Arab lands. My father and his family were Algerian, from a Jewish community thousands of years old that predated the Arab conquest of North Africa and even Islam. Upon receiving independence, Algeria allowed only Muslims to become citizens and drove the indigenous Jewish community and the rest of my family out.

While many people constantly refer to the Arab or Palestinian refugees, few are even aware of the Jewish refugees from Arab lands.

While those Arabs who fled or left Mandatory Palestine and Israel numbered roughly 750,000, there were roughly 900,000 Jewish refugees from Arab lands. Before the State of Israel was reestablished in 1948, there were almost one million Jews in Arab lands, today there are around 5,000.

An important distinction between the two groups is the fact that many Palestinian Arabs were actively involved in the conflict initiated by the surrounding Arab nations, while Jews from Arab lands were living peacefully, even in a subservient dhimmi status, in their countries of origin for many centuries if not millennia.

In addition, Jewish refugees, as they were more urban and professional, as opposed to the more rural Palestinians, amassed far more property and wealth which they had to leave in their former country.

Financial economists have estimated that, in today's figures, the total amount of assets lost by the Jewish refugees from Arab lands, including communal property such as schools, synagogues and hospitals, is almost twice that of the assets lost by the Palestinian refugees. Furthermore, one must remember that Israel returned over 90 percent of blocked bank accounts, safe deposit boxes and other items belonging to Palestinian refugees during the 1950s.

Even though the number of Jewish refugees and their assets are larger than that of the Palestinians, the international community only appears to be aware of the latter's plight. There are numerous major international organizations devoted to the Palestinian refugees.

There is an annual conference held at the United Nations and a refugee agency was created just for the Palestinian refugees. While all the world's refugees have one agency, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Palestinians fall under the auspices of another agency, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

UNRWA's budget for 2010 is almost half of UNHCR's budget.

Equally impressive is the fact that UNHCR prides itself on having found "durable solutions" for "tens of millions" of refugees since 1951, the year of its establishment. However, UNRWA does not even claim to have found "durable solutions" for anyone.

If that is not distorted enough, let's look at the definitions



Danny Ayalon

and how they are applied: normally the definition of a refugee only applies to the person that fled and sought refuge, while a Palestinian refugee is the person that fled and all of their descendants for all time. So, according to the UNRWA definition of conferring refugee status on descendants, I would be a refugee.

However, I do not consider myself so; I am a proud citizen of the State of Israel. The Jewish refugees found Israel, so too, the Arab refugees should find their national aspirations being met by a Palestinian state.

With direct negotiations resuming between Israel and the Palestinians, the spotlight will be returned to this issue. The so-called Palestinian 'right of return' is legal fiction. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194, the supposed source for this 'right' does not mention this term, is not legally binding and, like all other relevant United Nations resolutions uses the intentionally ambiguous term 'refugees' with no appellation.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, still seen as the primary legal framework for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict asserts that a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement should necessarily include "a just

settlement of the refugee problem."

No distinction is made between Arab refugees and Jewish refugees.

In fact, one of the leading drafters of the resolution, Justice Arthur Goldberg, the United States' Chief Delegate to the United Nations, said: "The resolution addresses the objective of 'achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem.' This language presumably refers both to Arab and Jewish refugees."

In addition, every peace conference and accord attended or signed between Israel and its Arab neighbors uses the term "refugees" without qualification.

During the famous Camp David discussions in 2000, president Clinton, the facilitator and host of the negotiations said: "There will have to be some sort of international fund set up for the refugees. There is, I think, some interest, interestingly enough, on both sides, in also having a fund which compensates the Israelis who were made refugees by the war, which occurred after the birth of the State of Israel. Israel is full of people, Jewish people, who lived in predominantly Arab countries who came to Israel because they were made refugees in their own land".

In 2008, the US Congress passed House Resolution 185 granting, for the first time, equal recognition to Jewish refugees, while affirming that the US government will now recognize that all victims of the Arab-Israeli conflict must be treated equally.

I am proud of the fact that the Knesset passed a resolution in February of this year that will make compensation for Jewish refugees expelled from Arab countries after 1948 an integral part of any future peace negotiations. The Israeli bill stipulates that "The state of Israel will not sign, directly or by proxy, any agreement or treaty with a country or authority dealing with a political settlement in the Middle East without ensuring the rights of Jewish refugees from Arab countries according to the UN's refugee treaty."

Before 1948 there were nearly 900,000 Jews in Arab lands while only a few thousand remain. Where is the international outrage, the conferences, the proclamations for redress and compensation? While the Palestinian refugee issue has become a political weapon to beat Israel, the Arab League has ordered its member states not to provide their Palestinian population with citizenship; Israel absorbed all of its refugees, whether fleeing the Holocaust or persecution and expulsion from Arab lands.

People like my father, the hundreds of thousands who came to Israel and the millions of Israelis descended from these refugees are entitled to redress. It is vital that this issue return to the international agenda, so we don't once again see an asymmetrical and distorted treatment of Arabs and Jews in the Israeli-Arab conflict.

(Daniel "Danny" Ayalon (born 17 December 1955) is an Israeli politician who currently serves as Deputy Foreign Minister and as a member of the Knesset for Yisrael Beiteinu. He is a former Israeli Ambassador to the United States, serving from 2002 until 2006)

Israel – the Nation-State of the Jewish People

By Joshua Teitelbaum

According to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the real root of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians had been their ongoing refusal to recognize "the right of the Jewish people to a state of their own in their historic homeland" and he has singled out this issue as a key "prerequisite for ending the conflict." Netanyahu's proposal puts back on the global agenda a fundamental Jewish national right that was once axiomatic but today is rarely mentioned.

Ninety years ago at the San Remo Conference following World War I (April 1920), the Supreme Council of the Principal Allied Powers determined the allocation of the Middle Eastern territories of the defeated Ottoman Empire and decided to incorporate the 1917 Balfour Declaration supporting a Jewish national home in Palestine into the British Mandate for the territory, a move which confirmed international recognition of the right of Jewish self-determination.

The language adopted at San Remo was a triumph for Zionism, which saw a national solution to the problem of the Jews. It recognized the existence of the Jews as more than individuals who subscribed to a certain *religion* - Judaism - but rather as a corporate group deserving of



Castello Devachan Villa in San Remo, Italy

national expression, in this case in the form of a national home. And this home was to be in Palestine, the ancient homeland of the Jews. The language agreed upon at San Remo was, as British Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon put it, "the Magna Carta of the Zionists." It was clear at the time

that the term "national home" really meant a state.

Jewish self-determination was part of a process that ended up decolonizing the Middle East in an effort that led to Arab as well as Jewish independence. Repeated recent associations of Israel with colonialism - an historical canard that erases the millennia-long association of Jews with the Land of Israel as an indigenous people - ignores the benefit that Zionism actually brought to the Arabs through the process of decolonization. The British Peel Commission Report of 1937 was quite clear on this. Indeed, it was the return of the Jews to the Land of Israel that gave critical mass to a distinct and unique Palestinian identity as well.

The Jews have been brought back into history through the establishment of the State of Israel. This was accomplished with the aid of international institutions, which recognized the justice, and importance of Jewish national self-determination. These institutions accepted the validity of Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jews. Today, those who deny the Jewish right to national self-determination, more than 60 years after the founding of Israel, engage in a new kind of anti-Semitism.

(Source: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs)

Courage in a hostile world

Alan Jones interviews Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali

Alan Jones: “Nine eleven” has come and gone for 2010 – the anniversary of the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York, nine years ago. The streets near Ground Zero were another focus of grieving. Hundreds of articulate voices converged on New York, arguing that the new Islamic Centre planned for lower Manhattan was a stab in the eye for victims of September 11, 2001 and demanding that the mosque and community centre be moved elsewhere. The speakers against the centre included people like Newt Gingrich, one of the Republicans’ leading intellectuals and a contender for the 2012 presidential nomination.

Two thousand, seven hundred and fifty two people were killed there on September 11, 2001. And all these years on, the debate about Islam and Islamic behaviour continues. A recent Time magazine survey found 46% of Americans think Islam is more likely than other faiths to encourage violence against non-believers. A quarter of Americans believe they should have the right to veto mosques in their neighbourhoods. More than 60% of Americans oppose the Islamic Centre in New York. One placard on September 11 said: “All I need to know about Islam, I learned on 9/11.”

Then we’ve got this evangelical southern preacher saying he’d burn multiple copies of the Quran to draw attention to the crisis we face with militant Islamic behaviour. The preacher, who has been condemned by everybody, said of radical Islam: “We want them to know that if they’re in America, they need to obey our law and constitution and not solely push their agenda upon us.”

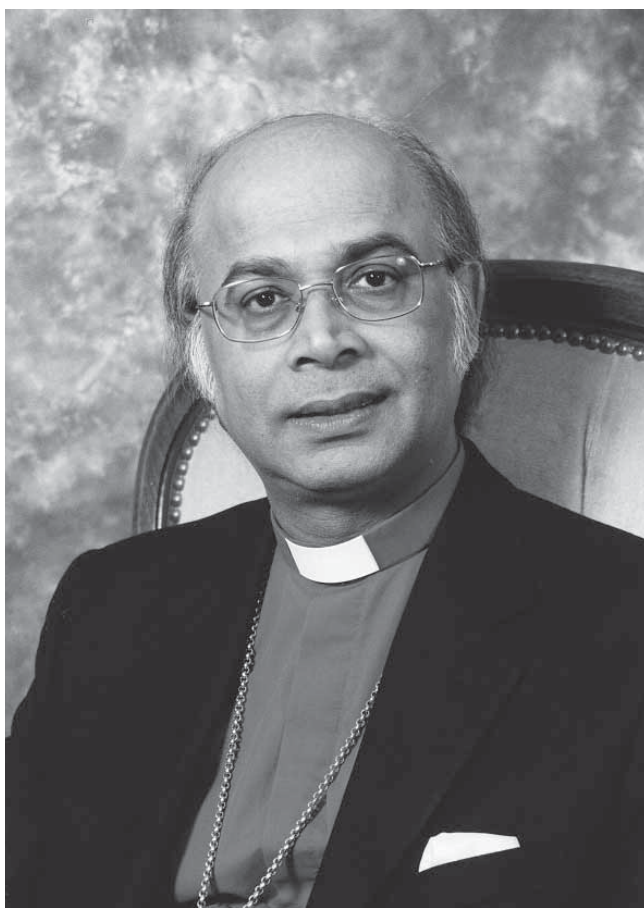
Of course, he was denounced by everybody as being disgraceful. I don’t condone burning Bibles, Qurans or anything. But the reason you don’t burn them is because you don’t think it should be done. You don’t not burn them because you’re frightened of violent reprisals which would come if they were burnt. As Barbara wrote to me and said: “The radical Muslims get hot under the collar because a minister’s going to burn 200 copies of the Quran. They don’t seem to realise that human life is worth more than a book. They don’t seem to realise that they burn down churches and other houses of prayer every day in the Middle East and they kill Christians without even giving it



a thought.”

Whether we like it or not, there seem to be only two camps for the militants within the Islamic faith – the House of Islam and the House of War – that is, for those who aren’t Muslims. And they believe that the final victory in that war for supremacy of the faiths should go to Islam over all other belief systems. How do we ignore this? Do we do nothing about it? We constantly hear people of the Islamic faith say, “He doesn’t speak for me, for fellow Muslims or for Islam – please stop tarring us with the same brush.” But the battle of faiths goes on.

Well, Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali was born in Karachi, Pakistan, to Christian parents. His father converted from Islam. He attended a Roman Catholic school in Karachi. He began attending Roman Catholic services and identifying as a Christian at the age of 15. When he and his family were at risk of their lives in 1986 after the introduction of partial sharia law in Pakistan, Michael Nazir-Ali found refuge in Britain. The Rev Steve Estherby, the NSW



Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali

state officer of FamilyVoice Australia, has said: “We’ve invited Bishop Nazir-Ali to Australia to share his insights on recent developments in Britain and to stimulate robust discussion and debate on vital issues affecting our freedoms in Australia. We are concerned,” he said, “that political correctness often silences matters which are important for the future of the nation.”

Bishop Michael was until recently the Anglican Bishop of Rochester. He was also a member of the House of Lords. He’s on this speaking tour of Australia, sponsored by the FamilyVoice Australia organisation, addressing public meetings in all mainland capitals. The theme is “Courage in a hostile world”.

Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali has an outstandingly distinguished record. He is a graduate of Oxford University with a Bachelor of Literature and a Master of Letters and Theology. He studied at the Centre for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School. He’s been awarded a Doctor of Divinity. He has a number of other doctorates. His particular academic interests include comparative literature and comparative philosophy of religion. He’s been a tutor at the University of Cambridge, a senior tutor at the Karachi Theological College, the visiting professor of theology and religious studies at the University of Greenwich. He’s an honorary fellow of St Edmund Hall, Oxford University and Fitzwilliam College at Cambridge University. He was ordained as an Anglican priest in 1976 and became the Bishop of Raiwind in West Punjab – at the time, the youngest bishop in the Anglican Communion.

In November 2006 he criticised the dual psychology of some Muslims who seek both, he said, “victimhood and domination”. He said it would never be possible to satisfy all the demands made by Muslims because “their complaint often boils down to the position that it’s always right to intervene when Muslims are victims, and it’s always wrong when Muslims are the oppressors or the terrorists”. With reference to the conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan, the bishop said: “Given the worldview that’s given rise to such grievances, there can never be sufficient appeasement, because new demands will continue to be made.” In January 2008 he wrote that Islamic extremism had turned “already separate communities into no-go areas” and claimed there had been attempts to impose “an Islamic character” on certain areas.

Of course, this causes political leaders to run for cover. One British politician who was once a candidate for the leadership of the Conservative Party, David Davis, said Bishop Nazir-Ali had rightly drawn attention to “a deeply serious problem”. Serious indeed! The bishop has faced threats to his life in Britain for criticising Islam, telling

him he would not live long and he’d be “sorted out” if he continued to criticise.

The bishop responded: “The irony is that I had similar threats when I was a bishop in Pakistan, but I never thought I’d have them here. My point in saying what I did was that Britain has lost its Christian vision which would have provided the resources to offer hospitality to others.”

Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali is on the line from Brisbane. Bishop, good morning!

Bishop Michael: Good morning, Alan. Thank you for that very comprehensive introduction!

AJ: Well, I wanted people to know who you are, and you speak from very, very significant personal experiences. You’re saying we have to face the reality that there is a worldwide resurgence of Islamic extremism.

BM: Yes, I think that’s right. If you open your newspapers or watch the television, it is impossible to avoid. I have had close personal experience of this, as you were saying. I think it is wrong to say, as some people were trying to do about the trial in Sydney which began yesterday, that this has nothing to do with religion. I think this is incorrect. These people – these radical Islamists – have a particular view of Islam which provides the motivation for them to act in the ways that they do. Now moderate Muslims may say, “This has nothing to do with me.” But when they have been challenging radical Islamists, they have often, nearly always, come off second best.

AJ: So you have talked about, in your words, “a multi-faith mishmash”, as governments promote an integration policy – multiculturalism. You say it’s an agenda which lacks the underpinning of a moral and spiritual vision.

BM: Well yes, I think my fear is that the West is facing what I call a triple jeopardy – so that aggressive secularism on the one hand has undermined the kind of Judeo-Christian moral and spiritual resources of the Western world, and at the same time it is facing this radical Islamist ideology. Because this is not just somebody’s faith, this is not individual spirituality – this is a comprehensive political, social and economic ideology, and ...

AJ: A campaign to take charge.

BM: Well, absolutely. The vision is a worldwide vision, as you were saying. It has to do with the pan-Islam – the idea that there is a single Muslim umma [community], and this calls into question, among other things, of any kind of loyalty to the nation state wherever it may be.

AJ: You say the role of chaplains in such places as hospitals, prisons and educational establishments is in jeopardy, “either because of financial cuts, or because the authorities want multi-faith provision, without regard to the distinctively different Christian character of the nation’s laws, values, customs and culture”.

BM: Yes, and when I was the Bishop of Rochester, I did not allow our chapels in such institutions to be used for multi-faith worship. I think it is quite right for us to provide people with freedom of worship and opportunities for worship in whatever way they like, but this should not in any way compromise distinctively Christian institutions.

AJ: No, and you say that not only locally but at the national level, the establishment of the Church of England has been eroded.

BM: Oh, it is being eroded every day – and the more the church is marginalised, the more a new kind of establishment comes to the fore, which is governments spending money on and talking to radical ideologues in the hope that they won’t rock the boat.

AJ: Of course what this equality of cultures, equality of faiths means – there is no priority or sovereignty here. And you say it is now less possible for Christianity to be the public faith in Britain. Who is defending what you call

Continued from page 12

the distinctively different Christian character of the nation's laws and values and customs and culture?

BM: Well I think this is a very good question, and we've got a wake-up call here. If people don't protect and defend, as you say, what is absolutely vital – not just to private belief, but to public decision making about a whole host of issues to do with respect for the human person, with liberty, with equality – all this is rooted in the vision of the Bible. If we don't defend this, then of course we will lose it.

AJ: And you make the very valid point that if you just support the establishment of the church and are not worried at all about the substance of the church, the substance rapidly disappears. Is it worth persevering with the trappings of establishment?

BM: I think that the whole question of the civil religious tradition of a nation has less and less to do with the establishment or otherwise of any church. You have a strong Judeo-Christian basis for public life in the United States ever since the time of the founders of that country. There is no established church, but you still have this way of thinking and acting which is rooted in a moral and spiritual tradition.

AJ: But the Prime Minister of Australia says she doesn't believe in God – she's an atheist, so ...

BM: Isn't that contrary to your Constitution?

AJ: But you don't discuss this, don't speak about it, you're not meant to ask questions about it. You've talked in a speech I've read of yours, about this neutral, secularist approach which refuses "to privilege" any faith. So we've got to be embarrassed about articulating the importance of Christianity to our community.

BM: Well I think this is absolutely fatal, because in fact there is no neutral point of view ...

AJ: No, secularism, as you said, it's got its own agenda, hasn't it.

BM: It's got its own ideology. I will be talking about this in the days to come, God willing.

AJ: God willing! Just one thing – instead of this multi-faith mishmash you're talking about, you're saying it's producing a new de facto establishment, because the government seems to be silent on establishing what you call "the privilege" of Christianity – and yet all of these communities are brought into the agenda. It's all about the integration, it's all about cohesion, but at the end of the day, what do we stand for?

BM: Yes, I think the integration and the cohesion has to be based on something – that is exactly the point. And my own feeling is that it ought to have been based on Christian hospitality – to say to people who are coming to Britain or indeed to this country, "This is who we are, this is how our institutions, our customs, our values have been formed ..."

AJ: But to interrupt you, Bishop – it may not be who you are, because already in Britain we've got a parallel jurisdiction of Sharia law in Muslim enclaves, we've got banks offering Sharia financing, we've got extremists given free rein on campuses, there's relentless pressure to suppress and censor any criticism of Islam or the Muslim community. We may no longer be sure who we are any more!

BM: Well of course, this is the point – and this is why I have written about these matters and spoken about them. I mean, this is a question about the survival of a people and of a nation. And the greatest danger is not really from radical Islamism – it is decadence and decay from within.

AJ: Apathy – apathy on our part. Good to talk to you. Welcome to Australia!

BM: Thank you.

AJ: Thank you so much, Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali. Thoughtful stuff, isn't it!

(Source: Radio 2GB Sydney, 7.15 am Tuesday 14 September 2010)

The Rise of a religious IDF

By Ryan Jones

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has always had a certain biblical element to it. Top IDF commanders, be they religious or secular, have never shied away from invoking biblical military heroes to inspire their troops. But the IDF has also always a bastion of neutrality in a nation increasingly torn down a religious-secular divide.

That is why researchers at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at Bar Ilan University in Tel Aviv expressed surprise last month when the vast majority of Israelis said they didn't care that a growing number of IDF commanders are from the national-religious camp.

In contrast to the ultra-Orthodox movement, religious Jews belonging to the national-religious camp all serve in the army, hold down regular jobs and see the modern State of Israel as a fulfillment of biblical prophecy. They are usually characterized by knitted skullcaps, or kippas.

In the Begin-Sadat poll, 79 percent of Israelis said they were "not concerned at all" that today about 35 percent of IDF commanders holding a rank of captain or higher are religious. Just 20 years ago, in 1990, only 2.5 percent of IDF commanders were religious.

While the prevailing wisdom is that religious soldiers are usually more courageous on the battlefield and more dedicated to their military service, officials at the Begin-Sadat Center feared they would also be more prone to refuse government orders to uproot Jewish towns in Judea and Samaria (the so-called "West Bank").

It is precisely that kind of politicization of military orders that is likely fueling the rise of a more religious IDF. Israel's left-wing media establishment viciously berated the few commanders who refused orders to uproot the Jews of Gaza in 2005, but regularly holds aloft as heroes those soldiers who refuse to protect the Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria.



photo@Isranet

Because the bulk of the army's orders are characterized by the left-wing as "oppression of the Palestinians," the IDF itself is increasingly seen as a symbol of the Right, and more specifically the bible-believing Right.

So, it should come as little surprise that left-leaning Israelis are keen to hurry through their mandatory service and get out of the army, while religious, biblically-focused Israelis are increasingly motivated to make a career out of their military service.

Fortunately, the Begin-Sadat poll shows that the media talking heads and the academics in their ivory towers are a vocal minority, and that most Israelis have no problem with their army going in this direction.

(Source: israeltoday.co.il)

Israel's population hits 7.6 million

By Ryan Jones

Israel's population continues to grow, according to Central Bureau of Statistics data released a month ago. The population now stands at 7,645,000 people, continuing to grow at a steady rate of 1.8 percent per year for the seventh year in a row. When the state was established in 1948, there were only 806,000 residents. The population is expected to reach 10 million by 2030, according to CBS projections.

Jews number some 5,770,000, or 75.5 % of the population; Arabs total 20.3%, or 1,559,100 people. The remainder, 4.2%, is classified as "other," and is mostly immigrants from the former Soviet Union who are not registered by the Interior Ministry as Jews.

The CBS statistics show that Israel is still a fairly young nation, with nearly 28% of the population under the age of 14, compared to 17% in most Western countries. Only 10% of Israelis are older than 65, whereas in other Western countries the average is closer to 15%.

There were 161,042 babies born in 2009, an increase of 2.6% over the previous year and pushing the average Jewish family size up to 2.88 children. In the Muslim community, the average number of children per mother continued to drop to 3.73, having been 3.84 children per mother in 2008. Among Christian families, the average number of children increased to 2.15 in 2009.

The ratio of men to women remains consistent, with slightly more women than men, especially later in life. According to the CBS, there are 979 men for every 1,000 women; in the under-30 set there are more men, but the over-75 age group offsets this, with some 680 men for every 1,000 women. More than 50,038 couples registered to marry in 2009, with 75% of them Jews and 21% Muslim. Divorces numbered 13,488. Among those ending their marriage, 84% were Jews and only 10% Muslims.

The majority of the Jewish population is located in the coastal plain, including Tel Aviv, while 60% of the Arabs live in the North. In fact, while one-fifth of Israelis live in the North, less than 10% of Jewish Israelis live there. In the South, the split falls in the opposite direction; only 13% of the people there are Arabs, most of them Beduin.

Jerusalem and the coastal plain saw the largest growth in population in 2008, with a rise of 2.4% and 2.1%, respectively while cities such as the Haifa and North regions saw smaller increases in the range of 1%. There has been a steady rise in the proportion of native Israelis. During the early years of the state, only 35% of the Jewish population had been born here, but by the end of 2009 that figure had increased to 71.7%.

(Source: www.jpост.com)

Israel discovers 1.5 billion barrels of oil

Is Israel sitting on a profitable oil reserve that can provide energy, cash flow, and international political influence? This is the question that everyone is still waiting to be answered in the engineering report ordered by Givot Olam Oil, overseeing the drilling at the Megged 5 site, next to Rosh Ha' Ayin.

However, a preliminary report was already issued to Tel Aviv Stock Exchange on the oil reserves on the site. "The amount of oil in place in Rosh Ha' Ayin plot is estimated at 1.525 billion barrels of oil." In previous reports, the quantity was appraised at only a few hundred barrels of oil a day.

The total oil reserves in the world (as of 2006) is 1.3 trillion barrels, but most of this is concentrated in the territory of less than 15 countries. The oil reserves located in countries not considered powerhouses in the field totals about 133 billion barrels, making the estimated amount of oil in Megged 5 quite significant. In Qatar, for

instance, the oil reserves are about 15 billion barrels.

Yet it is still too early to view the report as bearing real economic (or political) tidings. The 1.5 billion barrel figure refers to the oil in place, and not to the amount of recoverable oil in the reserve. The amount of oil that can be successfully extracted will be made known only in the final report submitted in September.

According to Givot Olam's reports from May 2009, the amount of recoverable oil in the reserve is likely 10-20%.

"This is a joyful and heart-warming discovery," said Chairman of Israel Institute of Petroleum & Energy Amir Makov said to Ynet recently. "However, this discovery does not indicate the extraction capability, and the company will have to perform additional tests and drillings until we know what this means both in terms of the company's commercial potential and in terms of the national potential."

(Resource: YnetNews.com)

Where is God?

By Henk Kamsteeg

A few weeks ago, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu told a Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, “It’s time for the Palestinians to do something they have refused to do for 62 years. It’s time for them to say yes to a Jewish state.... I recognized the Palestinians’ right to self-determination and sovereignty. They must finally recognize the Jewish people’s right to self-determination and sovereignty. It’s important because the Palestinian leadership must begin to make clear to its own people that they are making a permanent peace with the Jewish people, a people that has a right to be here, a right to live in its own state and in its own homeland.”

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas responded with a cynical remark to Netanyahu’s call to recognize Jewish state, saying that Israel is “free to call itself the Israeli Zionist Jewish Empire.” He also said that Israel’s Jewishness is none of his business, but “if Israel wanted Palestinian negotiators to recognize its state, it should also recognize a Palestinian state.” Abbas added that negotiations would only continue under a settlement freeze. If the moratorium was extended for one month, he would remain in peace talks for one month, he said.

The Palestinian daily newspaper Al-Hayat Al-Jadida reported that the Palestinian Ambassador to Lebanon, Abdullah Abdullah, insisted that “the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations...are not a goal, but rather another stage in the Palestinian struggle... to isolate Israel, to tighten the noose on it, to threaten its legitimacy, and to present it as a rebellious, racist state.”

So much for genuine talks leading to lasting peaceful coexistence...

Benjamin Netanyahu also pointed out that “A peace agreement by itself does not preserve the peace. We need to understand that the only peace that will hold in the Middle East is a peace that can be defended. I have made clear that in order to defend the peace we need a long-term Israeli presence on the eastern side of a Palestinian state - that is, in the Jordan Valley.

“The only force that will be prepared to sustain a long-term commitment is a force that is absolutely convinced that it is defending its own people from attack. And if we have learned anything from history,



Henk Kamsteeg and Michael Freund

it’s that the only force that can be relied on to defend the Jewish people is the Israel Defense Forces,” he said.

Considering all of this, and the fact that the U.S. President Barack Obama has strongly opposed a Jewish presence in areas restored to Israel after the 1967 Six-Day War – even labeling the Jewish areas “settlements” – is now harassing Israel again to make more concessions to the enemies at the gate. It looks like Israel is more and more becoming a nation that is dwelling alone.

But here, in a single verse is revealed the heart and soul of the Middle East conflict: “Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more” (Psalm 83:4). We all know that the Arab-Muslim nations have made ‘a covenant to wipe out Israel as a nation’, but “*The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing*” (Psalm 33:10) and “*God will enter into judgment on behalf of My people and My heritage Israel, because they have scattered them among the nations and have divided up My land*” (Joel 3:2).

Only when we view the daily news through the eyes of God, can we gain insight and understanding about what’s happening. God is going to be magnified through Israel to all the nations and the events taking place in Israel and Jerusalem hold the key to the future of all mankind. “*Blessed is*

the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom He has chosen as His own inheritance” (Psalm 33: 12).

As Christians we believe the day is coming that God will manifest his power and might to the whole world when most of the nations will turn against Israel. God Himself is the Deliverer of Israel!

A good friend of *Christians for Israel International*, Michael Freund, has also been launching a few “wake-up” calls about this theme in some of his “Fundamentally Freund” columns in *The Jerusalem Post*.

“Something is stirring in the Middle East. The winds of war are blowing, picking up speed with each passing day, and the threat to Israel is growing steadily more alarming. All around us, trouble – major trouble – appears to be brewing, and it is time we open our eyes and confront the dangers that may lie ahead.

From Beirut and Damascus in the north to Teheran in the east, and back to Gaza in the south, the “arc of hate” surrounding the Jewish state is speaking openly and brazenly of conflict and destruction. Israel’s foes have launched increasingly fiery verbal volleys in recent weeks, in what appears to be a coordinated campaign to heighten tensions in the region. With pressure mounting on Iran over its nuclear program, and the threat of stricter sanctions in the air, Israel needs to be on guard and alert.’

“In the face of all this,” Freund says, “there is a knife-like question piercing through the fog of fear: Where is God?”

“Some might take this as a challenge to divine justice, but that is not what I intend. I am a man of faith, and I believe our deliverance will assuredly come. What I mean to say is: Where is God in our public discourse? Why aren’t we turning to Him in this hour of need?”

“Sure, diplomacy and military readiness are crucial, and we must continue to invest our efforts in these areas, even as we hope for the best. But the piercing siren sounded yesterday brought to mind the wailing of the shofar on Yom Kippur, penetrating the serene obliviousness that characterizes much of our daily lives. This was a spiritual wake-up call, sounding to arouse us and jolt us into action. We can choose to ignore it, but we do so at our peril.

“Each night, our generals and defense officials grace the television screens, insisting that “Israel is strong” and “we are ready.”

I’m glad to hear it and hope it’s true. But as we have seen in the past, overconfidence can breed arrogance, which is a recipe for disaster.

“A dash of humility and a healthy dose of faith are just as critical to ensuring success. That’s why I’d like to see our leaders projecting a little less conceit and a lot more conviction.

“How refreshing it would be to hear them invoking some reliance on the Almighty and putting God back into the national conversation, injecting the sacred into their public discourse – and ours.

“This is more than just semantics; it goes to the very heart of the challenges we face. Belief in a higher power and in the justness of our cause is our spiritual ammunition, giving us the strength and determination to turn back any foe.

“The great hassidic leader, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, once asked a student where God could be found. The surprised young scholar offered the seemingly obvious answer: Rabbi, He is surely everywhere! “No!” said the Kotzker, with fiery certitude. “God is only where we let Him in!”

Now, more than ever, would be the perfect time to do so.

An Explosive Issue

By Prof. Paul Eidelberg

Unlike such intellectual giants as Maimonides and Thomas Aquinas, few commentators dare say that Islam, regardless of what may be said of its virtues and historical accomplishments, is inherently a malicious and destructive creed at war with individual freedom and human dignity.

Islam has declared war against Israel and America, respectively the source and guardian of Western civilization. While Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad proclaims “Death to America” and vows to “wipe Israel off the map,” Islam remains untouchable.

Even though Muslims predominate among terrorists, apologists would have us believe that these Muslims have “hijacked” Islam, a religion of peace. Meanwhile, other

commentators, to avoid disparaging Islam per se, speak of “Islamism,” “militant Islam,” “political Islam,” “radical Islam,” etc.

Still, a truth-seeker would like to understand the difference between “Islam” and “Islamism.” Isn’t Islam an “ism” as much as Islamism? Isn’t it strange that some commentators speak of “radical Islamists”? What is the difference between “Islamists” and “radical Islamists”? Besides, since Jihad is the most distinctive principle of Islam and Islamic history, doesn’t this same principle animate Islamism, militant Islam, and political Islam? Perhaps some data about Islamic scriptures will clarify this explosive issue?

Consider the findings of a monumental study of the Islamic Trilogy, the Quran,

the Hadith, and the Sira published in 2007. (Note: whereas the Hadith consists of Islam’s oral traditions, the Sira consists of biographies of Muhammad used to develop the Hadith and Muslim Law, Sharia.) The study was made by Bill Warner, director of the Center for the Study of Political Islam:

Of more than 153,000 words in the Quran, only 4,018 or 2.6 percent seem to express goodness to Humanity, qualified, however, by obedience to Muhammad.

The words of Allah are only about 17 percent of the Islamic Trilogy, but the words and actions of Muhammad comprise 83 percent of the Trilogy.

About 20 percent of the most authoritative school of the Hadith is about Jihad.

At least 75 percent of the Sira is about

Jihad.

There are 146 references to hell in the Quran, only 6 percent of which concern moral failings such as murder and theft. The other 94 percent of the reasons for being in Hell are for the intellectual sin of disagreeing with Muhammad, a political crime.

No public official dares say that Islam is the greatest threat to Western civilization. (Apart from risking his life, he might be indicted for a hate crime.) True, it is known and admitted that Islam has enslaved countless women. It has also been reported that since the time of Muhammad, Muslims have slaughtered 270 million human beings! [ii] Nevertheless, while the Quran calls infidels dogs and pigs, Islam remains a sacred cow.

Burn a Koran Day

By Mark Durie

In response Muslim groups throughout the world have warned that this event will result in extreme reactions. Would-be martyrs have declared their readiness to die in bombing the Dove Church. Radical groups such as Hizbut Tahrir and the Muslim Brotherhood have warned about uncontrollably violent reactions. For example a statement posted by the Muslim Brotherhood said:

“Dr. Diaa Rashwan, Islamic movements’ expert at Egypt’s Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, described the intended burnings of the Quran [as] unreasonable and exceedingly dangerous going beyond all reason and sensibility. He maintained that a serious crisis will arise and extremism will be initiated in the Muslim world stressing that it is imperative that the US administration and UN interfere before a vicious circle of violence and extremism is initiated. He added that the burning of the Quran was not freedom of expression but a clear violation of the rights of nearly one and a half billion Muslims worldwide.”

An effigy of Pastor Jones of DWOC has been burned in Kabul, by protestors shouting ‘Death to America. Death to Obama’, and General David Petraeus, the US military commander in Afghanistan has warned that the act ‘could endanger’ American troops, and play into the hands of the Taliban.

Many have spoken out against the burning ritual, including American Christians. The National Association of Evangelicals has urged cancellation of the burning because:

“God created human beings in his image, and therefore all should be treated with dignity and respect. The proposed burning of Qu’rans would be profoundly offensive to Muslims worldwide, just as Christians would be insulted by the burning of Bibles.”

Rick Sanchez of CNN in his interview with Terry Jones, pastor of DWOC asked him why he would burn the “sacred” book of Muslims, and also asked how he would feel if Muslims burned a Bible. Jones said that he wouldn’t like it, but this would be their right.

Kiran Chetry in another interview suggested to Jones that he would have the



In the end Florida pastor Terry Jones said his church will “not today, not ever” burn a Quran, even if a mosque is built near Ground Zero.

blood of American soldiers on his hands.

This Quran burning ritual is a bad idea, but not because it shows disrespect to Muslims, nor because Jones will have ‘blood on his hands’.

Re disrespect.

It is unhelpful for the NAE to demand that Christians must respect Islam for the sake of Muslims’ sensibilities. If someone believes the religious ideas or beliefs of others are bad, it is wrong to demand that the person must show respect towards these ideas or beliefs. Bad and harmful beliefs do not deserve respect, no matter how ardently they are held. The assumption that if you reject someone’s beliefs, you are attacking or offending the person who holds them is also a very, very unhelpful idea. People should be free to disagree with or vehemently reject the beliefs of others without being accused of hatred.

Re blood guilt.

If some people rise up and kill others on the basis of a Koran burning incident - or any other incident which is believed to insult Islam - then the only people who will have blood on their hands will be the killers. Opposition to Islam’s teachings does not and

never will justify acts of violence by offended radical Muslims.

These two ideas, i) that if you attack Islam, you are attacking Muslims; and ii) that criticism of Islam justifies violence - these are very bad ideas, bad for freedom, bad for justice, and bad for peace. It is true they are claimed by some Muslims to be the legitimate teachings of Islam. Some cite, for example the verses of the Koran which state that ‘persecution [*fitna*] is worse than slaughter’ (Sura 2:191, 217) or ‘fight them until there is no more persecution [*fitna*]’ (Sura 2:193, 8:39). These are the same verses used to justify killing those who leave Islam (so-called ‘apostates’ from Islam). According to the *fitna* worldview, violent responses to criticism of Islam are justifiable. However they are not, and it is unwise for critics of the DWOC to veer into a dalliance with the *fitna* worldview by commanding respect for bad beliefs, while expulcating perpetrators of violence and terror.

Yet I do oppose the Quran burning. The best explanation, from a Christian perspective, for opposing this reckless act, has come to me, not from Christians, but from Ahmadiyyah Muslims. It is found in a statement *Love for All, Hatred for None - A Peaceful Message to the World Burning*

Scriptures - A Biblical Teaching?

The Ahmadiyyah response begins by citing Jesus’ words from the Sermon on the Mount:

“But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven ..” (Matthew 5:44-45)

The Ahmadiyyah statement correctly rejects Dove Church’s reliance on Acts 19:19, in which pagan Ephesians burned their magic books and articles:

“This is the only such incident of “book burning” recorded in the New Testament. However, for verse 19:19 to be used in support of Christians gathering together to burn the scriptures of other faiths publicly is not logical and is unsupported by any other Christian teaching. The scrolls that are burnt in this verse are burnt by their owners themselves, the implication being that they are aware that what is contained within is not truthful and they fear being disgraced as those who had been using Jesus’ name to drive out demons were disgraced. They openly confess their actions and then burn the scrolls to show they are putting an end to such practices in the future. This is a completely different scenario from the one being presented by the Dove centre to justify burning the Qur’an.”

Indeed. The Ahmadiyyah statement then goes on to point out that Jesus taught meekness, showing mercy, peacemaking, forgiving others, not judging others, and repentance, citing Matthew 5:5, 5:7, 5:43-45, 6:14-15, 7:1-2, 11:25, and 9:10-13. It points out that burning is an action of destruction and hatred, and this is not in accordance with the message of the New Testament: “Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” (Romans 12:17-18).

It is sad that some Christian leaders, in their rejection of the DWOC’s foolhardy and dangerous Quran burning proposal, have fallen into the trap of appeasing the sentiments of Muslims, instead of standing up for Christian principles of love and grace.

Israel’s no-win dilemma: To strike Iran or not

By Abraham Rabinovich

A chilling article on Haaretz newspaper’s opinion page caught Israel’s attention recently.

‘There is an 80 per cent probability that within nine months to two years, the Israeli home front will absorb 1,000 to 20,000 losses,’ it began.

The fatalities would be caused by Iranian missile strikes in retaliation for an Israeli attack on Iran’s nuclear facilities, the writer said. The Israeli attack was described as inevitable.

The author, Mr. Udi Pridan, is co-director of one of Israel’s leading advertising agencies.

In a country where numerous executives are former high-ranking military officers, his background is unclear but the authoritative tone of his article and the prominence given to it by the prestigious daily suggest someone with solid security credentials.

The question of a pre-emptive attack against Iran is the most agonising security dilemma Israel has faced since its founding.

The arguments against a strike are formidable. Iran would clearly retaliate with missiles and its Hizbollah proxies in Lebanon would join in with thousands

of rockets.

Although Saddam Hussein’s Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel during the 1991 Gulf War, they caused only one direct fatality. In the war against Hizbollah four years ago, Israel suffered some 40 fatalities from 4,000 rockets. The Iranian missiles, with half-ton warheads and accurate guidance systems, can be expected to exact a far more significant toll.

‘If there will be thousands dead, we will lick our wounds,’ wrote Mr. Pridan. ‘Five thousand would be a national trauma. At 20,000, we will use the doomsday weapon against Iran, and then there will really be a new Middle East.’

But Mr. Pridan’s article, headlined ‘Wake Up!’, was not an argument against an Israeli attack. It was a call for the government to swiftly beef up emergency and rescue services needed to deal with massive casualties and damage inflicted by Iran’s response.

‘Israel will act against the Iranian nuclear programme, with or without the Americans,’ he wrote.

Even short of an all-out war following a pre-emptive strike, retaliatory attacks are

anticipated against Israeli legations and citizens around the world as Iran and its supporters lash back.

Also, a closing by Iran of the strategic Strait of Hormuz to oil shipments would likely exacerbate the global economic crisis.

An Israeli attack may also undermine the growing liberal movement in Iran, which is the best bet for eventually unseating the radical regime in Teheran.

And Iran would probably be able to restore its damaged facilities within a few years at most, given Israel’s inability to mount sustained conventional attacks from such a great distance.

Against all this, advocates of an attack offer only one argument: Although it is illogical that Iran would actually use a nuclear weapon against Israel, if only for fear that the country in its death throes would be able to launch a nuclear counter-strike, Teheran cannot be given such an option in the first place.

Israel faced a somewhat similar existential situation once before. In the 1973 Yom Kippur War, it was caught by a surprise attack on two fronts with the bulk of its army still immobilised.

The Egyptian army succeeded in driving Israeli forces back from the Suez Canal, while on the Golan Heights Syrian armoured divisions broke through defences and appeared on the verge of descending into Israel proper. So desperate was the situation that Defence Minister Moshe Dayan warned that Israel’s existence was in danger.

At a grim meeting in the underground war room in Tel Aviv with chief of staff David Elazar, two generals proposed using ‘special means’ against Syria in order to end the threat on the northern front and enable the army to focus its attention on the Egyptian front.

The term ‘special means’ has never been publicly spelt out but it is believed to include nuclear weapons. Two other generals, including the deputy chief of staff, argued forcefully against it and General Elazar let the suggestion drop.

That suggests that if Israel attacks Iran, it would avoid using nuclear weapons against the nuclear sites even though that would be the only way to ensure their complete destruction.

(Source: *The Straits Times*)

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