

Teaching *from* Zion

"...for out of Zion shall come forth Torah
and the word of the Lord from
Jerusalem." – Isaiah 2:3



ALTIYAH

PAST PRESENT & FUTURE

*"Look! I am bringing them from the land in the north, gathering them
from the far ends of the earth..."*

Jeremiah 31:8



Netivyah **נתיביה**
Teaching from Zion

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About Netivyah

Netivyah in Hebrew means "the Way of the Lord." "The Way" was one of the names by which the early community of believers was known in the Brit Chadashah (New Testament). Paul says, "I worship the God of our fathers in accordance with the Way (which they call a sect). I continue to believe everything that accords with the Torah and everything written in the Prophets." (Acts 24:14 CJB). As followers of "the Way," we believe in the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We try to be faithful to God's law (the Torah) and to the rest of Scripture—the Prophets and the Writings. We believe that the Messiah promised in God's word is Yeshua (Jesus), the one who "saves His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

More Information: www.netivyah.org

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News from Netivyah

Shalom Dear Friends of Netivyah,

Autumn is here and God has faithfully answered our prayers for rain and cooler weather.

We have celebrated what we refer to as the “High Holidays” from September thru October and for the first time in more than two years, the nations have returned to join us, according to the scriptures! All of Israel is very grateful for all those who have ventured, once again, to the Holy Land.

With your prayers and support for Netivyah, we continue straight forward with what the Lord has given us, including weekly Hamotzi distribution to needy families in Jerusalem and the yearly scholarship program. We are also hosting holiday luncheons for our Holocaust Survivors, weekly zoom teachings all over the world in Zimbabwe, Finland, East Papua, China and Norway, and getting ready for the yearly gifts to our beloved soldiers.

We are quite busy and thanking Abba for it all. We are honored to be His hands and feet here in His land. We couldn't do it without your faithful prayers and support. We thank Him for you and ask His blessings on you all and your families now and for the upcoming Holiday Season and New Year.

Gratefully,

The Netivyah Staff

OUR IDF SOLDIERS

When I made Aliyah in 2004, I wasn't aware that from 12 years old, Israeli kids are being trained up to give some of their best young years to the Israeli Defense Force (IDF).

Everywhere I went I would see them. At the national parks, at museums, at the Wailing Wall and the Old City, at check points; in all aspects of life, they were there, keeping watch over our beloved Israel. It made me feel safe to have them close by, armed and ready to defend us--to sacrifice this young part of their lives for me (us). The Lord really planted an understanding and loving appreciation for these young people deep in my heart.

Coming to work at Netivyah gave me the chance to put my heart's desire into action. It also became very apparent that many of us here, at Netivyah, had the same desire. Several had already served and/or were about to serve.

When we researched how we could bless them, we learned some interesting facts about military life in Israel. One of the most interesting facts is the IDF doesn't give a salary to new recruits. They offer "perks" like free bus/ transportation passes, uniforms with boots, food, and a place to shower and sleep; all that depending on the situation. During times of conflict or war (which can be a constant) some of the most basic supplies can run low.

Another thing we learned is that the soldier (their families) must provide the very basic personal items like: soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, personal hygiene items (including combs and hair brushes), deodorant, and more. Many families have more than one soldier in their homes.



Some soldiers are "lone," meaning they do not have families in the Land.

We knew now what our goal would be. To provide our believing soldiers with some personal things and also fun things like candy, coffee, warm scarves, ski hats and gloves. We also thought Hanukkah would be a good time to bless them.

How would we find them? How would we get the gifts to them? This loving kindness was also on God's heart and He led us, step by step, through the how's and what's and where's. It was "nip and tuck" as we say in English, at first, but He was and continues to be FAITHFUL to lead us each year, to give gifts from our hearts, from HIS heart!

Netivyah, along with various ministries at different times, has been able to provide wonderful, useful gifts that the soldiers can use during their time in the IDF and also lasting gifts, to use well after their service. Gifts they couldn't afford to buy themselves.

We contact nearly all of the believing congregations throughout the Land and get the list of soldiers who attend. Every year we update the list. We've moved the giving date to Purim each year and we deliver the gifts to all, outside of Jerusalem, and the local congregations come to the office to pick up for their soldiers

After more than 15 years, it's still one of the most important things of all that we do at Netivyah for our IDF soldiers and Israel.

OUR ACTIONS PROJECTS IN 2022/2023

In these pages, you can read what we have done in the past year and what we will continue to do in the coming year.

During the last year, we expanded Netivyah's activities throughout Israel and the world, through several new high-quality filmed teaching series, available for viewing worldwide.

We also have continued our existing activities and started a new project in partnership with Houses 4 Healing in Abilene, Texas and Shevet Achin, in Israel.

HAMOTZI - FOOD DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Our flagship project, providing various types of food such as fruits and vegetables, meat and fish, and dry goods, to any who has need. We work with 10 different welfare offices throughout Jerusalem in order to help as many people as possible. Jerusalem is a mosaic of ethnicities and our families come from them all - Eritreans, Arabs, Jews, Messianics, homeless, single mothers, and more. For over 20 years we have invested everything in order to serve them flawlessly each and every week, and each week we are blessed and inspired to be able to take part in this work. When a holiday comes, we try to add that extra special thing that makes it special, such as apples and honey or Matzah with chocolate, just to see that spark of joy in their eyes.



Our guiding directive is to show the love and light of our Messiah - Yeshua, to be an example to those around us.

We love to help these dear people, and especially to socialize with them over a board game, or a good cup of coffee.

Each week we serve one thousand people and never turn anyone away.

Volunteers from all over the world who come to see the Holy Land set aside one day a week to come and serve our needy families.

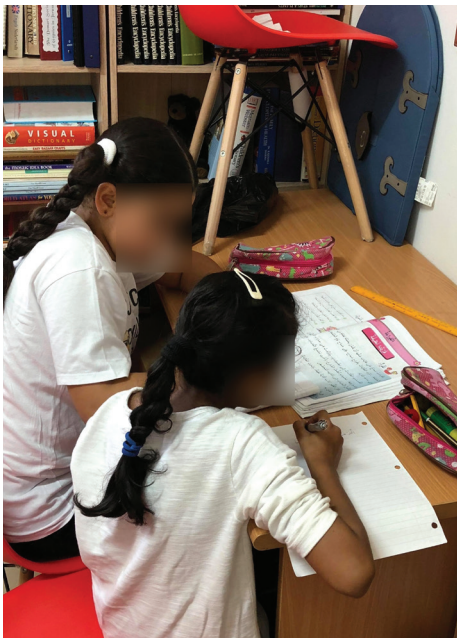
After many years of service, it is clearly visible how the Lord blesses this project, the volunteers, and our needy families.

Each week we hear stories and see the miracles that the Lord does in the lives of those who come. If you are in Jerusalem, we would be blessed for you to come to join us. Make sure to arrive in time to sit down with us for a tasty lunch before we start serving the families.



GYPSIES

There is a gypsy community of two thousand people, living in east Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and in Judea and Samaria. Originally, they were a nomadic people, but have since settled and abandoned their old vocations. Like in Europe, also in Jerusalem, the gypsies suffer from prejudice and hate. Local children often will not play with them and the schools do not try to keep them from dropping out. Like most residents of East Jerusalem, they are permanent residents of Israel but do not have citizenship.



In the last year we partnered with Rechobot congregation in Washington state, who like us, saw the great need to help the gypsies living in the old city of Jerusalem. The purpose of this help is to encourage the education and development of the children, and to try to alleviate the harsh conditions that

they endure in East Jerusalem.

We at Netivyah see this as a great mission duty to help the weaker members of society and especially educate and invest in future generations. We have been called to help the needy. It is what the Lord demands of us, so it is our great privilege to be on the side that gives.

Psalm 72:12 “For he will rescue the needy when they cry, the poor too and those with none to help them.” CJB

ONCE UPON A WEEK



Our new teaching series are available on our website and on YouTube once a week.

In the coming year we will study together, each week, in a series about the weekly Torah portions written by Yehuda Bachana, the director of Netivyah and pastor of Roeh Israel congregation. Each week Yehuda will present different perspectives on the Torah portion, especially focusing on how it is alive and relevant to us today; something that we can implement in our lives. We invite you to come and learn each week from the Torah portion, and to connect to your Jewish roots through these teachings.

THE PROPHETS (HAFTARAH) & TORAH PORTION:



This last year we partnered with the Korean TV station, Brad-TV, and created a series of in-depth and thrilling teachings by Joseph Shulam, about the weekly Torah portions. In these series, Joseph presented many relevant and practical examples for our daily lives. Due to the success of those series, we decided that we will continue for another season. This time, Joseph will teach weekly from the prophets (the Haftara) and connect all the prophets in the bible in a deep, interesting and capturing way. We invite you to join us for this in-depth teaching that will take you one step further in your understanding of the scriptures.

STUDENTS:

We invest a lot of effort in building the body of the Messiah in Israel. One of the main ways we do this, is by giving scholarships to believing students; students who served the country and are now striving to advance to the top of Israeli industry and society.

Netivyah has been granting scholarships for the past 26 years. To this day, we have supported more than three hundred students from congregations all over Israel. Many of the students come from impoverished backgrounds, and this is why we come along beside them and support their efforts.

This coming year, we will be helping twenty students (along with a few more from within our congregation). We will support them in every way that we can in order for them to focus on their studies and achieve all their goals and desires.

Many of our students, today, work in very good professions, such as engineers, lawyers, psychologists, doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, managers, and more.

We are privileged to be part of building up the body of the Messiah in Israel and the opportunity to help these students who need this financial aid and support at this critical time in their lives.

It is imperative that the Messianic body is able to participate in the leadership and navigation of the country and of Israeli society.

HOUSES FOR HEALING

Medical conditions that require the patient to receive long-term hospital care can become a very difficult problem when the patient and/or his supporting family do not have a place to stay near the hospital. In recent years we have noticed that this problem is growing and the need for such a place or “house” is necessary for people and families.

Our mission is to aid the sick by providing free temporary housing to those receiving medical treatment in the Jerusalem hospitals.

That’s why we founded Houses for Healing, to provide those in need with the best assistance to get through their ailment without additional worries.



We provide a small, furnished apartment free of charge to people who need to receive medical treatment far from their homes. During their time in our apartments, together with members of Jerusalem congregations, we take care of all the needs of the patients so that they can receive the best treatment. We walk alongside them with a lot of love and support throughout the period.

The apartments are located near the “Hadassah Ein Kerem” International Hospital. The purpose of the apartments is to provide short-term medical housing for people living in Israel and for refugees (people who come from Ukraine following the war) who need to receive medical treatment as well as for family members who accompany them during the time in the hospital. The common causes for such hospitalization and using the apartments are: medical emergencies, accidents, premature birth, chemotherapy/radiation (cancer patients), amputation, prolonged treatment and complex medical conditions.



The apartments are under construction for repairs and maintenance work, until the end of January. We will update you as soon as they are ready.

For more information please scan the QR code.



BETSY RAMSAY M E M O R I A L

Our dear friend and sister in the Lord, Betsy Ramsay, passed away, rather suddenly last July 22, 2022. I say “suddenly” because she seemed in good health for her 85+ years.

I want to share a bit about her life, as I knew her, and how she touched me, even as she touched and impacted many of the Messianic community here in Jerusalem, Israel.

I met her many years ago through another dear friend, Chana Siegal.

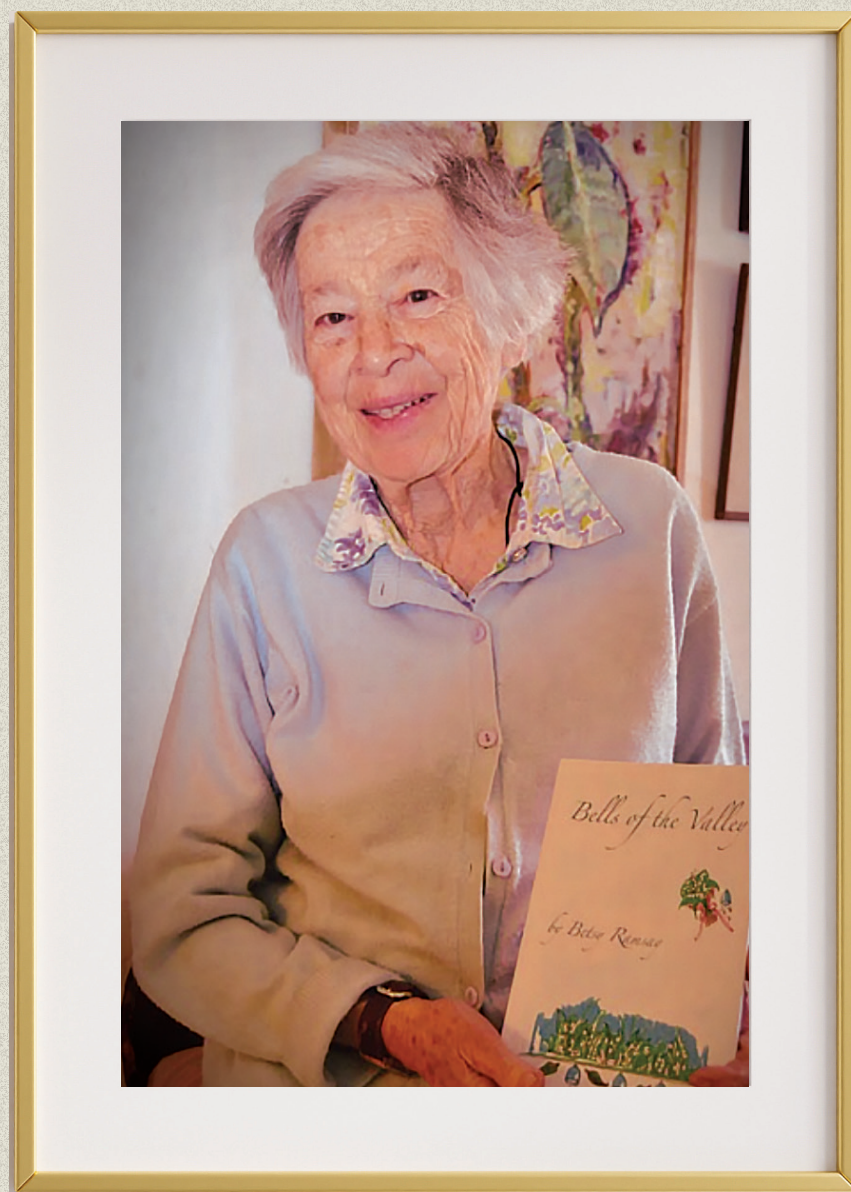
Betsy was, as she told me, an American by birth and well-educated at Wesley College. She aspired to be a journalist and poet and accomplished both. Betsy married into an aristocratic European family and lived and raised her three children in Sweden. She made Aliyah when she was in her fifties.

She loved Israel and settled in Jerusalem, attending the Messianic Assembly here.

She was a brilliant, successful author and poet and wrote many books. Some children's, some autobiographical, and some poetry.

In the last few years, she penned several articles for this magazine, Teaching from Zion, on various topics. She always had great spiritual insight and had a wonderful way of communicating herself on paper! I loved reading her books and articles and always learning from what she had to share.

She was a good friend and is greatly missed by many. I look forward to meeting her on the other side.



ALIYAH:

PAST PRESENT & FUTURE

by Joseph Shulam

The Hebrew Bible relates that the patriarch Abraham came to the Land of Canaan with his family and followers in approximately 1800 BC. His grandson Jacob went down to Egypt with his family, but never forgot that their home was the land of Canaan, the Land God gave to Abraham and his seed as an eternal inheritance. Isaac, Jacob, and his children went down to Egypt to seek sustenance, but always wanted to get back to the land of Canaan! It is interesting that God prepared for the family of Abraham, the Hebrews, a ticket for survival, by manipulating Joseph to become the second most important person in Egypt and prepare for his family a lifesaver in Egypt. However, a couple of centuries in Egypt became slavery and misery for the children of Israel, and they cried unto the Lord for help and salvation. The Lord heard their cry and sent them Moses and Aaron to lead them out of slavery and back to the land of Promise, the land of Israel that God promised to Abraham. “Then He [God] said to Abram: ‘Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also, the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.’” (Genesis 15:13–16 NKJV)

When we think about the subject of

Aliyah, the above text is of great importance. The Word of God states here clearly that one of the reasons why the children of Israel will not return to the land of promise is that “The iniquity of the Amorites (other nations that have immigrated from the far north to the land of Canaan) is not yet complete.” This gives us a clue as to how God works with the nations, and that includes how He works with Israel as well. The promises of God to Israel include the same paradigm. The reason Israel went into exile more than one time is exactly the same: “lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you.” (Leviticus 18:28 NKJV, See also Leviticus 18:25, 28, 20:22, Ezekiel 39:21-27)

As the word of God states over and over again, exile or expulsion from the land of Promise is a part of the paradigm that is stated so clearly: “The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.” (Leviticus 25:23)

It is interesting that the same paradigm is also for the disciples of Yeshua in the New Testament. As people of God, as servants of the Most High, even the non-Jewish disciples of the Messiah, the Christians, are described in the New Testament as having been “strangers and sojourners.” “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.” (Ephesians 2:19 NKJV)

The major expulsion of the Jewish people out of the land of promise happened in the 8th Century BCE. The prophets all spoke and prophesied that God was going to send the people of Israel out of the land, as God has spoken to Moses, and as it is recorded in the book of Leviticus chapters 26:15ff. Around 50,000 Jews of the elite of the Jewish society, the ruling class, the rich and wealthy and famous, were all taken to Babylon. We have the sad picture of the King of Israel capitulating on his hands and knees before the king of Babylon with the dignitaries of Israel behind him. This is one of the saddest pictures carved on stone, placed in the temple of the Babylonian god, as a memorial to the words of God to Moses in the book of Leviticus.

It is a demonstration of the faithfulness of God and the truth of His Word carved on stone in the capital of Babylon. The book of Daniel in the Bible is written in Babylon, and so is





The events surrounding the exile to Babylon were so traumatic and the return from Babylon so dramatic that the drama is recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Bible.

the book of Ezekiel. We have in the Bible the books of Ezra and Nehemiah that tell us the story of the return and the rebuilding of the land of Israel and especially the city of Jerusalem. King Cyrus of Persia/Babylon wrote the declaration permitting and sending the Jews back to the land of Israel in 538 BCE. By the year 459 BCE, Ezra and Nehemiah had returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the city and the city wall of Jerusalem. You can visit Jerusalem and see the walls of Jerusalem that were rebuilt upon the return of the Jews back to the city. It is interesting that even in that time the neighbors of Israel, including the Arabs, resisted and fought the Jews that returned to Judea. And today, Israel is still doing the same and rebuilding and restoring the desolation and neglect that centuries of Turks, Arabs, and Persians have left in this land. Here are the words of the Holy Spirit from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah; this verse says it all. See that nothing has changed in the process of Aliyah and returning home and that all of it is nothing else other than the very work of God and fulfillment of His promises: “Every one of the builders

had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me.” (Nehemiah 4:18 NKJV)

The Jews returned from Babylonian exile, rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem and the walls of Jerusalem, and restored the Jewish settlement in the land!

The fall of Jerusalem a second time in the year 70 AD, brought a major exodus from the land of Israel all through the Mediterranean basin, Egypt, Lydia, and all through North Africa, Asia Minor, Greece, the Balkans, Rome and all the way to Spain, Jews searched and settled to find new life, away from the land of their Fathers. The return from this diaspora had a few waves in the 8th century, and again in the 12th, 14th, and 15th, and then in the 17th, 18th, 19th, and finally the 20th century. These waves had a painful and difficult absorption into the land and into the society that lived in the land of Israel in those times.

The attitude of the inhabitants of the land during these periods was lax toward the Torah and the rest of what is called today the “Old Testament.” This was the cause of the Pharisaic Revolution that changed the paradigm of how we read the Bible and especially the Torah. These developments in the land of Israel happened after the destruction of the temple, and the seeds of that Revolution of how we view and use the Bible was the birth of the Pharisaic party in the land of Israel and especially in Jerusalem and in the Galilee.

The most influential Rabbis at the end of the 1st Century BCE and in the next centuries in the land of Israel were immigrants mainly from Babylon. Rabbi Hillel and his family made Aliyah to Jerusalem from Babylon,

and so did some of the other most influential Rabbis that collected and edited the material that later became the heads of the Sanhedrin and the main leaders of the ruling cast of Jews in the land of Israel.

Gamaliel, the famous Rabbi, was a relative of Hillel that made a very big and significant contribution to Judaism, and until today the influence of Hillel, Gamaliel, and their families have been most influential in the shaping of Judaism. Their influence is still mentioned and has an impact even until



The fall of the Temple in Jerusalem and the destruction of Jerusalem, including the temple, and the taking of the Elite of Israel to Rome, is so well documented even on the walls of the Titus Arch in the Roman Forum carved in three-dimensional relief on the inside of Titus' victory arch.

today. Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox Jewish circles are influenced by Hillel and Gamaliel, immigrants to the land of Israel from Babylon. Remember too that Gamaliel is mentioned in a very favorable light in the book of Acts.[1] The Apostle Paul himself was from a family of immigrants from the city of Tarsus.

Ezra and Nehemiah were the two most important immigrants from Babylon that led a major reformation in Judaism and made the reading and the Study of The Torah a major commandment. They were the ushers and brokers of the Pharisaic Revolution.

The events surrounding the exile to

Babylon were so traumatic, and the return from Babylon so dramatic that the drama is recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Bible.

The exile from the land of Israel in the first quarter of the second century AD was even more dramatic and much bigger and more traumatic than the exile at the fall of the First Temple in Jerusalem.

The fall of the Temple in Jerusalem and the destruction of Jerusalem, including the temple, and the taking of the Elite of Israel to Rome, is so well documented even on the walls of the Titus Arch in the Roman Forum. The carving in three-dimensional relief on

the inside of Titus' victory arch shows Roman Soldiers carrying the temple's furniture and the gold menorah and the silver trumpets and the table of show bread that was in the temple, being carried in the victory parade in Rome after the fall of the temple in Jerusalem in 70th AD. The next major expulsion of the Jews from the land of Israel was in the years 235 – 245 AD. Very big numbers of Jewish slaves were sent to Rome and the Roman provinces.

The major trauma of the fall of Jerusalem was the fall itself, the destruction of the Temple and the exile of the Jews from Judea. It is interesting that in the New Testament, we have the prophetic picture of the fall of Jerusalem in the

Gospel of Luke: “Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, ‘These things which you see—the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.’” (Luke 21:5–6 NKJV) The prediction of the fall of Jerusalem was given in the year 30 by three Rabbis; Yeshua was one of them, Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zachay, and Rabbi Zadock. However, Yeshua also predicted the salvation of Israel and the rebuilding. After the very sad and horrible description of the fall of Jerusalem, Yeshua also gives the time stamp of when there will be salvation and restoration of Jerusalem: “For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” (Luke 21:22–24 NKJV). The most important in this text is the last phrase: “Until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled!”

This phrase is a prediction of the end of occupation of Jerusalem by the Gentiles’ foreign forces and the salvation of Israel. Jerusalem has been occupied by non-Jewish forces from the first century BCE, and fully occupied by foreign forces of Gentiles since 70 CE (A.D) until June of 1967. The Six Day War was the first time in nearly 2000 years that Jews were in control of all Jerusalem. There were waves of Aliyah several times between the fall of Jerusalem and the Six Days War in June of 1967.

Here is a short list of the main waves

of Aliyah: 10th–11th century

In the 10th century, leaders of the Karaite Jewish community, mostly living under Persian rule, urged their followers to settle in Eretz Yisrael. The Karaites established their own quarter in Jerusalem, on the western slope of the Kidron Valley. During this period, there is abundant evidence of pilgrimages to Jerusalem by Jews from various countries, mainly in the month of Tishrei, around the time of the Sukkot holiday.

12th and 18th Century

Many Jews migrated to Israel because of the waves of the crusaders and the persecution of Jews in Europe by the Crusaders. The Crusaders were Christians who were inflamed by some pious zeal to free the Holy Land. But on the way, they burned synagogues and killed Jews, wholesale, just because they were Jews. This persecution caused many Jews to return to Israel right in the wake of the Crusaders.

The same phenomenon continued between the 13th and 19th Centuries. The major cause during that period was the Catholic Inquisition that again persecuted, killed, burned, and mutilated Jews, young and old. This time, the Jews were forced to convert to Christianity or have their property and their livelihood taken. That was a motivation for Jews to convert to Catholicism outwardly, but try to keep their Jewish identity in secret, hidden in their homes. This caused the Catholic Inquisition to create a special court to judge and condemn these Jews that were called “New Christians” and “Marranos.”

These courts were called “auto-da-fé”. In Portuguese auto da fé means ‘act of faith’. It was a public ritual of penance

that almost always ended in burning alive, in public, those Jews that tried to keep their faith secretly. This caused some rich Jews to migrate to the land of Israel.

Among the most famous one, was the richest person in Europe, Dona Garcia by her Latin name, and Ester Nasi, by her Hebrew name. She was a young widow that managed to have one of the biggest shipping fleets in the world. Her ships carried goods from Asia to Europe and carried Jews from Europe to Asia to hide and run away from the horrors of “Christian love,” which was forcing the Jews to convert to Christianity and give up their identity, tradition, and observance of the Torah laws.

This Christian persecution of Jews in the most horrifying and cruel ways imaginable by humans caused all those who could to run away from Europe. Because of this, the number of Jews who made their way to the land of Israel rose significantly between the 13th and 19th centuries.

The land of Israel during this time was under Turkish Ottoman rule. Jews were safe and protected by the Muslim law in the Ottoman Empire. In fact, this same Ester Nasi, Dona Garcia, was redeemed from Prison in Venice by the Ottoman Sultan, and she purchased most of lower Galilee, including the Tiberius and the Sea of Galilee (The Kinneret) from the Turkish Sultan, and paid in cash.

The expulsion of Jews from England (1290), France (1391), Austria (1421), and Spain (the Alhambra decree of 1492) was considered by many Jews as a sign of the soon coming of redemption and for this reason many made their way to the land of Israel full of messianic expectations.

Even Jews that didn't make Aliyah to the land of Israel, especially in France, Italy, Germany, Poland, and Russia, began to believe in the imminent restoration of Israel and in the gathering of the exiles and the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel.

The Aliyah during this period of severe persecution and forced conversion to Catholic Christianity caused a wave of hundreds of Rabbis and their families to make Aliyah to the Land of Israel; but sad to say, many of these Rabbis and their families died in the hands of the Crusaders in the 13th Century.

This didn't stop the Jews and their leaders to keep making serious efforts to return to Jerusalem and to the land promised by the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal in 1498 caused Jews from Western Europe including England and France (and even some Russians and Ukrainians that ran from the murderous persecution of Bogdan Khmelnytsky in the 17th Century CE) to find their way to the land of Israel.

In the 19th century, motivated by messianic dreams of the Gaon of Vilna, inspired one of the first truly large pre-Zionist waves of immigration to Eretz Yisrael. In 1808, many hundreds of the Vilna Gaon's disciples, known as The Pharisees (Perushim), settled in Tiberias and Safed. This formed what is called the Old Yeshuv. These Perushim also had a branch of immigration to Jerusalem during the same period.

In Jerusalem, there was also a large movement of Jews from Muslim Countries mainly from Bukhara, Yemen, and Russia.

What is very interesting to me is that there were also many Christians that

read the Bible and understood that it was time for the restoration of Israel, and they mobilized significant groups to come to Israel in the early and mid-19th century. Among the first were German Christian groups that settled in what today is Tel-Aviv. Then, it was called Sarona, and in Jerusalem the German Colony, whose buildings still exist in one of Jerusalem's fine neighborhoods. Also, the American colony in Jerusalem was settled by two Swedish families that came to Jerusalem from Chicago: the Spaffords and another family, but I don't remember their names right now.

In Jaffa, during the same period, Christians from Boston organized and built the American Colony with the same spirit of restoration of Israel and preparation for the Jews to return home and rebuild the country and prepare for the return of Jesus the Messiah to Zion.

The German Christians and the American Christians, both in Jerusalem and in Jaffa, were not the only groups that mobilized with Messianic fervor to come and prepare the land for the Jews. There were large groups of Ukrainian Sabbath Keeping Christians (Subotnicks) who came and purchased land from the Arabs in the Galilee and in the Jezreel Valley and farmed it. David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister to the State of Israel from 1948 and well into the 1960's, came from Odessa in Ukraine while still a student in the University, and the first place he found work was at a community of Ukrainian Christian farmers in the Galilee.

There was also a British mystic, Laurence Oliphant, who wanted to rent Northern Palestine to settle the Jews there (1879).

The major and most formative waves

of Aliyah were in the 20th Century, beginning right after the First World War. Jews, especially from Eastern Europe, started to get organized and came in every possible way to a land that was desolate and occupied mainly by Arab share-croppers.

I find it interesting that when Jews left their homes in the first century CE (AD) during the Roman atrocities, murders, rape of the women, destruction, and burning of the cities of Israel including Jerusalem, the Jews that escaped took with them the keys to their homes. You can see such keys found in the Judean Desert in the straw bag of a woman named Babta who was hiding from the Roman soldiers in caves in the Judean Desert. Even though the Jews knew well that Jerusalem had fallen and that the Romans were shipping thousands of Jews to Rome and Greece to be slaves in a foreign land, they took the keys to their homes with the hope that they would return.

This hope has never stopped, and for this very reason the national anthem of Israel is called "HaTikvah" - "The Hope!" Here is the first stanza of our Israel's National Anthem:

"As long as deep in the heart,

The soul of a Jew yearns,

And forward to the East

To Zion, an eye looks

Our hope will not be lost,

The hope of two thousand years,

To be a free nation in our land,

The land of Zion and Jerusalem."

This article is getting a bit too long.



Immigrants arrive from the ship 'Thetis' 1882. The First Aliyah

There are the stories of the First Aliyah and Second Aliyah waves between 1881 and 1914, when more than 30,000 Jews came from Russia, and they were joined by Jews from Austria, Hungary, and Austria. This major Aliyah increased the number of Jews in the land to nearly 300,000. The kibbutz movement started during that period, and Kibbutzim, like Degania, near the Sea of Galilee, started from these groups of Russian Pioneers that came to the land.

There were waves of Aliyah from Poland, Latvia, Morocco, and Yemen, and I have no other explanation for the restoration of the Jews back to the land of Israel, other than the Almighty hand of God moving and shaping history using people, leaders—religious and secular.

Ottoman Turkish Land of Israel (Palestine 1881–1914)

The persecution of Russian Jews between 1881 and 1910 led to a large wave of immigration. Since only a small portion of East European Jews were in the process of adopting Zionism by then, between 1881 and 1914, only 30 to 40 thousand immigrants went to Ottoman Palestine, while over one and a half million Russian Jews and 300,000 from Austria-Hungary

migrated to North America.

First Aliyah mainly from Romania and Russia (1882–1903)

Second Aliyah (1904–1914)

Around 35 to 40 thousand Jews immigrated to Israel in these years from the Russian Empire, and also from Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria. The main motivation for this second Aliyah Movement was the pogroms and growing anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe. There were also Jews from the Caucasus, Yemen, Iran, and as far away as Argentina. Some Jews settled also in Jaffa that was predominantly Arab, and also the Yeminite Jews who immigrated settled on the south slopes of the Mount of Olives in the ancient village of Shiloach (Siloan).

The roots of Tel-Aviv were planted by Jews who came in this Second Aliyah, and at first it was considered a Jewish suburb of Jaffa. The Movement was called Ahuzat Bayit (Homestead).

David Ben-Gurion, our first Prime Minister of Israel, had the opinion that only 10% of the people who came on this Aliyah stayed in the land. Most of the immigrants who came on this Second Aliyah found it too hard to survive in this land.

Aliyah is a biblical mandate. It is a prophetic promise by God from the Torah, from the Prophets and from the Psalms and wisdom literature in the Bible

After the First World War, the British and the French divided the Middle East between themselves. The British military occupation, which they called “Palestine,” was between 1919-1948. The British were not neutral in this land, and they limited the possibilities to bring Jews to the Land of Israel, but they did allow Jews who were in Israel before the war to return to Israel.

The Third Aliyah (1919–1923) was mainly supposed to be of returning Jews, but the truth was that most of those who “returned” were never here before, but they were trained by those who were here, to pass the British tests that were given to those who came in this Third Aliyah. One of the institutions that was created by the Third Aliyah and for the new immigrants was called The Hachshara. It prepared and equipped the young immigrants together with some of those who had come earlier to re-settle the Land and work it and build farm communities and towns in preparation

The future of Israel and the future of Christianity are woven together in the program and the mandate and mission given by God for our times and the future of both Israel and the Church.

for the future waves of immigration. One of the important people in this movement was Abba Hushi – who later became the mythological mayor of the city of Haifa.

I would like to mention one particular ship that came from Odessa in Ukraine with 67 Jews from Romania and Bulgaria but mainly from Ukraine. This was already during the British Mandate and new immigrants were not allowed, only those who were in “Palestine” before World War I and left because of the war were permitted by the British to return. In this ship, called Ruslan, there were 67 young and old Jews. Only 17 of them were refugees of the war. The rest were young intellectuals and working people that wanted to come to the Land of Israel and rebuilt the old-new Jewish Homeland.

The passengers of this small ship called Ruslan, were some of the most influential Jews who made Aliyah during this so called “Third Aliyah Movement.” Here is a short list of those who were on this ship:

- Baruch Agadati, dancer and choreographer; immigrated 1919 on board the Ruslan
- Rachel Bluwstein, known as “Rachel the Poetess”; returned 1919 on board the Ruslan. Some of Israel’s most important songs were written by this Rachel.
- Menachem Ussishkin, Zionist leader; immigrated 1919 on board the Ruslan
- Joseph Constant, sculptor, painter, and novelist immigrated in 1919 on

board the Ruslan with his wife

- Henya Pekelman, Zionist pioneer, woman manual laborer, women’s equality activist partisan and rape victim; the autobiography she wrote provides a rare documentation of daily life in Eretz-Yisra’el of those times

- Joseph Klausner – One of the most important Jewish scholars of the New Testament. Klausner wrote the book “Jesus of Nazareth.” This book gave a totally new path to the study of the historical Jesus.

The complete list would be long, but almost all of those who came made major contributions to the building and strengthening of the Land of Israel and the people of Israel.

Why am I mentioning this particular ship? The reason is simple. There is nothing too small or too hard or too big or difficult for people who have faith and a mission from God. Like in the movie the “Blues Brothers,” they were on a mission from God to help the orphanage that they were raised in to survive financially. They did the only thing that they knew how to do, and that was playing blues and jazz with old friends from their band.

Today, Israel is still receiving and inviting and promoting Aliyah! There is a myth going on that Israel doesn’t receive Messianic Jews for Aliyah. There is a formidably long list of leaders of the Messianic Movement who are already holding Israeli passports and there is also a long list of leaders of the Messianic Movement who are already living in Israel and continuing

to minister and use their God given talents in the land of Israel; from the Northern most boarder with Syria and Lebanon to the port of Eilat at the Red Sea, which is the southernmost point on the map of Israel.

Aliyah is a biblical mandate. It is a prophetic promise by God from the Torah, from the Prophets and from the Psalms and wisdom literature in the Bible. Jews from around the world, religious and non-religious, Messianic and Orthodox Jews, ought to re-read their Bibles and see texts like Isaiah 51, 60, 61, 62, 66, Ezekiel 39:21-27, and numerous Psalms and promises of the Lord, including the last two chapters of Leviticus.

The Jews whose families were converted to Catholicism during the nearly 300 years of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisition want to make Aliyah, and I believe that if welcomed, millions would pack their suitcases and board the first plane to come home to the land of Israel, the promised land by God, to all the physical and spiritual descendants of Abraham, in the flesh and by faith.

The future of Israel and the future of Christianity are woven together in the program and the mandate and mission given by God for our times and the future of both Israel and the Church.

Our non-Jewish brothers and sisters who have been born again and are no longer pagans and strangers to the covenants, promises, fruit of the Spirit, and the blessings of Salvation promised by God to Abraham and to Isaac and Jacob, and repeated by the Apostles in

their letters and in the book of Acts, must at least carry out the commission of the prophets as they are stated in the following texts:

I am limiting this list only to Isaiah because it would be way to long if I bring similar passages and prophetic promises to Israel from the Torah to the Book of Revelation.

The promises of God to His faithful prophets are beginning to be fulfilled now! This is the future dear brothers and sisters. The Lord is faithful to keep His promises, and we, Israel, and the disciples of Yeshua in this land, are witnessing it being rebuilt right in front of our eyes.

If you have visited Israel five years ago, you might now have a difficult time recognizing Israel, the cities, the roads, the farm communities and even some of the Archaeological sites.

“Indeed, He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’” (Isaiah 49:6 NKJV)

“So, the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads.

They shall obtain joy and gladness; sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” (Isaiah 51:11 NKJV)

“You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles and milk the breast of kings; you shall know that I, the LORD, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.” (Isaiah 60:16 NKJV)

“Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the posterity whom the LORD has blessed.” (Isaiah 61:9 NKJV)

“The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD will name.” (Isaiah 62:2 NKJV)

“For thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. Then you shall feed; on her sides shall you be carried, and be dandled on her knees.’” (Isaiah 66:12)

“I will set a sign among them; and those among them who escape I will send to the nations: to Tarshish and Pul and Lud, who draw the bow, and Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands afar off who have not heard My fame nor

seen My glory. And they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles.” (Isaiah 66:19)

I didn’t write about the late waves of the Ethiopian Aliyah, and the Russian Aliyah of the 1990’s and the Aliyah from China. And I didn’t write about the great need of opening up the gates of Israel for the Indian Jews who call themselves Beni Menashe, or the many thousands of Jews in Brazil who are the decedents of the victims of the Inquisition.

Here below are some interesting articles to research these topics further. The articles are hyperlinks. [2]

Main article: Aliyah from Ethiopia

See also: Ethiopian Jews in Israel

The first major wave of aliyah from Ethiopia took place in the mid-1970s. The massive airlift known as Operation Moses began to bring Ethiopian Jews to Israel in November

The Aliyah from the Soviet Union and post-Soviet states

Main articles: 1970s Soviet Union aliyah, 1990s post-Soviet aliyah, and Russian Jews in Israel and Georgian Jews in Israel.

[1] Acts 5:34 “Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while.”
Acts 22:3 “I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers’ law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today...”
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aliyah_from_Ethiopia | en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethiopian_Jews_in_Israel | en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Moses | en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethiopian_Jews
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1970s_Soviet_Union_aliyah | en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1990s_post-Soviet_aliyah | en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Jews_in_Israel | en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgian_Jews_in_Israel

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joseph Shulam was born in Sofia, Bulgaria on March 24, 1946 to a Sephardic Jewish Family. In 1948, his family immigrated to Israel just before the establishment of the State. While in high school, he was introduced to the New Testament and immediately identified with the person of Yeshua. In 1981, Joseph and the small fellowship that was started in his house established one of the first official non-profit organizations of Jewish Disciples of Yeshua in Israel – Netivyah Bible Instruction Ministry. Joseph has lectured extensively and has assisted in encouraging disciples around the world. He and his wife Marcia have two children and two grandchildren.

*By the Rivers of Babylon, I sat down and cried.
There they hung their harps on the willow trees.
“How can they sing the songs of the Lord,” I sighed,
“While living in foreign lands, overseas?”
Adonai is beckoning them, both young and old,
For this is what was prophesied—this is what He planned,
To bring them from the four corners of the world
To their ancient inheritance, to their Biblical homeland.*

*I, the Lord, will roar like a Lion,
And they will come trembling from the West.
With weeping and a prayer, they homeward shall hasten,
And once in their Land they will again be blessed.*

*Adonai is calling His remnant forth,
Like doves to their nests on wings have flown.
He is whistling for those in the Land of the north,
So they will return as distant clouds are blown.*

*This Exodus will be glorious to ascertain,
Returning on every form of transport,
Arriving by ship or plane, by truck or train,
Restored on vehicles of every imaginable sort.
Having been banished to the ends of the earth,*

*I will restore them to their Land of Israel;
And gather them from the countries of their birth
In prophetic Ships of Tarshish they will sail.*

*“I scattered them for their iniquities, however,
From the east and the west, from the north and the south,”
Says the Lord, “I will bring back and regather.”
These words I have spoken. They proceeded from My mouth.*

*Rally the blind, the lame, and women in labour,
Restoration for the Exiles as a great throng returns!*

*Regathered to the Land they did once remember.
Returning they shall know My love and concerns.*

*The Outcast will return to the Land of their Forefather,
He shall come home to the Land of his ancestors.*

*I shall plant Israel in this Land forever,
“Never again to be plucked out!” write His authors!
The Valley was full of Bones, dry and barren.
“Can these Bones live, O Lord? Only You know!”*

Aliyah Poem

by Glen Haines

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Glen Haines was born in South Africa, and he first came to Israel in 1988 when he volunteered for the International Christian Embassy at their Feast of Tabernacles celebration. In 1991, Glen established a ministry called Operation Tarshish which became recognized by the Israeli government in 2000. In 2001, he married a Jewish doctor from the former Soviet Union. While in Jerusalem, he studied tour guiding, and in 2008, he received his license. In 2008, he and his wife adopted two abandoned girls from Russia. He and his family continue to reside in Jerusalem in obedience to a word that Glen received from the Lord.

*For My Name, I could leave them no longer forsaken.
My Holy Name was at stake, My Holy Manifesto!
Prophesy! And the Four Winds blew.
There was a rattling among the bones.
Tendons and flesh appeared, as an army grew.
Now Breath, blow over their gravestones!
Dry Bones had become the whole House of Israel.
Breath entered as the Army came to life.
Thriving in their Land – Adonai’s Word did prevail;
Tribes of Israel – flourishing and free from strife!
Rejoice and shout, for My children’s homecoming!
Sing, O Daughter of Zion! Make your praises be heard!
I am bringing you back with dancing and singing!
Under My wings you’ll be sheltered!
For thousands of years the Jews celebrated the miracle
Of their amazing Passover redemption from slavery.
But the prophet Jeremiah predicts something more wonderful
As God accomplishes an even greater mystery.
Majestic miracles the Jews will agree
forgetting the first Exodus ever happened.
Greater than the manna or the parting of the Red Sea
Will be reason to remember the surpassing Second.
I will be their God and they will be My people – regathered!
When I bring them back to their Land with singing.
I will take them from every Nation where they were scattered
Then in their own Land their sheaves they’ll be bringing.
“Our mouths are filled with songs of joy and laughter
More than when the grain and the new wine abound,”
“The Lord has done great things for us!” says the Psalter,
“Like when the streams in the Negev desert are found.”
When His Word comes to pass, then we will all know!
And they’ve all come home we’ll be awed
When we see in the sky His Glorious Rainbow,
Yes, then we will know He is our Covenant-keeping God.
Once more they shall be Lights to the Nations
Just as the Prophets of Old did foretell.
Their faces shall shine with joyous reflections
When once again on the Mountains of Israel they’ll dwell.*

Amended July 16, 2018



ALIYAH

by David and Martha Stern

A Bit of Background

I, Martha, grew up in Michigan. In the first town we lived in, we were the only Jewish family. (My mother told me about a ladies' group once inviting her to talk about "how the Jews kept Christmas," but she politely told them that Jews don't celebrate Christmas and told them about Chanukkah.) Then, when I was six, we moved to a town with a few other Jewish families living in our subdivision. Nevertheless, my parents were very definite about being atheists, NOT believing in God, NOT being interested in being involved with a synagogue or other parts of the Jewish community, and they certainly had no interest in Israel. My grandfather suggested that they should join a synagogue for the sake of us kids (my younger sister, brother, and me), but it was a "no go". But they were in fact, definitely Jewish in their style and life. So that left me very much alone and an outsider—not fitting in with the other Jewish kids who all hung together and had their Jewish community. But on

the other hand, I also did not really feel like I belonged with the non-Jewish kids.

We would spend summers in upstate NY at Keuka Lake, one of the Finger Lakes, with my aunt, uncle, cousins, grandparents, and other relatives. One summer at the lake when I was ten, I read the book "Exodus" by Leon Uris when it first came out in 1958 (I was a precocious reader), and amazingly, I decided I wanted to live in Israel! It just grabbed me. I knew it was for me.

Then, after years of going on through junior high and high school and on to college as an Art student, I was a hippy and all that went with it. My interest in Israel was sort of put on the "back burner". But in 1972, I, through the grace of God, became a believer in Yeshua the Jewish Messiah! (This is another story for another time.) And along with that, the old desire to live in Israel was rekindled in my heart!

Continuing on with my story, I joined

Jews for Jesus in 1974 and was on the first Jews for Jesus summer campaign in New York City. The following year, we all went to the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America summer conference at Messiah College near Harrisburg, PA, on our way to the 1975 New York City evangelism campaign. As the oldest single woman in JFJ, my friends were all rooting for me to find a husband. They had me running the book table so I could meet people. It was a great place to meet people; there were even ladies known as the "Yentas" (matchmakers) who would try to help.

One day, sitting outside the lunchroom cafeteria, I met David, and we started talking (but that too is another story). We went on to chat after an evening meeting, then lunch the next day, and 3 days after we met when we were taking a walk, he pretty much proposed to me. Well, that was neat! But I definitely had some conditions, one of them was, "DID HE WANT TO LIVE IN ISRAEL?" Since I knew as a



LA in the 1850s and were founders of the Wilshire Blvd. Temple, an important Reform congregation. The Reform movement was not very Zionistic, and therefore he too had not been at all interested in Israel or in living there. He had also become a believer in 1972, and soon afterward, being a scholarly type (who had gotten his Ph.D. in Economics from Princeton when he was 24), he decided to study at Fuller Theological Seminary to learn more about the faith in Yeshua. In fact, while he was there, for every paper he had to write for all of his classes he wrote something about the Jewish aspect of the faith—what later became known as Messianic Judaism. After his time studying at Fuller, he spent a year studying at the University of Judaism to learn and deepen his knowledge of Judaism.

believer that wives need to follow the calling of their husbands, and since I knew that I was supposed to live in Israel, I had no interest in marrying anyone who wasn't going to live in Israel.

Well God had worked that out. David was from a well-established Jewish family from Los Angeles. His family had been some of the first 20 Jews in

But back to our story, as part of the Fuller studies, there was a Hebrew in Israel summer program that he went on. After the summer program ended, he stayed on for a while to explore

Israel and in the process, he went to a Yeshiva (a school for orthodox Jews) to experience it. Within a short time, the people running the Yeshiva realized that he was a believer. David had not announced it, but he also didn't hide it when he was asked more about himself. He actually had said to himself that he "was going to let nature run its course". He later said, "Nature took about three hours to run its course". When they realized he was a Believer, he was politely invited to not attend the Yeshiva, but they suggested he meet with a Rabbi who had been a German Lutheran and, as the yeshiva said, "made the opposite odyssey that David had done"—he had converted to Judaism. When David met with him, as they were speaking, the Rabbi who was not offended by David and his Messianic Jewish faith nor his interest in developing it posed him a question, "What are you doing living in L.A.? Don't you know that since the founding of the Jewish state nothing new will come out of the diaspora?" And he quoted Isaiah 2:3, "For out of Tziyon will go forth Torah, the word of Adonai from Yerushalayim."

And David said he knew in that instant that he was supposed to live in Israel - that he had changed 180° from no interest in Israel to knowing he needed to live there! So when we met the next summer at the messiah Conference and

“How many have made definite plans on when they are doing it?” Most of the hands went down. Then he would say, “If you are waiting for a special word from the Lord to tell you to go, you don’t need one.”

he asked me to marry him, it was a done deal!!! We got married the next spring, and in 1977, we went for a few months to visit Israel. David thought it would be a good idea since I had never been there, so I would know better what it was going to be like before we actually moved there.

In 1979, after our daughter Miriam was born (when she was four months old), we made Aliyah in August 1979. Our friends Shira and Ari Sorko Ram, who had always encouraged people to make Aliyah, met us at the Airport. We stayed with them for a few days and then rented a house near theirs and became part of their congregation in Netanya. We were part of their congregation for four years during which time our "sabrah" son Daniel was born when we were all living in Ramat Hasharon, a town near Tel Avi., Then we made the final part of our Aliyah (going up) to live in Jerusalem.

The Actual Process

Since we came as Tourists and wanted to become Israeli citizens, we had to go through the legal government process. We were a bit concerned about whether we would be rejected since we were both believers in Yeshua! But luckily, that was the pre-computer era. We didn't do the preliminary work from the states where the questions were much more thorough, and from which we probably would not have been accepted since we both had worked for Jews for Jesus, (I rejoined and he joined after we were married) and since David had studied and taught at Fuller Theological Seminary. Instead, we did a simple process in Israel, first coming as tourists and then applying for a temporary visa that would be valid for three years during which time one could either become an Israeli citizen or not. But rather than wait the three years, within a short time, we applied to change our status to permanent status.

And then, once that was done, it was just a matter of 90 days' wait while the Government could (but didn't) check if there were any criminal reasons not to grant citizenship. We became Israeli Citizens!!!

To us, it was a no-brainer that we wanted to encourage others in the Messianic movement to also make Aliyah. So, we went back to the states to the various messianic conferences and spoke about Aliyah, and we would have a table with literature about Aliyah. A number of our friends now living in Israel told us that they heard us speak, and the Lord used us to encourage and inspire them to make Aliyah.

One of our favorite things to do as part of our talks on Aliyah at the messianic conferences was to ask, "How many people in the audience are Jewish?" and lots of hands went up. Then David would ask, "How many are wanting to make Aliyah?" and a few hands went down but most stayed up. Then, he would ask, "How many have made definite plans on when they are doing it?" Most of the hands went down. Then he would say, "If you are waiting for a special word from the Lord to tell you to go, you don't need one. He has already given the word if you are Jewish. God gave the Land of Israel to the Jewish people. You don't wake up in the morning and pray, "Lord, should I rob someone today?" or "Lord, should I murder someone today?" Of course not! You don't need a special word from the Lord to know those things. So, in the same way, you don't need a special word from the Lord to tell you to come to live in Israel, the homeland of the Jewish people! The opposite, you need a special word from the Lord to tell you NOT to come!!! (And in fact, there are people called to ministry and for other reasons to stay in the diaspora. But the rule is: live in Israel!)

Then after a few years, one of the major messianic groups decided to "un-invite" us to speak or even have a table with our literature. They were worried that too much of their constituency would leave. It is too bad that they thought that way! So that year, my dear husband David got T-shirts printed which we wore every day at the conference. They said, "Messianic Jewish Aliyah Information Here", and had something about Israel on the back of them (a sacrifice on my part since for me part of the fun of the conference was dressing nice in fun clothes). One of our friends, Joe Rosenfarb, who knew that we were not allowed to give a talk or have a table, came up to us and said, "I see you are wearing your 'table'".

We have been living in Israel since we made Aliyah in 1979. Israel itself has changed greatly in those 43 years, and we have been happy to be part of and help contribute to the believing community in Israel and to see it grow from a few hundred believers to many thousands with many congregations.

In addition, David has been involved in helping in a number of legal cases to help people with their Aliyah, and also helping people obtain the necessary documents to go through the legal process to make Aliyah. Now, there are believers who have become Lawyers and are continuing with this kind of aid and carrying on the work.

Our friend Meridel Rawlings wrote a book called, "Fishers and Hunters." The title is based on the verse from Jeremiah 16:16, but it is really interesting to read a couple of verses before that to get the context.

"Therefore," says Adonai, "the day will come when people will no longer swear, "As Adonai lives, who brought the people of Isra'el out of the land of Egypt," but, "As Adonai lives, who

brought the people of Isra'el out of the land to the north and out of all the countries where he drove them"; for I will bring them back to their own land, which I gave to their ancestors. 'Look,' says Adonai, 'I will send for many fishermen, and they will fish for them. Afterward, I will send for many hunters; and they will hunt them from every mountain and hill and out of caves in the rocks.'"

The point of the book is that God will bring His people back to Israel. He has been and he still is doing so. In the first years of the state, many came from all the Arab Muslim countries when they were no longer welcome in their own countries. Since we moved here, there was a large Aliyah from Russia about 20 years ago, and there were rescue lifts of Ethiopian Jews. But it is much better to come when He "fishes" us, when we can come to Israel with planning, with our possessions, in an orderly way, as opposed to being "hunted" when your country has become dangerous due to wars, antisemitism, and persecution or other disasters and you need to flee quickly and with very little—just the clothes on your back. We sadly see throughout history that "hunting" has happened many times and still happens. Even today, we see the situation in Ukraine is very bad, and people coming to Israel have to come with very little.

After we moved to Israel in 1979, I went to Ulpan (the schools to learn

Hebrew). There were other new immigrants from lots of places in my class. I enjoyed talking with them and learning where they were from. There were three men from Iran in my class, and one day, only one man came, and I asked him where his friends were? And he said they had gone back to Iran. I was totally surprised and shocked since it was after the overthrow of the Shah and the Iranian Revolution and the takeover by Ayatollah Khomeini. Iran was not a good place. I asked him, "Why did they go back?" and the guy answered, "they loved their carpets." That was his way of saying they loved the good life that they had in Iran. Jewish people were well off and happy there. I thought after what happened in Germany with Hitler that Jews would know not to stay in bad places.

I, Martha, have a relative from the part of my family from Czechoslovakia, and their story has definitely affected my thoughts on all of this. The family lived in Dresden, Germany, and they were well off. They owned a factory. Then, when things started to get bad because of Hitler, the father did not want to leave his factory, and so they didn't leave. After he died of natural causes, his wife, my cousin, and his older brother did leave and got as far as Holland, but the Nazis got them, and only my cousin Werner survived Auschwitz. He returned to Dresden (which was then in East Germany under communist control), got his home and factory back, and got married

and had two children. Then, one day in the 50's, a friend told them the KGB is going to get you. They wanted his factory! Werner and his wife Ada said, "We're not going to make the same mistake twice." They took their kids and left their home and factory, drove to Berlin, and crossed from East Berlin to West Berlin and declared themselves refugees! Later, when they arrived by boat to America, there was an article in the New York Times about them that said, "Millionaire leaves all for freedom in America."

One last thought. Never think it won't happen in your well-off, happy country. That's what Jewish people in Germany thought before Hitler. It would never happen there. David has said that he is waiting for the "Great American Aliyah" wondering what will make the Jewish people there decide to leave their good life in the "Golden Medina" as Jewish people called America when they left their hard lives in Europe to go live a new life. And also, the same goes for other well-off places in the world.

Don't wait to be hunted! Make plans to come now! And join us in the wonderful adventure of living in our home, Eretz Israel, the land of the Jewish people!

We have been blessed to be pioneers in building messianic Judaism in Israel, and as always, we still encourage friends to make Aliyah.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David and Martha Stern have lived in Israel since 1979, the year they made Aliyah. They are pioneers in the messianic Jewish world. David is the author of the Complete Jewish Bible, the Jewish New Testament, the Jewish New Testament Commentary, Restoring the Jewishness of the Gospel, and the Messianic Jewish Manifesto (now renamed Messianic Judaism—A Modern Movement with an Ancient Past). His books have been translated into many languages including Russian, German, Portuguese, Spanish, Polish, Dutch, Italian, and lately Korean. They have a Facebook page (David H. Stern author page) with posts about the portion of the week. You can follow them on it. Martha has worked with David, reading through all his books with him as they were being prepared for publishing. They have been members of Netivyah since it was founded.

Martha is an artist. She works in various mediums including painting - especially watercolor, mosaics, embroidery, and cloth tapestries. One of Martha's art works is the "Paroket" that she and some of the other women in the congregation made for the Torah Ark that we have in our worship hall.

The Sterns have two adult children and nine wonderful grandchildren.



ALIYAH TO THE HOLY LAND

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF A STRANGER IN A VERY STRANGE LAND

by Elhanan ben-Avraham

Thus says the Lord God, “Indeed, I myself will search for my sheep and seek them out as a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep and deliver them...I will bring them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, I will feed them on the mountains of Israel...” Ezekiel 34:11-16

I am a Jew living in the Mountains of Judah. After many years and several wars, I find myself in this quiet village in a house overlooking a gentle horse ranch, surrounded by a lush and peace-filled garden of grape vines and roses, tall evergreens, and fruitful citrus, fig, and pomegranate trees, and even a fishpond with water lilies. The only sounds are the birds

singing, my golden retriever barking at them, my wife stirring in the kitchen, and grandchildren trying to catch the goldfish.

The Mountains of Judah are covered with a pine forest reminiscent of our previous home in the Colorado Rockies. But it was not always this way.

In the Israeli shopping malls, orthodox Jews with side curls sip iced coffee along with Arabs in their traditional kafiyas next to young secular Israelis in modern dress and shorts. Young male and female soldiers with their weapons of war chat on the streets of Jerusalem

Millennia of generations came and passed with these hills lying barren and forsaken as the Roman Empire arose and fell after destroying Jerusalem. Europe evolved through the ages, and finally the New World was discovered, and the young nation of America won their revolution and prospered. And these hills waited patiently, razed in cycles of war as multiple civilizations overran Jerusalem, leaving their fingerprints and artifacts to bake in the hot Mediterranean sun. The forests were cut down for siege ramps and crucifixions, left bereft and mourning, awaiting the impossible prophesied return of the Jews someday to their Biblical promised land to replant those forests.

The quiet here is real and illusory at the same time, maintained by the constant presence of the military guarding our borders, without which we would be consumed by those who hate. Expanding out from our borders pulses the perennial turmoil and unhappiness of the Islamic world that surrounds us on all sides in overwhelming numbers. It is hardly five miles from my house that the turmoil begins and doesn't seem to end.

As I gaze upon the limestone walls of ancient Jerusalem, destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD and re-built by the Ottomans in 1536, perspective is gained only by contrast, realizing that these new walls were erected almost two and a half centuries before the American Revolution. And in the shadows of these walls lie the remains of the older walls of King Herod from the time of Jesus, and under them the stones from the time of King Solomon and of King David the Poet and of Hezekiah, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and below them are the remains of the Canaanites, all of whose stony silence is given voice by their words written

on the ancient goatskin scrolls.

The relative calm and prosperity of life here is tempered at any given moment by a pervasive angst as tens of thousands of missiles are aimed at us from our neighbors who seem to be perpetually angry. Though their anger is aimed mostly at Israel, it has by no means spared its own brethren in those unhappy Arab nations, judging by the cycle of brutal wars which they regularly wage one with the other. There are several going on as I write this, which perhaps helps keep it quiet here in Israel.

But we live here with this reality, with bomb shelters in our homes stocked with gas masks, and most citizens are required to serve in some branch of the Israel Defense Force. For two thousand years, Jews were rarely given the right to bear arms, and they paid very dearly for it. Today, back in this land where their history began, the Jews sport a gallant army of braves to defend their homes and families, remembering that painful hiatus of two millennia.

What would bring such a soul as mine to this strange and controversial place,

at such a time as this? What would bring one to choose to live in a tiny and besieged nation of conflict that is less of a place than a phenomenon, one that words cannot contain and always fall short of the reality? But perhaps one word that could fit this phenomenon is "contrast." Contrast shows its face in the parade of daily life here. Shepherds tend their flocks on the spring green hills as army patrols pass in armored vehicles. Normal morning traffic flows toward the cities and jobs, sometimes slowed by a Merkava tank being transported north toward the Golan, or a quiet picnic might be comfortingly overflowed by the roaring of F-15 fighter jets, and the verdancy of the Galilee and its sea contrasted to the barren Judean desert. In the Israeli shopping malls, orthodox Jews with side curls sip iced coffee along with Arabs in their traditional kafiyas next to young secular Israelis in modern dress and shorts. Young male and female soldiers with their weapons of war chat on the streets of Jerusalem, including black Ethiopian immigrants, as Russian orthodox Christians and devout Muslims shop in the open market at Mahaneh Yehuda, or on the main pedestrian mall of Ben-Yehuda

Street where a hundred languages are spoken. It all flows on peaceably without making news.

It had never been my desire to live in Israel, or even to visit here. It simply never crossed my mind. As a young artist, I had taken a one-way trip from America to Paris where I would remain for five intense years. There, I would throw off every restraint that I had

while committing centuries of the worst atrocities against my Jewish people in the name of that poor Jew. No thank you. No human argument would suffice to alter that opinion of this Jew.

My pilgrimage through time carried me progressively backward throughout Europe to Rome, and then to Greece, the cradle of western civilization. I

taken me back to the primitive, to touch life little-affected by the European dainties of civilization.

In Rio, I arrived at that crossroad age of thirty and yet still bereft of answers to my questions. There seemed to be no answer or solution to the folly of human existence, its ongoing wars and perplexities, *la condition humaine*. I had painted, sculpted, and written my

There seemed to be no answer or solution to the folly of human existence, its ongoing wars and perplexities, la condition humaine. I had painted, sculpted, and written my way around the globe, and yet despaired of the raison d'être.

been delivered, casting off every idea, to reach out and touch life and history through my own senses, with nothing of manmade foible to blur the input. I was convinced of a profound error in the development of human history, and was determined, at all costs, to find the core of being from which the calamities of our history began, where the error had begun. I would play history backward to its source or bust.

In Paris, I was asked, "Are you a Jew?" I replied, "What is a Jew?" Then she said, "Are your parents Jewish?" "Yes", I replied. "Then you are also a Jew; would you like to visit Israel?" "Jamais, jamais", I answered in French, which is never, never. So much for Never-Never Land. But as a Jew, I had known enough of religion and its grim histories to not fall into its entrapments. Especially Christianity was to me repulsive, speaking of love

would read Homer to understand what those folks thought as they walked into those ancient temples the ruins of which I too entered. I would touch, smell, and feel history directly, through my own unhindered consciousness. But during those five years, in none of these places did I find the source, nor did I find the love that does not consume the lovers, leaving nothing but ashes and leaving only the need to find fresh kindling.

Circumstances changed, and with a contract with an American publisher, I moved down to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where I would remain for the next four years.

Brazil is a combination of South America and Africa, the Portuguese early on having brought black slaves to its shores, thus producing a strong African flavor to modern Brazil. As it would turn out, my pilgrimage had

way around the globe, and yet despaired of the *raison d'être*. In those artistic experimentations, I had even sought the source of creativity and the source of my very thoughts, consciousness, and dreams but yet remained in utter quandary.

In 1977, all that changed abruptly and without warning. My friends and I had decided to experience the wild festival of Carnival in its primitive purity in the Brazilian city of Salvador, twelve hundred miles north of Rio. On that long bus ride, I pondered the disturbing dream that had come to me the night before our departure. In that unusual dream, I had experienced my own death, something, I am told, one should not experience. That dream took me to a state where only the dream existed, and there I walked in the cool evening air by a lovely quiet pond. The pond was covered by glass, with aquatic

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chapter of the
prophet Isaiah.*

vegetation and water lilies growing under the glassy covering. There was one opening in the glass, through which I dove into the water. I swam under the water until my breath diminished, and then I turned to exit by way of that opening in the glass. But feeling my way under the glass, I could not find that opening. In a panic, I realized that I would now have no choice but to gasp in the water and drown.

But the dream continued on to a second part, in which the first part was forgotten. I was again walking by the pond in the still evening, and I decided to see if that glass would support my weight, which it did. I walked out onto the glass, as if walking on the water. Well out on the pond's surface, I looked down into the water lilies and leaves, spying something there white and shriveled among the foliage. There I gazed down onto my own dead face, pressed up lifelessly against the glass. I awoke with a start, trembling and grasping the damp sheets, realizing that I was still alive. The troubling dream remained with me on that bus ride north to Salvador.

I was met there with a colorful rainbow spanning over the old city where slaves were first introduced from Africa four hundred years before, and

I sensed that something unusual was about to occur.

The details of that which did occur remain etched in my memory forever, but all of them would make this account longer than a reader might be willing to wade through. So, I will encapsulate the event that would change

my life for the foreseeable future

and beyond.

We entered a house where we would be staying for the next three days, and I had the odd feeling that I had somehow been here before and had met the people of the house previously. In fact, the more I studied the situation, the more it appeared as the people and place I had described in a novel which I had written in Paris, which was entirely imaginary. Where do such imaginations arise from, I wondered. How could this be? But this was only the beginning.

It was not long after that we went out to the beach, and there I met a native Brazilian girl. She was wearing a necklace with a small seed embedded in a cube of transparent glass. "What is that?" I asked her. She smiled sweetly and said in Portuguese, "It is the mustard seed of which Jesus spoke." How amazing, I thought, that the words of a Jew in Jerusalem two thousand years earlier had the power to carry through space and time to this lonely and far-off beach, to a primitive people, and inspire faith in a parable that lay so simply in that tiny seed.

Though raised in the Jewish faith, the Bible had never been on my preferred reading list, but without a doubt, the Book of Books had a profound influence on the world I had grown up in, and most have heard portions of it here and there in films, art, and music. It is probably best that I had not read it before as what I was about to experience was not thereby influenced. I did not know at the time that it was prophesied therein, "In the latter days, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams..." (Joel 3).

My intentions for experiencing

I arrived in Israel at Purim with about three hundred dollars to my name, expecting to find a dry and hot desert of desolation. Instead, I found a land revived from desolation, like myself. I took a bus up to Jerusalem and to the Old City, where I prayed and wept at the Western Wall.

the Carnival had altered entirely. What followed instead was an encounter with that very Source which I had been seeking with all my being. But like a lamp lit suddenly in a room long held in darkness, I was given to see the accumulated rubbish therein. I grieved at the sight, and all the damage it had caused both to me and others, and how

so much was passed down through the generations. But how could all that be undone—cleansed out of my soul?

I walked through the streets of Salvador which teemed with pagan antics of the Carnival reveling in drugs and constant loud music and sensuality of every sort, of which I now wanted no part. As I walked aimlessly, I experienced what the Prophet Ezekiel had himself described as stepping into waters to the knee, then to the loins, then the chest, increasing until it was over the head. The increasing intensity into unfamiliar realms bade me then to seek out that was familiar, something of comfort. I ducked into a music shop that was playing recorded upbeat music of the samba. Enjoying the familiar sounds, I looked at the art on various album covers until I came to one showing the pyramids of Egypt. At that moment the shop keeper changed the music, and a new song came onto the air: ‘Do you know where you’re going to, do you like the things that life is showing you, when you look behind you there’s no open door, what are you hoping for- do you know?’ There before me were the pyramids of Egypt that my fathers had left in the Exodus. And now I had finally come to my own exodus of some sort, which I would not turn away from.

In the Bible, it is written that you will find God on that day when you seek Him with all your heart. I had sought the source of all things in my pilgrim’s journey of life, leaving behind what would have surely been an affluent lifestyle, in the pursuit of that source, whatever it would turn out to be. Now I had come to walk through that veil, whatever the cost.

Walking the streets of Salvador, I passed an old church, and saw the carvings

of Jesus carrying his cross. I studied with great interest the sculptures one by one as that Jew suffered under the cruel device of torture and death, mocked, humiliated, and rejected by his own people, and murdered by the Romans. For the first time, I saw into the reality behind the art, and strangely I felt a personal identity with him as if this were occurring not two thousand years ago, but this day, and a new sense of comprehending this man and his mission.

That night I sat in my little rented room, troubled in spirit. The weight in my soul was now nearly unbearable, being shown the lasting results of my sins on myself and others, and I knew that the accumulated effects of sin in my life like a cancer could lead to the reality of death itself. Like the words to a Dylan song, ‘You could die down here and be just another accident statistic’. That reality seized me with great force, and I stood with raised hands and for the first time cried out directly to God from the depth of my being, with these words: “I want to live!”

At that instant a great power as if a liquid light poured down over me from above, and I lifted my hands. I felt the love of God and the power of Life itself pour over me as we embraced each other, like a wayward son returning to his welcoming father. Simultaneously, a cloudburst of rain poured over the little house, like tears of joy mixing with my own. I was then taken out of my body, like a swift blue light passing through the ceiling, and found myself traveling upward through the heavens at great and glorious speed, and then returned to the little room in what seemed to me an instant.

There was a wooden ladder in this small room extending from the floor



I was drafted into the Israeli army, where I learned war and served in annual reserve duty on the West Bank for the next fifteen years. My unit did patrols and guard duty at many of the ancient Biblical sites there.

to the ceiling. Then from the always flowing Carnival music outside came the words of the song Stairway to Heaven, and the room momentarily became before my eyes a small stall in Bethlehem, where I heard the words, I was born here.

That morning dawned in a way I never before experienced or had ever heard anyone else describe. I now knew that God had called me to draw nearer to Him, and to follow His directives,

which I knew I could trust implicitly. I was led to take a boat out to the Isle of Itaparica, just off the bay of Salvador. My worried friends knew that something was happening but could neither comprehend nor perceive what. And I myself was well beyond words to explain.

On the island I walked to the beach, still bearing the heavy burden in my soul. It was like a festering wound in need of cleansing and healing. Here with

the Baia do Todos os Santos spread before me, I was directed to carry that wound into the cleansing saltiness of the sea, into that Bay of All Saints. I would now comply, whatever was to be the outcome, even death itself if need be. I began the swim into the bay, from the shallows into the deep water over my head.

The heavens opened before me, and it was as if the very elements of the sea prepared my path, leading me out just

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at the end of my strength, swimming to a cluster of three large rocks with the waves surging over them. Exhausted, I climbed up onto the center rock to which I had been led, and rested. That large rock contained a hole in its center into which the waves rolled and were sucked down, like a flushing toilet. This was the place and time of my deliverance. I thrust my legs into that hole and, as the waves rolled over the

rock, felt something black and grainy, like an infection, depart from my body and suck down into the depths of the sea.

It was only later, when I had returned to Rio and sought a Bible which I would then read straight through in the following nine months, that I came upon the passage in the prophet Micah which prophesies these words, to which I burst into tears, "Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity, and passing over the transgression of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy, He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities, you will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will give truth

to Jacob, and mercy to Abraham, which you have sworn to our fathers from days of old" (Micah 7). And in my tears, I then proclaimed out loud, "This is the word of God!"

I arose from the depths of that rock like one arising from the tomb in resurrection, light and unburdened, baptized by the hand of my Creator. In tears of gratitude and utter amazement, I gazed out across the bay, and all appeared suddenly bright and fresh, clear and newly created, like a newborn. I looked out over the city of Salvador, which means Savior. And in that moment, I suddenly understood the Messiah, brutalized and shamed and rejected on that Roman cross, made to be, like this rock, as the toilet of the universe to take upon himself our filth and dispose of our sins, our crimes against God and man. None had told me of this, but I now understood thoroughly. And I knew of a certainty that Yeshua had conquered death, and yet lives. And my feet were set firmly upon the unfailing Rock of Ages.

In the midst of my jubilation, I looked out onto the new world, and a strange sight struck my soul. As if travelling back in time I saw the events of my life pass in an unbroken vision before me to the city of my birth, and then through the lives of my parents, and then grandparents fleeing Hungary, and before, through the generations of my seed all the way back to their source: Jerusalem. This had been a long and arduous journey through space and time, now culminating in my own young life here and now, at the Source.

That night back in my room, I sat in wonder, knowing my life had changed into something new that would lead me in an unforeseen direction. As I meditated on these things, the presence of God drew very near, and I felt a finger touch my chest, saying "Serve". Understanding this, I answered, "Just give me an opportunity." "I am a Jew, and you are a Jew," said the Presence, indicating my return to Israel to tell my people of that which I had been shown. Back in Rio, the struggle began as more questions than answers filled my mind. How can this be? I thought. How can it be that Yeshua is alive, and yet so much sad history has passed in his name? I visited the local synagogue and showed the rabbi scriptures in the Bible that I thought I was the first to discover. I read to the rabbi the fifty-third chapter of the prophet Isaiah, which describes the rejected messiah who is stricken for our sins, and the Prophet Zechariah describing the pierced one whom we Jews will look upon in Jerusalem, and the prophet Micah telling of his birth in Bethlehem. The rabbi could only say, "It has nothing to do with Jesus." I looked at him and said, "Rabbi, you do greatly err."

In bafflement, I proceeded to visit every church in Rio de Janeiro, which only added to my perplexity. Few

could answer my many questions, and all disagreed with much of what the others held as sacred doctrines. How could this be resolved, and what error back in the past had given birth to such a discordant history of the churches? It had all begun with the Jews in the Land of Israel, in Jerusalem, and it would only be there that my questions might find an answer. Jesus had pronounced, "Salvation is of the Jews."

I was loath to actually go to Israel, to its dangers and wars, and to again serve in the military as I had in the US army. But confirmation came regularly that this was to be my destiny. Once, when I asked a woman of God what I should do, she responded immediately, "Go to Israel and you will meet your Ruth in a field." That very night, I had a dream where I saw a field, and my wife-to-be lived on the other side of that field. In March of 1979, I would take that one-way journey to the Holy Land entirely alone. But not alone.

I arrived in Israel at Purim with about three hundred dollars to my name, expecting to find a dry and hot desert of desolation. Instead, I found a land revived from desolation, like myself. I took a bus up to Jerusalem and to the Old City, where I prayed and wept at the Western Wall, which bid me Welcome home. In that first week, I hitched a ride north to the Galilee, and again wept at the beauty of the land, green with springtime and laced with fragrant wildflowers and flowing streams and verdant fields of cotton and citrus groves, the snowcapped Mount Hermon hovering almost ten thousand feet above the fertile Hula Valley. There, on a kibbutz in that same first week in the Holy Land, I met the woman who was to become my wife and bear my children. And she lived on the kibbutz across the cotton field. In

*Then I was
beaten and
accused of
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other false
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and I was
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to leaving
Israel.*

that field of my dream, I asked her to marry me.

I had found the table that King David sang of, prepared by God in the presence of my enemies, and the same Shepherd who would lead us to green pastures and still waters (Psalm 23). I knew now that all things were possible, and nothing too good to be true. I had climbed the mount and finally found that bush that Moses had discovered, that burns but does not consume, which is the Tree of Life and the unending love of God.

We began our life as poor new immigrants living in an absorption center, where we studied the Hebrew language for five months. Soon thereafter, I was drafted into the Israeli army, where I learned war and served in annual reserve duty on the West Bank for the next fifteen years. My unit did patrols and guard duty at many of the ancient Biblical sites there, including the tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, Jacob's well, Joseph's tomb in Schem (Nablus), Palestinian refugee camps, and Jewish settlements. At such places, I was given ample opportunities to discuss issues of the Bible and God with my fellow soldiers. In guarding the settlements and refugee towns there, we were engaged in a good number of intense adventures for which I remain thankful for the honor and the challenge.

We also experienced wars. It is not at all a pleasant experience, but one worth being witness to, in seeing the very hand of God in the midst of such trials. The Gulf War against Saddam Hussein of Iraq was one worthy of telling here.

As President Bush gathered his coalition against Saddam in 1991, we had the luxury here of preparing for the worst, which was stocking up food and preparing a sealed room against a gas attack. Everyone was given gas masks, including our little children. When my brother suggested we come to California to stay with him, I said to him, "No, we'll ride it out and trust God."

Saddam promised that if the coalition attacked Iraq, he would surely burn half of Israel. What that blackguard did not know was that we were already half burned with a long-running drought. Water was scarce, and the news declared that it would take the

impossibility of ten wet years to fill the depleted Sea of Galilee. But, in fact, that depletion revealed a two-thousand-year-old fishing boat at Ginnosar, the very place where Yeshua preached from a similar boat (Luke 5).

Then came the war, and I called a friend early one morning to say, “They’re bombing Baghdad”. True to his word, Saddam’s scud missiles came flying our way, and the awful howl of the air raid sirens shattered the tense silence. We grabbed the kids and dove into our shelter and waited. When the all-clear finally sounded, we came out to learn that six missiles had screamed into Israel and exploded in the coastal cities, shattering glass for six square blocks. We watched the TV intently as people climbed out of ruined buildings unscathed, or with an arm in a sling. This went on for six weeks and thirty-nine missiles striking Israel, each time with no deaths, except for a fluke where an older person could not figure out his gas mask and suffocated in it. Israel was forbidden from entering the conflict; it turned the other cheek as no nation before or since had done but sat ready in the cockpits if needed. I wore my combat boots the first week of war, ready for the coded call-up. The war ended precisely during the Festival of Purim when we celebrate the deliverance of Israel from those who had declared our destruction. Very befitting, and more than a coincidence. Even some of the war-hardened Israelis declared it a miracle.

The drought continued. Then Saddam, again keeping his word, set fire to the oil wells of Kuwait upon withdrawing his defeated army from there. They burned for a year unextinguished, pouring tons of soot into the atmosphere, during which time the temperatures of the Middle East dropped significantly. This led to the heaviest precipitation onto the land of Israel of the twentieth

century. Lakes that hadn’t existed for a thousand years returned, the Sea of Galilee filled and overflowed in four months necessitating the sandbagging of Tiberias. The aquifers filled and the mountains were all heavily snow packed. The Jordan River became a rushing torrent. Quite unusual, Jerusalem had four major snowstorms which stopped everything but the building of snowmen by our kids.

*I now sing with
my children and
grandchildren
the grateful
songs to the
King of Israel
composed by
King David
three thousand
years back on
the hills just
outside my
home.*

That spring, the land became as green as Ireland, and we ate strawberries as big as your fist. Even the Dead Sea was surrounded by wildflowers. What Saddam had meant for evil, God had turned to good, a blessing for Israel.

The boasting Saddam, like his forebear Nebuchadnezzar, was found humbled in a hole in a field with dreadlocks and a scraggly beard, and was hanged like Haman, who had also declared the destruction of the Jews, on his own gallows. It was well worth the risk and stress to have weathered this storm in order to be a faithful witness of such events of Biblical proportions in our times. Afterwards, my brother called and told me he had committed his life to God, asking me to immerse him in the Jordan River. “Then you’ll have to come over here,” I informed him.

During this time, I met other Jews who had had a similar revelation, and we worked together to form the first Jewish synagogue in Jerusalem, dedicated to the Messiah, in two thousand years; a difficult and challenging task, this, clearing away two millennia of rubble, of pain and corruption, of errant doctrines that had led to inquisitions and crusades and pogroms and expulsions of the Jews in his name. We had taken up the task of restoring the faith to its origins, along with the restoration of the ancient land and its Biblical cities. I have had many opportunities to discuss these things at length with my Jewish brethren, including the orthodox. But word got to the zealous orthodox Jews who stand much against this idea, and thus began my first taste of persecution.

I was fired from all my jobs, and posters were put up all over our neighborhood telling neighbors to not speak with us, saying “They love you because they want you to love Jesus!” How true. My life was threatened several times, then I was beaten and accused of assault, among other false accusations, and I was taken to court. This became rather overwhelming, and my thoughts went to leaving Israel when I heard clearly, “Stand and watch.” I did, and a year passed before I stood in the courts of

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Jerusalem, asked to recount what had happened, and was telling this story of Yeshua before the judges of Israel, as was promised by the Messiah. Furthermore, I was given a plea bargain in which I received the punishment of sixty hours of public service. I accepted this as an opportunity to serve and offered my talents as an artist to do a mural for the city of Jerusalem. It was not long after that I was painting a large mural of Noah coming forth from the ark with all the creatures, in a public library. When completed, I was commissioned from this work to paint a larger mural in a gym of a community center, and from that to paint a mural of forty-five by eleven feet on the wall of the indoor pool of that center: the Garden of Eden. I thanked the Lord for His faithfulness, as I could have never worked out such a prosperous scenario as this on my own.

Certainly, there is much more of interest to recount to you in detail, but perhaps that will come later, as it is simply too much for a short account such as this. I have attempted as well to relate this in all my work as an artist, poet, and writer. He has passed us through trials and delivered us from each, stronger.

He has blessed the work of our hands and prospered our paths. The King of Israel is faithful to His promise to the children of Israel.

Israel is a phenomenon like no other, being at the same time ancient and modern, old and new. I myself am three years older than this re-born nation, which came into being in 1948. It is a gathering back of its ancient inhabitants to the land of their forefathers after two thousand years of dispersion throughout the planet. Though prophesied in the ancient texts of the Bible, it seemed unlikely of ever coming to pass, and Jerusalem would be doomed to lie forever in ruins as a memory of its former and destroyed glory. It would take a devastation, unheard-of in human history, to bring the reluctant Jewish people back again to these shores. That catastrophe was provided ironically by the Nazi Holocaust which attempted to erase the Jews from the world, but instead succeeded as the catalyst to resurrect the Jewish nation in their former ancient estate. I am a remnant of that Holocaust, part of whose family perished in Hungary, born into this world shortly after the atomic bomb

was used to end the global conflagration of what is now called World War Two.

I now walk over the same ground that my fathers did nearly four thousand years ago. I walk among the ruins and remnants they left, those structures now dug up in our days which were built by their hands, and live in the words inscribed by the prophets of Israel. I have watched as half of the modern history of Israel has occurred here before my eyes, growing from a struggling third-world mess to a modern and prospering nation filled with blessings. And all this achieved in the face of incessant attack and slander and hatred and attempted wars of annihilation and vicious terrorism. Here our children were born and grew upright and brave, serving also in the Israel Defense Forces. I now sing with my children and grandchildren the grateful songs to the King of Israel composed by King David three thousand years back on the hills just outside my home. I even named my firstborn son after that warrior-poet, and our daughter after that fruitful and sweet tree, the date palm, Tamar. And we sing those psalms in the only ancient tongue to have died and risen again after two millennia of silence, Hebrew, the tongue of the prophets, of Moses, and of Yeshua. I concur with the words of David Ben-Gurion, that secular first president of the State of Israel, who once said, 'Anyone living in Israel today who does not believe in miracles is not a realist.'

We are back.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elhanan ben-Avraham, born in 1945, is a professional artist, poet, writer, father of two, and grandfather of four, and he has been living in Israel since 1979. He has served in the IDF, taught the Bible internationally, published five illustrated books of poetry, painted two large Biblical murals in public buildings in Jerusalem, and most recently produced THE JERUSALEM ILLUSTRATED BIBLE, among many other works. He and his wife live in a quiet village in the Mountains of Judah.

THE LORD'S GREAT ALIYAH

By Glen Haines

A millennium ago, the prophets of old put pen to paper, or rather quill to parchment, and wrote about the great regathering of Jews from the four corners of the world in the Last Days. To some, they were and are, just dry letters on a page. To others they were embryonic, divinely conceived words, waiting for the right time to be brought to birth. For many, many centuries, these words remained dormant, germinating in the hearts of those whom God had touched to pray and intercede for the appointed time.

God had chosen Abraham and appointed him to be the father of many nations, including the Jewish nation (Genesis 12:1-3). From Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob, came the 12 tribes of the Jewish people. They were chosen to be a 'Light to the Nations', to all the other peoples. However, instead of being a light they tried to become like the other nations, following their gods and worshipping their idols.

Scattered Due to Disobedience and Sin

First, the 10 northern tribes were taken into captivity by the Assyrians due to their wicked idolatry, disobedience, and occultic practices. This occurred in 722 BCE (before the Common Era or BCE) and then the tribes of Benjamin and Judah were taken into captivity by the Babylonians in 586 BCE for their idolatry and disobedience to the word of God. God was angry with His people, and even though God disciplined His people, He neither abandoned nor forsook them.

The first mention of the Jews returning to their Land was made by Moses, before the Children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob even entered the Land for

the first time – as recorded in Deuteronomy 30:4-5. Moses was not allowed to lead the Israelites on the first Exodus (from Egypt) into the Promised Land due to one irreverent act, showing how holy this Aliyah is to the Lord.

What is the Meaning of Aliyah?

Aliyah is a Hebrew word meaning 'to ascend' or go up. Jerusalem is a city that was once built on a hill. Wherever you were, in order to get to Jerusalem, you had to "go up!" On the top of Mt. Zion, King Solomon built the Temple, and so to reach the Temple one also had to "go up!" or make Aliyah.

Aliyah is a Hebrew word meaning 'to ascend' or go up. Jerusalem is a city that was once built on a hill. Wherever you were, in order to get to Jerusalem, you had to "go up!"

Not only was it a physical ascension to Jerusalem but also a spiritual one, for this is where the Jews were commanded to go up to meet with God three times a year – during the Passover, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and the Feast of Tabernacles. (Deuteronomy 16:16, Exodus 23:17, Exodus 34:24). There are also 15 Psalms of Aliyah (Psalms 120 – 134) and these Psalms were read as the priests and pilgrims ascended to the Temple.

It is no accident that the word Aliyah has today been given to the return of the Jews to Israel, because not only is it a physical return to the Land, but it is also the beginning of their spiritual return to their God. Many of the returning Jews, especially those returning from the former Soviet Union, don't believe in God (see Ezekiel 37:8). But there is coming a time when God will breathe

His Spirit into them (v.14), and they will come to life. Then they will all know that He is the Lord.

Second Dispersion, Second Regathering

God gave promises to the prophets that the Jews would come back to Israel. The first exile lasted seventy-years in Babylon (Jeremiah 29:10; 2 Chronicles 36:21; Zechariah 1:12, 16), and they started returning in the 5th century BCE. Unfortunately, not everyone returned, and in 70 CE (or AD), they were again dispersed.

In 70 AD, the Jews were scattered throughout the world a second time, where they have been wandering for nearly 2,000 years without a country, a king, or even a common language. However, it was God's desire that all of them would one day be living in Israel.

God began bringing His scattered children back in 1881-82 with the first Aliyah wave. The second wave began in 1904, and the waves continued – 1919, 1924 and 1929. This was the second return, which God promised through the prophet Isaiah (11:11), and this return, He vowed, would outshine the first exodus from Egypt (Jeremiah 16:14, 15).

On May 14th, 1948, Israel became a country once again, recognized by the nations of the world – another amazing event foretold by our God (Isaiah 66:8).

This second exodus, from all the nations of the world, is truly a miraculous event which only an Almighty God could do. To scatter a people around the world takes some doing. But to gather that same people again, after 2,000 years, bring them back to the same country, and give them their language back again – this is something that only God could do. Yes, this Aliyah shows us that this is

something only the God of Israel could do. It shows us that He still loves His people and has not deserted them. It shows that He is faithful to His promises and is fulfilling each of them.

The Aliyah is about God's Promises to His People.

God has promised to...

- Take the Jews out of the nations,
- Gather them from all the countries where He scattered them,
- Bring them back into their own land,
- Sprinkle clean water on them and make them clean,
- Cleanse them from all their impurities and from all their idols,
- Give them a new heart and put a new Spirit in them,
- Remove from them their heart of stone,
- Give them a heart of flesh,
- Put His Spirit in them,
- Move them to follow His decrees and His laws,
- Let them live in the land He gave their forefathers,
- Make them His people,
- And Be their God (Ezekiel 36:24-28)

With All His Heart and Soul

This Aliyah is something very close to the heart of God. Through the prophet Jeremiah, God said that He was going to bring His people back to their Land

¹ The word Jew, here and throughout this article, refers to all the descendants of the 12 Tribes of Israel and not just Judah and Benjamin

² www.tarshish.org.il/the-amazing-aliyah

To scatter a people around the world takes some doing. But to gather that same people again, after 2,000 years, bring them back to the same country, and give them their language back again – this is something that only God could do.

and to plant them in their Land with all His heart and soul (Jeremiah 32:41). Nowhere else in His Word do we read of God doing something with all His heart and soul. This is truly remarkable.

This Aliyah is so much on the Lord's heart that He has sprinkled these Scriptures throughout His Word. A friend of mine has collected 64 Aliyah Scriptures in an article he titled, "The Astounding Prophetic Significance of Aliyah."

The Greatest End-Time Event

This Aliyah is truly something awesome. In fact, I believe that it is the greatest end-time event which God is doing. Already, we have seen some amazing events, but we "ain't seen nothing yet" if the prophets' words are to be believed.

Jeremiah foretold that this Aliyah, which is only just beginning, is going to far surpass the first exodus from Egypt. For three and a half thousand years, the Jews have been celebrating the first exodus because of the great deliverance that God performed to bring His people out from under slavery and bring them to the Promised Land. God did some amazing miracles in that liberation from oppression in Egypt. He performed 10 plagues in Egypt, He parted the Red Sea, He drowned Pharaoh and his army, He led the Hebrews for forty years with a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day, their clothes and sandals did not wear out, He fed them manna from heaven each day, and He brought forth water for them from the Rock. What mighty miracles! What has to happen to surpass all those miracles for the Jews to forget those awesome feats? What is God going to do to cause the Jews to forget all about their Passover Seder which they've celebrated for thousands of years and only speak about the Exodus which is coming? We are standing on the brink, about to see massive and awe-inspiring miracles, which will far exceed the first!

Operation Solomon

Already, we are seeing some of those miracles beginning to happen. In May 1991, we saw 14,400 Ethiopian Jews flown to Israel in less than 48 hours. Some of the Ethiopians, who had never seen an aircraft up close, were told, "Pack your things, for tomorrow you'll be in Israel." This was almost like what Moses said to the Israelites; kill the lamb,

place the blood on your doorposts, and tomorrow you'll be free! (Exodus 12)

A total of 35 planes took part in Operation Solomon, and at one time there were 26 planes in the air simultaneously. Israel now holds the world record for the number of Jews that flew in a single plane – 1,088. And 1,090 landed, because there were two births on that flight. There were seven children in total born during that operation.

And when the Ethiopians landed, each of them was given a hot meal, and they had a roof over their head that night. Truly a modern-day miracle.

Operation on Wings of Eagles

Other airlifts of Jews to Israel happened between June 1949 and September 1950 which brought some 50,000 Yemenite Jews to Israel. The operation was called "On Wings of Eagles" after the Biblical passage in Exodus 19:4, "You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself."

Come Home Now!

Listening to the news announcer recently, I heard an announcement which seemed to me like a cry from God's heart to His scattered Children worldwide, "No matter where you are, Israel will always be your home!"

God is calling His Chosen to come home to the Land He has promised them – the Land of Israel. He is bringing them home like Doves to their nests (Isaiah 60:8). He also uses the imagery of clouds to describe how the Jews are coming back. A dove knows where its nest is located and will fly directly there. Some Jews have a strong inner compulsion to come to Israel and fly straight here.



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Other Jews, however, are like the clouds, which must be driven by the wind. They don't really want to come to Israel, but "circumstances" just "blow" them here. (Ruach is the Hebrew word for wind but

it also means Spirit.)

Ships of Tarshish

Another Scripture in Isaiah which has

yet to be fulfilled speaks of "Ships of Tarshish" that will bring His "sons from afar" with their silver and gold "to the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 60:9).

³ The record itself is uncontested, but the number of passengers is unclear



God is calling His Chosen to come home to the Land He has promised them – the Land of Israel. He is bringing them home like Doves to their nests.

Although ships and boats have brought God's "sons" first to Palestine and then Israel, nowhere can anyone point to a

fleet of boats and say, "Those are the Ships of Tarshish."

It is my firm belief that one day a convoy of marine vessels will be used by the Lord to help rescue the Jews from the islands or coastlands.

Why Boats?

God is using boats for a number of reasons, some which were made quite clear during the recent Covid lockdowns when air travel was forbidden. Boats and yachts were not as restricted. Another reason is becoming obvious with rising fuel prices: sailing will be the most economically viable way to travel.

Some smaller islands only have a very small Jewish presence on them, but according to the prophet Ezekiel all the Jews are "coming Home!" (Ezekiel 39:28) These islands are only accessible by boat, and to escape any disaster, threat, anti-Semitism, or persecution, a marine vessel will be needed. So, whether there are 20,000 Jews on the Indonesian Islands, for example, or only

Due to this present crisis, over 15,000 Jews have now made Aliyah to Israel. These Jews would still be in the Ukraine had Russia not invaded their country. God is using this present conflict to bring not only the Ukrainian Jews but also bring Russian Jews home.

12 living in the Faroe Islands (numbers according to Wikipedia), they all need to come home. God will do what needs to be done to get them all home.

It is my belief that one of the main reasons God is allowing this present conflict between Russia and Ukraine is to get His children home. Due to this present crisis, over 15,000 Jews have now made

As the symphony orchestra's closing notes fade and the curtain falls, then each one will know that it has been the perfect work of the Lord God Almighty and that He has performed it.

Aliyah to Israel. These Jews would still be in the Ukraine had Russia not invaded their country. God is using this present conflict to bring not only the Ukrainian Jews but also bring Russian Jews home – Jews who are seeing the writing on the wall, their Synagogue walls.

If only the Jews in the west could also see these signs and begin preparations to make Aliyah to Israel. Something must happen to move the Jews from their comfort zones in America, Britain, South Africa, and Australia to bring them to their Biblical Homeland. The prophet Hosea predicts that the Lord will “roar like a lion, and His children will come trembling from the west” (Hosea 11:10). I’m not sure what that ‘roar’ will be like, but I wouldn’t want to come “trembling from the west,” with perhaps just the clothes on my back, as some of the Ukrainian Jews have had to do.

How Many Jews are There Today?

During 2021, some 25,000 Jews made Aliyah to Israel.

If God is bringing all the Jews home, then we need to know how many Jews there are living in the world today. The Israel Bureau of Statistics estimates there are 15.2 million Jews in the world today, of which 45% are living in Israel.

If anyone asks me how many Jews are in the world today, I ask them to look upwards on a clear night to the stars and count them, if they are able. This was the number of descendants God promised to Abraham (Genesis 15:5). Innumerable!

End-Time Orchestra

It is as though we are in a large concert hall watching world history unfold before our eyes, like an orchestra playing a magnificent musical piece.

The Conductor is Yeshua, skillfully directing the Aliyah ministries as they bring the Jewish people home. The musicians all have different instruments – woodwinds, brass, percussion, and strings – and all the ministries have different callings, but each is working together in perfect harmony as they carry out their different roles in this awesome Aliyah to produce an anointed melody.

God is not allowing just one person or ministry, such as He used Moses in the first Exodus from Egypt. He will not allow a single person or ministry, to get any of the glory in bringing His children home. Just as a single instrument cannot ever hope to bring the fullness and depth of sound that the whole orchestra can achieve, so too one ministry can never hope to achieve what all the ministries

can do when working together in perfect harmony for His Aliyah.

Yes, as the musicians each skillfully play their instrument, or ministries play their part in this Regathering, and the End-time song reaches its crescendo as the Jews come flooding home, the audience will watch in wonder and surprise. Then, as the final notes are played and the last Jews are brought home, there will be admiration, awe, and amazement, not only among the Jews but also among all the nations of the earth.

As the symphony orchestra's closing notes fade and the curtain falls, then each one will know that it has been the perfect work of the Lord God Almighty and that He has performed it.

“I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord” (Ezekiel 37:14).

“Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10).

One day, when all the Jews are back in the Land (Ezekiel 39:28), people will ask and then say, “How did that happen? It could only have been the God of Israel.” To Him be the glory!

4 www.israel21c.org/israeli-population-reaches-9449000-at-start-of-2022/

5 www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog-april-25-2022/

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Glen Haines was born in South Africa, and he first came to Israel in 1988 when he volunteered for the International Christian Embassy at their Feast of Tabernacles celebration. In 1991, Glen established a ministry called Operation Tarshish which became recognized by the Israeli government in 2000. In 2001, he married a Jewish doctor from the former Soviet Union. While in Jerusalem, he studied tour guiding, and in 2008, he received his license. In 2008, he and his wife adopted two abandoned girls from Russia. He and his family continue to reside in Jerusalem in obedience to a word that Glen received from the Lord.

There's a lot more to Netivyah than meets the eye; the Teaching From Zion magazine is only one of our outreach and humanitarian ministries. We invite you to connect with the other branches of our ministry.

Publications

Publishing is one of Netivyah's top priorities, as we see education as being central to our existence. Visit our website for previous issues of Teaching from Zion, as well as a selection of our books.

Congregation

Roeh Israel, "Shepherd of Israel," is a Messianic Jewish Congregation in Jerusalem. The Congregation is made up of followers of Yeshua, both Jews and non-Jews, who worship together in a traditional synagogue environment.

Humanitarian Aid

There are many families in Israel, even entire sections of the population, who fall between the cracks. Hamotzi Food Distribution Center is a place that literally brings forth food for local needy families in Jerusalem. Without charities and organizations like Netivyah, they would not be able to put food on the table.

Video Teachings

The world is watching videos online, so we are producing high quality teaching videos in English and Hebrew and publishing them on the internet to continue to present the Good News to the world in its original Jewish and Hebrew culture.



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רועה ישראל
Roeh Israel



Hamotzi המוציא

netivyah.org
tfz@netivyah.org



NETIVYAH BIBLE INSTRUCTION MINISTRY

Tel. 972-2-6231019 | www.netivyah.org | PO BOX 8043, JERUSALEM 91080, ISRAEL