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FROM THE EDITOR

June 1967 was a good time to be Jewish. At least it seemed that way to me. I was a teenager during the Six-Day War, and I was so proud of the Israeli soldiers. Not only were they fighting for their country, but they were fighting for Jewish people everywhere who understood the importance of safeguarding the one place on Earth where Jews did not have to worry about being persecuted: Israel.

The war took place June 5 through 10. In mid-June, I began working as a bunk counselor at Camp Ramah in Palmer, Massachusetts. It was one of the best summers of my life. In early July, the Israeli contingent began to arrive, as it did each year, joining the American staff. The excitement was palpable. Some of the young men were with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and had brought their wives and children to camp with them.

One evening a group of us sat mesmerized around a bonfire as a soldier told us about the fighting. He said the IDF was so careful not to damage the Western Wall that he and his buddies fought hand-to-hand, without firing weapons.

Even Gentiles were praising Israel. One man told me with admiration, “Everyone knows those Israelis are the best flyboys in the world.”

Oh how things have changed. Though there are more than 50 Muslim nations in the world—many of which persecute Christians—apparently few people believe the Jews are entitled to even one Jewish nation.

The Six-Day War was fought 22 years after the Holocaust. Few people then disputed the truth of that atrocity. Today, however, anti-Semitism is rampant again, and more and more people either deny the Holocaust or know almost nothing about it. The world is being pulled into a vortex of revisionism, and the importance of Jerusalem’s reunification is being erased by anti-Semites who have no regard for facts or truth.

In this issue of Israel My Glory, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the reunification of the eternal capital of the Jewish people. We had so much good material for this issue that we ran out of room. I was particularly disappointed we couldn’t run the full interviews Elliot Jager did with Israelis who lived through the war. But we put them online for you, with photographs, at israelmyglory.org. I urge you to log on. You won’t be disappointed.

Someday Jerusalem’s strife will end, and it will become the capital of the world. Ruling will be Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, who will love and protect the Jewish people. And no anti-Semite will be able to stop Him.

Waiting for His Appearing,
Loma Simcox
Editor-in-Chief
Does God fight for Israel?

When Israel triumphs over multiple Arab armies attacking on multiple fronts, it certainly seems that God fights for Israel. Such was the case in 1967 when Israel won a humanly improbable victory in the miraculous time frame of less than a week.

That wasn’t the first time Israel faced insurmountable odds. The day after declaring independence on May 14, 1948, Israel was attacked by five Arab countries. Vastly outnumbered by a well-equipped, well-trained Arab military, Israel’s small militia somehow prevailed. God fights for Israel.

In 1967, Israel knew its Arab neighbors were planning a war against it. Their goal was the same as in 1948: to annihilate the Jewish state. As the enemies amassed along Israel’s borders, Israel was again outnumbered. The war began on June 5 and ended June 10. It is a mistake to think that because the war was short, it was an easy fight. Many valiant men on both sides died. But in the end, Israel not only defended itself, but also gained control of the Sinai to the south, Golan Heights to the north, and much of biblical Samaria and Judea.

The crown jewel of the victory was Jerusalem. For the first time in more than 2,500 years, Jerusalem was again under the sovereign control of a Jewish nation. God even gave back to Israel the Old City, where the Temple once stood. It reminds us of the biblical days when God fought for His people.

In Exodus 14, when the Israelites were trapped between the Red Sea and Pharaoh’s army, Moses said, “The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace” (v. 14). God parted the Red Sea and dried the seabed so Israel could cross to the other side. He then used the water He had held back to drown the mighty Egyptian army.

Unfortunately, this was a lesson the Israelites soon forgot. When they feared entering the Promised Land because mighty people lived there, Moses declared, “Do not be terrified, or afraid of them. The Lord your God, who goes before you, He will fight for you, according to all He did for you in Egypt before your eyes” (Dt. 1:29–30).

When Israel prepared to enter the land 40 years later, Moses commanded the priests to remind the army, “Do not let your heart faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified because of them [the enemies]; for the Lord your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you” (20:3–4).

In his farewell address to Israel, Joshua said, “One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the Lord your God is He who fights for you, as He promised you” (Josh. 23:10). In Judges 7, Gideon, with merely 300 men, defeated the Midianites who were “as numerous as locusts; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the seashore in multitude” (v. 12). God had the Midianites kill each other.

When Assyrian King Sennacherib’s army surrounded Jerusalem and demanded Israel surrender or die, Judean King Hezekiah encouraged his people to be strong and courageous and not to fear: “With him,” said Hezekiah, “is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God, to help us and to fight our battles” (2 Chr. 32:8). Sure enough, during the night, “the Lord sent an angel who cut down every mighty man of valor, leader, and captain in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned shamefaced to his own land” (v. 21).

These great victories by God’s hand bear similarities to Israel’s victory in 1967. How could such a small nation survive the onslaught of so many Arab armies that were better equipped, better trained, and far more numerous than the army of Israel? There is only one reasonable explanation. As in the days of Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and Hezekiah, God is still fighting for Israel.
FIGHTING FOR LIFE

What does Canada have in common with all of New England plus New Jersey and Pennsylvania? The answer is population. New England, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania house an estimated 36.3 million souls. Canada has an estimated population of 36.4 million. That’s a lot of people. It’s so many that if a tragedy were to wipe out all of Canada, for example, the world would be horrified.

Yet according to the World Health Organization, 40 to 50 million babies are aborted around the world each year. In the United States alone, 59.2 million have been killed since the Supreme Court legalized abortion in 1973. But few register horror at these statistics.

In fact, approximately half a million people marched in Washington, DC, recently to show solidarity for women’s rights; and the so-called right that was front and center was the “right to choose.” Signs with slogans like “My body my choice” were tooted up and down the streets of Washington and other cities to mark the 44th anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court decision Roe v. Wade.

At the top of the conversation were the latest abortion statistics released by the Guttmacher Institute that show a decrease in the number of abortions performed in the United States between 2011 and 2014. Abortions among women ages 15 to 44 reportedly fell 14 percent since 2011, the lowest level since 1974.

Nobody would argue that a 14 percent drop is a bad thing. But the numbers conceal a darker truth. That is, the abortion industry remains alive and well and still has a firm grip on America.

More than 925,000 abortions were performed in 2014 alone, down from 1.06 million in 2011. So instead of wiping out Canada in a single year, we killed only the equivalent of the entire population of South Dakota (865,454) or everyone in the country of Fiji (915,303). No matter how you spin it, we have an abortion crisis.

Scientists, humanists, atheists, and others have spent years speculating about when life begins. But anyone who reads God’s Word should know the answer. God told the prophet Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations” (Jer. 1:5). Could the Lord have made Himself any clearer?

King David wrote, “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret. . . . Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them” (Ps. 139:13, 15–16).

Abortion can also become a tool that a godless society uses to weed out people it deems unfit to live. In the United Kingdom, 90 percent of those “who know their child will be born with Down’s syndrome have an abortion—so there are concerns a new, highly accurate test to identify babies with the condition will lead to even more terminations,” the BBC reported in an article titled “A World Without Down’s Syndrome?” And every unborn baby diagnosed with Down’s in Iceland is aborted: 100 percent.

At one time slavery was the world’s disgrace. Today it is abortion. Ian Tuttle wrote in The National Review, “In the Civil War, we fought to vindicate every man’s right to liberty. What is at stake in the current conflict is the only right more fundamental: that of life.”

The evangelical Christian community in America and Europe helped raise awareness of the evils of slavery. Christians understood all people were created in God’s image and should be valued equally.

Today the global evangelical community belongs on the front lines, raising awareness about the evils of abortion and providing alternatives because, to our heavenly Father, one aborted life is one too many.
END OF THE TWO-STATE SOLUTION?

U.S. President Donald Trump recently announced he will not insist on a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. “I thought for a while the two-state looked like it may be the easier of the two. But honestly, if Bibi and if the Palestinians—if Israel and the Palestinians are happy, I’m happy with the one they like the best,” Trump said, referring to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by his nickname.

The two-state solution—a Palestinian state existing side by side with an Israeli state—has been a pillar of American policy in the Middle East for decades, going all the way back to the 1947 UN Partition Plan.

Although the foreign-policy establishment quickly criticized Trump, supporters countered that the never-ending Arab-Israeli conflict is proof that it is high time for a new approach. Still others claimed Trump’s openness to a one-state solution was a tactic to pressure the Palestinians to accept a deal on two states.

In any event, the two-state solution has failed for a number of reasons, all of which have their origin in Islamic doctrine. For example, the Palestinian leadership is divided between Fatah, which dominates the West Bank, and Hamas, which controls the Gaza Strip. Hamas, far from acknowledging Israel’s right to exist, is irrevocably dedicated to its destruction.

The Hamas Charter is unambiguous: “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.” The charter further states, “Initiatives, and so-called peaceful solutions and international conferences, are in contradiction to the principles of the Islamic Resistance Movement.” And again, “There is no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad. Initiatives, proposals and international conferences are all a waste of time and vain endeavors.”

The Hamas Charter is based on the foundational Islamic doctrine that once Islam has conquered a land or territory, it must remain under Muslim dominion forever. According to Islamic law, even if Muslims lose control over a land or territory once occupied—as is the case with Israel, Spain, Portugal, and parts of Italy—they are obligated to return and reestablish Islamic rule there.

In other words, the root cause of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is essentially theological, not political, even though the two-state solution rests on the supposition that the conflict is political, not theological.

Islamic doctrine also explains why Palestinians steadfastly refuse to recognize Israel as a Jewish state, a key Israeli demand. Addressing the UN General Assembly in September 2009, Netanyahu challenged Palestinian leaders: “We ask the Palestinians to finally do what they have refused to do for 62 years: say yes to a Jewish state. Just as we are asked to recognize a nation-state for the Palestinian people, the Palestinians must be asked to recognize the nation-state of the Jewish people.” In the words of one analyst, “For the Palestinians to recognize Israel as a Jewish state is to declare their surrender.”

Another reason the two-state solution has failed is because Palestinian leaders have brainwashed an entire generation of young Palestinians into believing they should harbor a visceral hatred of Jews. This situation makes peaceful coexistence virtually impossible.

For example, Palestinian clergy, media, and school textbooks are notorious for promoting the narrative that Jews are less than human and for fostering a cult of martyrdom that glorifies killing them.

The alternative to the two-state solution is the one-state solution, which involves Israel formally annexing the West Bank and absorbing millions of Palestinians into Israel. Like the two-state solution, the one-state solution also has problems. Trump’s openness to pursuing a new approach to the Middle East, however, is a long overdue breath of fresh air for those who are concerned about the future of Israel.

You can listen to an interview with Soeren Kern on radio.fol.org.
IRAQ—ISIS is increasing its persecution of Christians in Iraq, and believers must now decide whether to return to their cherished communities or flee the country for good.

In a horrific incident of torture, Esam, from Qaraqosh, related what ISIS did after his sister’s husband refused to convert to Islam: “He was crucified and tortured in front of his wife and children, who were forced to watch. They [ISIS] told him that if he loved Jesus that much, he would die like Jesus.”

The Islamic militants tortured his brother-in-law from 6 in the evening until 11: Two other members of Esam’s family, a Christian couple, were abducted and separated by ISIS. To this day, the husband does not know where his wife is; he only knows that she was turned into a sex-slave.

For Iraqi Christian Bashar, ISIS not only stole his home—they also stole his brother. When Bashar fled Qaraqosh in 2014, ISIS captured his brother Nawar and sent him to Mosul. Bashar expected to return home after ISIS was defeated. After two and a half years of occupation, though, there is no home to which Bashar can return. His brother is gone, and ISIS burned his home to the ground.

Iraqi Christian Rabee reported, “The church is trying their best to maintain [the] existence of the Christian community through helping families to go back to their cities, but the reality is Christian emigration increased after [the] liberation of Qaraqosh . . . because IDPs [internally displaced people] found that their homes had been burnt, their belongings were stolen, and they cannot make sure that the same thing will not happen in the future.” Meanwhile, the torture continues.

by Raymond Ibrahim
To read the full report, visit RaymondIbrahim.com.

MEXICO—Traditionalist Catholics in Chiapas, Mexico, have given evangelical Christians an ultimatum: Convert, flee, or face imprisonment.

Juan Gabriel Lopez Perez, an evangelical Christian in El Encanto, Chiapas, was recently imprisoned for three days for refusing to deny his faith and contribute to Traditionalist Catholic festivals, according to an advocacy group. Local authorities who practice the Traditionalist Catholic blend of indigenous pagan and Roman Catholic rituals threatened Perez that he would not be released unless he sold his house and left the area within 20 days.

Authorities gave Perez the option of paying a 5,000-peso ($240 USD) fine or spending 72 hours in jail. He refused to pay, so authorities sent him to jail for declining to sign a document denying his evangelical faith and for refusing to contribute to the Traditionalist Catholic festivals, which frequently involve drunkenness.

The incarceration followed after area Christians filed a complaint against Traditionalist Catholic authorities for cutting their water supply and suspending government benefits and medical services, as well as denying their children the right to remain in school. Although the Chiapas governor had been made aware of the harassment of evangelicals, he failed to address the problem.

The Coordination of Christian Organizations reported, “There is still no guarantee of freedom of religion as established in Article 24 of the constitution and as established in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”

Mexico ranks 41st on Open Doors’ 2017 World Watch List of the 50 countries where Christians experience the worst persecution.

by Morning Star News
To read the full report, visit Morningstarnews.org.
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(Suggested minimum age of 60)

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foi.org/events/gsherim
**MA’ALE ADUMIM:**

It’s Not What You Think It Is

There is a lot of talk these days that Israel’s “settlements” are preventing peace. Most people, however, know little about these areas and why they exist in the first place.

BY STEVE HERZIG

“Welcome to Ma’ale Adumim!” The sign greeted us as our tour bus pulled into the “settlement” located three miles outside Jerusalem.

Before we arrived in the spring of 2000, I asked the 16 members of our Friends of Israel Youth Adventure team (now called ORIGINS) to describe what they thought a settlement would look like. They knew the term because the news media used it constantly to refer to Israeli communities in the West Bank.

They told me they visualized a few religious Jews living deep in Arab territory in housing that looked like shacks. They knew the communities were controversial and located outside the pre-1967 Six-Day War borders and that the Palestinian-Arabs viewed them as acts of terror, claiming Israel stole their land.

My team’s description was not unique. In fact, in 2017, many people would describe the settlements the same way. And they, too, would be wrong.

Like the other settlements, Ma’ale Adumim is located in the biblical land of Judea and Samaria, where many events in the Bible took place. The name means “Ascent of Red” because of the red rock formations leading to it, first described in Joshua 15:7 as the border between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

And we never did see any shacks. Instead, we saw a beautiful city with a population of 25,000 (more people than in the borough of Princeton, New Jersey), a university, dozens of public schools, strip malls, grocery stores, drug stores, synagogues, recreational facilities, a lake, a conservatory, and several parks. My team’s perception was definitely skewed.

Ma’ale Adumim exists because the Arabs failed to destroy Israel in 1967. In May of that year, a Cairo radio broadcast explained their thinking: “The existence of Israel has continued too long. We welcome the Israeli aggression. We welcome the battle we have long awaited. The peak hour has come. The battle has come in which we shall destroy Israel.”

That month, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser
told the Arab trade unions, “We are ready to enter a general war with Israel. The battle will be a general one, and our basic objective will be to destroy Israel.” They regarded Israel’s existence as a reason to exterminate it. Unfortunately, that fact has not changed.

In the fray were Egypt, Syria, and Jordan. For weeks Israel had tried diplomacy to end the tension, to no avail. So on June 5, 1967, fearing an invasion, Israel executed one of the most dramatic military moves in history. It launched a preemptive strike. And in less than 144 hours (six days), it captured the Sinai and Gaza from Egypt; Judea, Samaria, and eastern Jerusalem from Jordan, including the Jewish holy sites and Old City; and the Golan Heights from Syria. Nasser, who had hoped to toast Israel’s destruction on the shores of Tel Aviv, instead suffered an overwhelming, humiliating defeat.

Surprisingly, soon after the victory, Israel let be known it wanted to make peace. Normally, the victor dictates peace. Instead, Israel was interested in negotiations. The Israelis offered land in exchange for Arab recognition of Israel. In July 1967, the answer came. The Arabs met in Khartoum, Sudan, and issued the infamous three no’s of Khartoum: “No peace with Israel, no negotiations with Israel, no recognition of Israel.”

With the Arab refusal to recognize Israel and jus ad bellum, “the right to war,” Israel set its sights on ensuring its security. Over time, successive Israeli governments gradually allowed the establishment of more and more Jewish communities on land strategic to the country’s safety. Israel’s action made perfect sense. For centuries nations have been established by winning wars. Few, if any, gave conquered land back (as Israel has). Yet in 1979, Israel returned the oil-rich Sinai to Egypt in exchange for a peace treaty. In 1994, Jordan recognized Israel, was given some land, and has remained at peace with the Jewish state.

Today, 80 percent of the towns in Judea and Samaria are located near the pre-1967 Green Line, which separates Israel and the West Bank. From 1948 to 1967, Jerusalem was divided. Jordan controlled eastern Jerusalem, while Israel controlled western Jerusalem. A barrier went down Jaffa Street. For 19 years, Jordan permitted no Jews to enter eastern Jerusalem. It destroyed every synagogue there and desecrated Judaism’s holiest site, the Western Wall.

Once Jerusalem was liberated in 1967,

The Arabs . . . issued the infamous three no’s of Khartoum: “No peace with Israel, no negotiations with Israel, no recognition of Israel.”

Jewish people streamed into the city to pray at the Western Wall. Today, 360,000 Jewish people live in and near the Old City, with another 400,000 in towns throughout Judea and Samaria.

The Arabs’ 1967 Khartoum attitude holds true today and is reflected in the posture of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. They all proudly proclaim they will never recognize a Jewish state. As long as they work to destroy Israel, Israel is justified in protecting itself. Settlements help ensure security. Yet Israel has demonstrated its willingness to work for peace.

In 2005, the Israel Defense Forces forced Jewish settlers out of the Gaza Strip, where they had lived for more than three decades. The Israeli government turned all of Gaza over to the Palestinians in the name of peace. Hamas came to power and soon launched thousands of rockets into Israel. In 2009 and 2010, Israel suspended all construction in Judea and Samaria with the hope that the PA would come to the negotiating table. It never did.

In December 2016, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared, “No one wants peace more than the people of Israel. Israel remains committed to resolving the outstanding differences between us and the Palestinians through direct negotiations. This is how we made peace with Egypt; this is how we made peace with Jordan; it’s the only way we’ll make peace with the Palestinians.” The PA still refuses.

To make matters worse, the world seems confused as to what constitutes terror. Building houses is not an act of terror; strapping a bomb to oneself to blow up people in a shopping center is terror. Building an addition to one’s house is not an obstacle to peace; refusing to negotiate is an obstacle.

Today Ma’ale Adumim is still considered a settlement, though it is a city of 40,000 people. The university has closed, but students need travel only 10 minutes to attend the Hebrew University. In addition, the city has added an art museum, swimming pools, basketball courts, and soccer fields. It is a full-fledged suburb of Jerusalem.

And there is good news for Jews and Christians. Neither a two-state solution nor a one-state solution nor a no-state solution will prevent God from keeping His promise given in Jeremiah 31:35–37 and Ezekiel 37. Israel will never be destroyed, and there will be peace when the King of kings rules. Maybe someone will explain that to the nations of the world.”

Steve Herzog
is the director of North American Ministries and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel.
* Israeli paratroopers after capturing the Western Wall.
JUNE 7 MARKS THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REUNIFICATION OF JERUSALEM. HERE IS A LOOK AT THE 1967 ARAB-ISRAELI WAR THAT SAVED THE JEWISH STATE FROM DESTRUCTION AND MADE GOD’S ETERNAL CITY WHOLE AGAIN.

Photo: Israel Government Press Office

* Israeli Lt. Gen. Mordechai “Motta” Gur and his brigade observe the Temple Mount from the Mount of Olives prior to their attack of the Old City.

D A Y S  I N  J U N E

BY ELLIOT JAGER
When the 1967 Six-Day War erupted, the Jewish state had just celebrated 19 years of independence. Levi Eshkol, 71, was both prime minister and defense minister. Eshkol had replaced the legendary David Ben-Gurion in June 1963. Filling Ben-Gurion's shoes had been anything but easy—particularly with the “Old Man” second-guessing him from the sidelines.

At 7,993 square miles, Israel 50 years ago was smaller than Vermont. Its population was 2.5 million (including 261,000 Arab citizens); immigration was slowing, as was the economy, and unemployment stood at 10 percent. Many big companies were state-owned, and Eshkol had to sell some of these assets to balance the budget.

But life wasn’t all bleak. Television had arrived in 1966, so middle-class Israelis now enjoyed both a local educational station and English-language broadcasts from neighboring Jordan. A general-interest Israeli channel was also in the works.

Having fought its way to independence in 1948—and losing 1 percent of its population in the process—the Israel of 1967 had no permanent borders. For boundaries it had only the 1949 armistice lines. The country was surrounded by 14 hostile Arab nations whose combined population stood at 110 million.

In America, President Lyndon B. Johnson was in the White House, the war in Vietnam was raging, and race riots roiled U.S. cities. The number-one bestselling book was William Manchester’s The Death of a President about the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Under Kennedy, the United States had authorized the first direct arms sale to Israel of Hawk surface-to-air missiles. France was Israel’s main arms supplier.

**THE BACKSTORY**

The 1950s had seen dozens of *fedayeen* (Arabic for “men of sacrifice”) attacks on Israeli soldiers and civilians across the armistice lines. Then, in 1956, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal that connects the Mediterranean and Red Seas, angering France and Britain, both of which were invested strategically and financially in the canal.

Egypt had also been encouraging attacks on Israel from Egyptian-held Gaza. Thus, in an alliance of convenience with Britain and France, Israel attacked and captured the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip.

Intense pressure from the Dwight Eisenhower administration, however, compelled Israel in 1957 to withdraw to the 1949 armistice lines without any guarantees that its shipping would be unimpeded or that attacks from Egyptian-controlled territory would stop. Terror attacks, sniping, and shelling from Egyptian Gaza, Jordan’s west bank, and Syria continued to take their toll on Israeli lives and nerves.
Meanwhile, also in the 1950s, a nucleus of Amb university students living in the Persian Gulf states established the Fatah, or conquest movement. Among the students was Yasser Arafat, who later became an arch terrorist and key Palestinian-Arab leader.

In 1964 the Arab League created the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) under Ahmad Shukeiri, who was part Palestinian-Arab and part Turkish. In 1965 the PLO was officially launched in Jordanian-controlled eastern Jerusalem, and its charter calling for Israel’s destruction was adopted. In 1969, Fatah took control of the PLO.

In Israel’s north, settlements in the Hula Valley had come under periodic Syrian fire. From the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee, Syrian snipers shot at Israeli fishermen and farmers. Saboteurs planted land mines, and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) took casualties trying to block infiltrations. The Arab states also colluded to divert water originating in Lebanon and Syria from reaching Israel.

Then as now, Syria’s internal situation was unstable. A fractious Ba’ath Party had ruled the country since 1963, and behind the scenes two strongmen controlled power: Salah Jadid and Hafez al-Assad, father of current Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Fronting for them was Syrian Prime Minister Yusuf Zu’u’yin, who declared, “We shall set the area afire, and any Israeli movement will result in a final grave for Israel.”

There were also Fatah attacks from the Jordanian-held West Bank. Terrorists tried to blow up a Jerusalem residential building a few miles from the armistice line that divided the city into Israeli- and Jordanian-ruled sectors. In January 1965, Fatah tried to sabotage Israel’s water supply. That October, a cargo train running on the single track connecting Tel Aviv to Jerusalem hit a land mine and derailed.

On a Friday evening in November 1966, three army reservists were killed when their jeep hit a Fatah-planted land mine near Arad. The news reached most Israelis only after Shabbat, and there were calls for harsh retaliation. Using U.S. channels, Jordan’s King Hussein wrote Eshkol to express Jordan’s condolences. However, by the time the message reached Eshkol, a massive retaliatory operation was already under way. Many houses in the village of Sam’u’a where the gunmen had originated were destroyed.

The objective had been to pressure Jordan to crack down on Palestinian-Arab gunmen operating from the West Bank. But critics thought the result was counterproductive since it made Hussein look weak. Doing nothing, however, was not an option for Eshkol.

Between April and May 1967, Fatah launched more than a dozen attacks along the Syrian, Jordanian, and Lebanese borders. On April 7, 1967, after the Syrians heavily shelled northern Israeli settlements, the Israel Air Force (IAF) retaliated against targets in Syria. Confronted by MiG fighters over the Syrian-controlled Golan Heights, the IAF shot down seven Syrian warplanes. In May, Damascus turned to Cairo for backing.

By spring 1967, tensions were reaching an explosive point. Yet, as Michael Oren writes in Six Days of War, the conflagration

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**Stories from the War**

**Asher Yuval**

Asher Yuval is chief executive officer of Methoda, a Tel Aviv-based company specializing in methodologies, software engineering, and information management. He writes a weekly Bible commentary.

Like many of my comrades, I was a student. I had been drafted in 1964 and received basic training before being assigned to a reserve unit as part of my academic studies at the Hebrew University. By 1967, I was a sergeant major.

One lesson of 1967 is the importance of striking first. It is just the opposite of Isaiah 26:20, which was the approach taken for so long by Diaspora Jews: “Hide thyself... for a little moment until the indignation be overpast.” I am left with a sense that events are being driven by grand forces.

In 1933, an ultra-Orthodox rabbi, Isaac Breuer, came to Palestine from Germany on a pilgrimage. He returned to Europe astonished. He went to one after another of his fellow Agudah [Orthodox movement] rabbis who, like him, vehemently opposed political Zionism. [He told them that] instead of complaining about political Zionism, [they should] bring 100,000 people and create an ultra-Orthodox adaptation of Zionism. And besides, there are already some ultra-Orthodox Jews in Palestine who are working the land, and they need help. And, moreover, it was time to escape Europe. They didn’t want to listen.

To this day, I feel we are living through an historic epoch. Everything is awesome. “The heavens are the heavens of the Lord but the earth hath He given to the children of men” [Ps. 115:16]. That is the answer. The Holy One, blessed be His name, does not interfere with individual choice.

We Israeli Jews need to strive for common values. We need to bring together the observant and nonobservant Jews. There was a day when everyone [in Israel]—from secular to Orthodox—knew their Bible. Granted, there is somewhat of a renaissance in Jewish literacy today. Not enough.

I become emotional when I travel our country because here [in Judea and Samaria] is where the Bible happened.

*For the complete interview, go to israelimyglory.org*
can’t be traced to any single incident or individual but, rather, to “an atmosphere of extreme flammability.”

The interlude from May 14 until the war broke out on June 5 was one of high tension and came to be known in Hebrew as Ha’amitana, or “waiting period.”

‘IT ALL BEGAN WHEN YOU HIT ME BACK’

Arab leaders were incensed over Israeli reprisals. Egypt demanded—and UN Secretary-General U Thant readily consented—to pull from Sinai the international peacekeepers who had been stationed there as part of the ceasefire deal that ended the 1956 Sinai Campaign.

The casus belli (war’s justification) came on May 17, 1967, when Nasser began to remilitarize the Sinai Peninsula, moving in some 100,000 soldiers and more than 1,000 tanks. Then, in the early morning hours of May 23, Egypt closed the narrow Straits of Tiran, effectively blockading the Israeli city of Eilat and the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping.

President Lyndon Johnson took a cautious approach, saying “the purported closing” of “what the United States considers . . . to be an international waterway” had exacerbated the existing crisis. On May 31, Britain’s Prime Minister Harold Wilson told Parliament, “Israel has a right to live”; but Foreign Secretary George Brown said London opposed aggression by either side. Privately, Wilson was said to be prepared to sell Israel tank ammunition, but he told Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban he didn’t want to be seen publicly siding with Israel.

War fever now gripped the Arab world—and Israel prepared for the worst.

“Our basic objective will be the destruction of Israel,” Nasser declared on May 27. “The Arab people want to fight,” he said. Mining the Straits of Tiran was intended to ignite a confrontation with Israel. “Adopting this measure obligates us to be ready to embark on a general war with Israel,” Nasser said.

Faced with the prospect of war with Egypt in the south and Syria in the north, Israel entreated Jordan on the east to remain neutral. Nonetheless, on May 30, King Hussein flew to Cairo to sign a mutual defense treaty with Nasser that put Jordan’s forces under Egyptian command. Iraq and other Arab countries made similar arrangements.

The week before the outbreak of fighting, every night there had been [Israeli] tanks coming up [to Jerusalem]. From the shelter, you could hear the rumblings of military vehicles. After [Egypt] began shelling us, the Jordanians were expecting an attack from western Jerusalem, but the IDF came around the back way. Many of the battles described in the Bible were surprise attacks by the Israelites.

Today, I live nearby Ammunition Hill, which, during the war, was the site of a major battle. It is a war memorial now, and you can still see the trenches and bunkers.

When it was all over, the Jewish Agency took us on a bus tour to Jericho. Arab vendors were selling everything for a dollar. I still have the souvenir clay jug I bought. After that, I went back to work at the Jewish Agency and helped coordinate the volunteers who were pouring into the country. There were Jews and Christians volunteering, and the kibbutzim [agricultural communities] were delighted for the help.

For the complete interview, go to israelmyglory.org.

Cecilia Stark

Cecilia Stark is a semiretired tour guide, specializing in Christian visitors.

I was born in London and came to Israel in 1963. When I arrived in Jerusalem, the city had a small-town feel. There were around 165,000 people in western Jerusalem. There was one traffic light. When you wanted to meet someone in town, you’d say, “I’ll meet you at the traffic light!”

There were not many cars. The buses were creaky, and you might be sitting next to someone who was bringing home a live chicken. We had iceboxes instead of electric refrigerators. There were no gas ovens; we cooked and heated our homes using smelly kerosene heaters.

When the war broke out, I was working [for the Jewish Agency]. We knew there was going to be a war. Men went into the reserves. The Jewish Agency shut down many offices. We were walking around with toothbrushes and a change of underwear. We didn’t know where we were going to be when the war started. I worried I would not recognize the air-raid siren. Anyway, I heard it! They took us all down to the Jewish Agency’s basement shelter.
with Cairo.

On May 30, Cairo Radio revved up its intimidation: “With the closing of the Gulf of Aqaba, Israel is faced with two alternatives, either of which will destroy it; it will either be strangled to death by the Arab military and economic boycott, or it will perish by the fire of the Arab forces encompassing it from the south, from the north, and from the east.”

PLO leader Shukeiri declared on June 1, “This is a fight for the homeland—it is either us or the Israelis. There is no middle road. The Jews of Palestine will have to leave. We will facilitate their departure to their former homes. Any of the old Palestine Jewish population who survive may stay, but it is my impression that none of them will survive.”

**ISRAEL BRACES FOR WAR**

To many it looked like the beginning of the end. That the Arabs were planning a massive offensive was obvious. By conservative estimates, Israel confronted an initial combined Arab force of 200,000 troops, 1,600 tanks, and 700 warplanes. MiG fighters had managed to fly—albeit 10 miles high—over Israel’s Dimona nuclear reactor. Nasser’s use of poison gas in Yemen four years earlier further frizzled IDF intelligence.

Eshkol worried over Israel’s “very existence.” “We have to do our utmost to avoid bloodshed on either side,” he told the Israeli people. And so Jerusalem appealed to the international community, pointing out that closing the Straits of Tiran was a blatant act of war under international law.

Eban was dispatched to various European capitals to seek support but came back empty-handed. France’s President Charles de Gaulle advised Israel to do nothing. On May 31, Mossad chief Meir Amit left Israel for a clandestine meeting at the White House with U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. During the meeting, Johnson called twice, asking to be apprised. On the way back to Israel, Amit’s cargo plane landed in Europe to load up with gas masks. He went directly to Eshkol’s place and offered a hazy assessment of U.S. policy:

It seemed that Israel was not being unequivocally directed not to go to war.

Left up in the air, Eshkol created an emergency government that included opposition leader Menachem Begin and David Ben-Gurion’s political ally, retired Gen. Moshe Dayan, as minister of defense. Yitzhak Rabin was in place as IDF chief of staff.

**INTERNAL ISRAELI BICKERING**

Eshkol and Ben-Gurion had a testy relationship. Ben-Gurion, now 80, denigrated Eshkol as too willing to compromise. To mark its 19th Independence Day on May 15, Israel had conducted a modest military parade—so modest that Ben-Gurion stayed away in protest. Eshkol pointed out that he was only trying to abide by the 1949 armistice agreement.

No matter. Western powers like Britain saw any parade as “provocative” and already had rejected Israel’s claims to any part of Jerusalem.

Ben-Gurion secretly summoned Rabin on May 21 and berated him—not for inaction but for his apparent public bellicosity and for mobilizing the reserves. Shattered by the criticism (some said he had a nervous breakdown), Rabin offered his resignation to Eshkol on May 25. The premier, taken aback, dismissed the resignation idea outright.

Around the world, Jewish volunteers flooded Israel’s embassies, offering their help. Many ultra-Orthodox Jews—whose rabbis opposed secular, political Zionism—nonetheless held urgent assemblies at which the Psalms were recited.

**ISRAEL STRIKES FIRST**

On June 5, 1967, Eshkol ordered the Air Force (flying French-made Mirage III fighter bombers) to attack Egyptian air bases. Long weeks of Cabinet deliberations, recriminations, and frayed nerves regarding whether striking first would boomerang against Israel diplomatically or strategically were over. The Cabinet decided Israel would not wait to be overwhelmed.

IAF planes flew low, avoiding radar, and destroyed almost all of Cairo’s Soviet-manufactured MiG-21s on the ground. Enemy runways were bombed; gaping craters made them unusable.

The ensuing war did not play out according to a tight script; there was continuous Cabinet debate about mission and strategy.

Within days, about 400 warplanes belonging to five Arab
states were destroyed. Israel lost 19 planes primarily to ground-based antiaircraft fire. Avi Hoffmann, a former military correspondent for The Jerusalem Post, called the IAF’s performance the most stunning achievement of any air force in the history of warfare.

With Israel commanding the skies, the IDF attacked the Gaza Strip and then the Sinai. By the evening of June 7, Israeli forces had reached the Suez Canal. Hundreds of Egyptian tanks were destroyed, and thousands of Egyptian soldiers were captured.

Egypt’s naval blockade of the Straits of Tiran had been shattered. On June 8, Nasser accepted a ceasefire.

**Prime Minister Levi Eshkol**

**We have to do our utmost to avoid bloodshed on either side.**

The news was equally encouraging on the Syrian front. Schools in Damascus had been closed to celebrate Israel’s pending destruction. But the IAF wiped out most of the Syrian Air Force on the first day of the war. The next day, June 6, Syria began massively shelling Israeli towns from atop the Golan Heights.

By nightfall June 9, Israeli forces advancing in tanks and bulldozers from multiple sectors across the entire front had scaled the Heights. On the way up, Israel took the Syrian shore of the Sea of Galilee and strategic Mount Hermon—and, incredibly, reached the gates of Damascus.

On June 10 Syria accepted a ceasefire.

**JORDAN MISCALCULATES**

Israeli leaders messaged Jordan’s King Hussein, pledging that the IDF would not move against him if he stayed neutral. But with a predominantly Palestinian-Arab population egging him on, the Hashemite king (the roots of his dynasty originated in what is today Saudi Arabia) felt compelled to attack.

Jerusalem is a city built on hills. It is embedded into the West Bank, with Judea to the south and Samaria to the north. The 1948 War of Independence had left Jordan in control of the West Bank, as well as the eastern, northern, and southern environs of Jerusalem, including the walled Old City and its Temple Mount and Western Wall; and Jordan forbade Jewish access to the Old City and Judaism’s holy places.

On the eve of the 1967 war, a strange calm prevailed in Jerusalem. Life took a surreal turn. People went about their business, knowing fighting was imminent. Bathtubs were filled with drinking water. Candles were kept at the ready should the electricity fail. Most men of fighting age had been called up, so bus service was largely suspended. High school students were delivering the mail. There was but one traffic
light in Jerusalem, and it flashed amber. Orthodox Jews, who normally abjure physical work on the holy Sabbath, were digging trenches to stop a possible Jordanian advance into the city’s western sector.

Egypt’s Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer reportedly deluded Hussein into thinking 70 percent of the IAF had been destroyed and that Egypt was advancing up from the Negev toward Hebron. This move hypothetically opened the way for Jordan to stab through Ismel’s 15-mile waistline from the Jordanian-controlled West Bank to the Mediterranean Sea.

On the morning of June 5, Jordanian forces began bombarding western Jerusalem along the armistice lines. With mere 15 miles separating the West Bank from the coastline, the outskirts of Tel Aviv took a pounding. Jordanian shelling on Jerusalem itself was indiscriminate and caused considerable casualties. The Knesset building took a direct hit. Civilians huddled in basements and bomb shelters for at least two days.

In late morning, Arab Legion troops moved up the southern slopes of the Valley of Hinnom outside the Old City walls toward the UN compound atop the Hill of Evil Counsel (Byzantine tradition identifies it as the place where the high priest Caiphas and his colleagues decided to arrest Jesus). The compound, formerly the official residence of the British high commissioner during Mandate days, was supposed to be a demilitarized zone.

The IDF counterattacked, taking the nearby village of Sur Bahir, which straddles the Hill of Evil Counsel and extends all the way to Kibbutz Ramat Rachel at the city’s southeastern perimeter. Founded in 1926, Ramat Rachel farm workers had come under periodic sniper fire from surrounding Jordanian territory over the years. In the 1948 war, the kibbutz, which is situated on a strategic plateau, was won and lost six times. In the end, it held off an Egyptian advance but suffered 11 fatalities.

The 1967 war would leave the kibbutz largely unscathed—save for a shell that exploded in the communal dining room. For two days, everyone on the kibbutz who was unable to fight hunkered down in bomb shelters.

ROAD 1
Elsewhere, too, the Israeli-Jordanian battle for Jerusalem erupted. Above the twisting, climbing, narrow, Jerusalem-Tel Aviv “highway” that connected the coastal plain to western Jerusalem, Jordanian soldiers were ensconced on the surrounding high ground above the corridor.

With the outbreak of war, the IDF moved to widen this critical passageway by punching out north from Kibbutz Ma’aleh HaHamishah on the Israeli side of the armistice line toward the Nabi Samwil (Tomb of Samuel) on the Jordanian side with its highly strategic and commanding view of Road 1. Other IDF troops took a route past Beit Horon toward Ramallah.

An IDF brigade attacked the strategic hilltop of Latrun (known partly for its monastery) overlooking Road 1, which Jordan captured in the War of Independence and was using as a sniping point. Indeed, Jordan’s dominance of Latrun had forced Israeli traffic onto a bypass road, which has been known since 1949 as the Burma Road.

STORIES FROM THE WAR

Nomi Paynton
A retired psychotherapist, Nomi Paynton is a gifted ceramist whose work is displayed at Shlomzion Ceramics in downtown Jerusalem.

I arrived on June 10, 1967, on a special El Al flight for war volunteers. It came from Paris, where I lived. One of my strongest memories was the warm welcome I received from everyone I met, from the man in the makolet [corner grocery store], to the bus driver, to people in the street—not to mention many relatives, most of whom I had never met. Strangers would give me a hug and thank me for coming. It gave me a feeling that every one of us can make a meaningful contribution to building up this country.

I [remember] the opening of the Kotel [Western Wall] to the general population for the first time on Shavuot [Pentecost], just days after the end of the war. Everyone was excited. People poured into Jerusalem, and the crowds snaked over the hills on narrow paths. Slowly we moved toward the Old City until all of a sudden, there it was, towering above us. I will never forget that breathtaking moment.

After volunteering on a kibbutz, I moved to Jerusalem to help in the office of the Jewish Agency. I was offered the position because I knew several languages—and because my cousin worked there and invited me to live in her home. I grew to know and love Jerusalem and made many friends.

After three months, things started to normalize. I joined the next ulpan [Hebrew-language intensive school] located in Beersheba. I recall coming up to Jerusalem the next year for a striking military parade on Independence Day. A seemingly endless stream of tanks, artillery, and soldiers passed by. How proud we all were.

It took time for us to digest the wider meaning of all this and its implications. Some years later, the format for independence underwent drastic change, and there were no more big military parades.

For the complete interview, go to israelmyglory.org.
Rosie Gordon Elkana
Rosie Gordon Elkana is a retired registered nurse.

I immigrated to Israel from Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1964. I got a job at Hadassah Hospital Ein Karem. The hospital’s Mount Scopus campus was inaccessible because it was surrounded by Jordanian-held eastern Jerusalem.

As the crisis deepened, the entire staff was called into the hospital. A spirit of solidarity [was] in the air. Shuli Natan’s voice singing “Jerusalem of Gold” filled the radio airwaves. Then suddenly, the war began.

Patients at Hadassah Hospital who were too sick to be sent home were brought to the basement. We were on a war footing, so there were no nonemergency services. We worked 12-hour shifts, with hospital vans serving as transport to take us home since municipal bus services had been suspended. There was palpable tension. We became fearful of an Israeli-Arab doctor. In hindsight, our qualms were uncalled-for.

I was working so hard I didn’t realize Jordan had entered the war or what was happening. Then it was over. After the war, it was Shavuot [Pentecost], and I remember walking to the Western Wall. What a special experience that was. We walked down Jaffa Street, and the barriers were gone. We could now continue to the Old City. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] had created a corridor and bulldozed the area in front of the Western Wall, so it was possible to access the site.

With the war over, our medical team was taken on a tour to Jericho, and we bought bananas—which I think had not been generally available.

When Hadassah’s Mount Scopus compound was reopened, I worked in the internal medicine wards and later at the well-child health clinic for many years. Today, I live in Ma’alot Dafna—a bustling neighborhood—which had been a barren no-man’s-land in 1967. When I think about those days, it was a time of miracles. Amazing.

For the complete interview, go to israelmyglory.org.

BATTLE TO REGAIN OLD JERUSALEM
Inside Arab Jerusalem, Jordanian forces were heavily entrenched in the northern quadrants of the city in locations that included a police academy, Ammunition Hill, and several neighborhoods. The IDF made its move toward Ammunition Hill on June 6. Dislodging Jordan’s well-trained and deeply bunkered Arab Legion troops necessitated terrible fighting. The Jordanians suffered 71 fatalities; the IDF lost 36 soldiers.

The victory at Ammunition Hill opened up access to nearby Mount Scopus, which, for 19 years, had been an isolated enclave. Mount Scopus had been the home of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem since the university opened in 1925. But reaching the original campus was too dangerous. So, after several years in makeshift facilities, a new campus in the western sector of the city opened at Givat Ram in 1958.

On the third day of the war (June 7), an Israeli force entered the Old City first through the Lions’ Gate and later through the Damascus Gate. Arab snipers shot from inside the al-Aqsa Mosque and from atop the Temple Mount. But by 10:15 a.m. the Israeli flag was raised over the Temple Mount. Below the Mount stood the Western Wall—an outer wall of the second Temple compound. Israeli soldiers were ordered not to harm the Muslim holy places.

The IDF captured all the territory west of the Jordan River—Israel’s biblical heartland. In the northern part of the West Bank (Samaria), the Arab towns of Ramallah, Qalqilya, Jenin, and Nablus were taken. In Judea, the strategic Etzion bloc, the southern gateway to Jerusalem, was taken—as were Bethlehem and Hebron.

On June 7, having lost the entire West Bank and Jerusalem, with no chance of reversing his fortunes, King Hussein accepted a UN-brokered ceasefire. Jordan’s shelling of Jerusalem caused 500 civilian casualties, including many fatalities.

SURGE OF HOPEFULNESS
Despite Israel’s stunning victory, the war did not end the conflict with the Arabs. And in the decades ahead, the dilemma of what to do with the captured territories would divide the Jewish people. However, in the war’s immediate aftermath, the country experienced a four-year baby boom and a spike in immigration. In 1968 alone, more than 30,000 new immigrants—nearly 6,000 from North America—moved to Israel.

Golda Meir, who would become prime minister in 1969, captured the spirit of the time in her memoirs: “There was no sense of triumph, only an enormous surge of hopefulness.”

To read more about the Six-Day War, I recommend the following resources:

→ Six Days of War; June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East by Michael B. Oren
→ The Lion’s Gate: On the Front Lines of the Six Day War by Steven Pressfield
→ Like Dreamers: The Story of the Israeli Paratroopers Who Reunited Jerusalem and Divided a Nation by Yossi Klein Halevi
→ 1967: Israel, the War, and the Year That Transformed the Middle East by Tom Segev

Elliot Jager
is an American-born Israeli journalist, political scientist, and author who lives in Jerusalem.
“THE TEMPLE MOUNT IS IN OUR HANDS!
I repeat, the Temple Mount is in our hands! All forces, stop firing! I repeat, all forces, stop firing! Over.”

Sounds of gunfire, soldiers singing “Jerusalem of Gold,” and the faint sound of a shofar were heard over the army wireless. It was June 7, 1967, and the Israel Defense Forces paratroopers had just liberated the Temple Mount and Western Wall. Finally, for the first time in more than 2,500 years, a unified Jerusalem was back in Jewish hands.

The day after the liberation, Israeli Defense Minister Gen. Moshe Dayan wrote a short prayer and tucked it into a crevice of the Wall. Curious newsmen immediately removed it. It read, “This was the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes” (Ps. 118:23).

I remember a conversation I had in Jerusalem with a veteran rabbi of the Six-Day War. I mentioned that I had spoken with some Israelis who did not believe God had anything to do with Israel’s victory. He bristled and told me to tell those people to go to him and say that to his face. For him and many others, the liberation of Jerusalem was a great miracle—a special gift from God.

Those of us who know the Lord have no doubt the Almighty was involved. Israel was vastly outnumbered and out-gunned on three fronts, yet won.

You can imagine the emotion at the Western Wall. Hearing the sound of the shofar as soldiers sang “Jerusalem of Gold” (see “‘Jerusalem of Gold’: A Special Song for a Special Time,” in the January/February 2015 issue) and the Israeli national anthem, “Hatikva.” The chief chaplain, Rabbi Shlomo Goren, holding a Torah scroll, recited a hymn of praise called “Kaddish,” followed by a memorial prayer called “Yizkor” for the fallen, as soldiers wept. Then in a solemn moment the rabbi cried out, “This year in a rebuilt Jerusalem! In the Jerusalem of old!”

Jerusalem has been at the heart of Judaism since the days of King David, when he made it his capital and moved the Ark of the Covenant there. It is no wonder the psalmist declared, “If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill!” (137:5). For millennia Jewish people have rejoiced, mourned, and wept over Jerusalem, the only place on Earth where God has chosen to place His holy name.

General Dayan was not a religious man, but the Scripture he chose from Psalm 118 is a reference to the Messiah: “The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” (vv. 22–24).

Someday the Messiah will return to Jerusalem and establish His Kingdom. That event, too, will be the Lord’s doing; and it will be marvelous in our eyes.

Jerusalem has been at the heart of Judaism since the days of King David.

by Peter Colón, the creative resource coordinator and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel
Israel hoped the 1967 war would be its last and that peace would prevail. But that has not been the case. Here is a look at the situation today.

Mindless talk of the “occupation” generally goes hand-in-hand with unvarnished ignorance or a willful disregard of the area’s strategic value.

The topography of the West Bank is such that no Israeli government could allow a militant Palestinian-Arab entity to control this hilly terrain that overlooks Israel’s main population centers and its main airport, Ben Gurion.

Many are unaware that there has never been a sovereign Arab state anywhere in Palestine. They are equally unaware that the West Bank happens to be the heartland of Jewish civilization, with many of the Bible’s familiar events playing out there. And yet there is no denying the 2.7 million Palestinian Arabs of the West Bank chafe under non-Muslim rule and the presence of nearly 400,000 Jewish civilians.

GOLAN HEIGHTS
In the north, world statesmen have long tried to cajole Israel down from the strategic, thinly populated Golan Heights, arguing that a peace deal with Syria’s Assad dynasty would be durable. Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, these pressures have abated.

SINAI
The Sinai Peninsula, which Israel returned to Egypt in exchange for the 1979 peace treaty, has become a danger zone, as Islamists battle Egyptian security forces loyal to President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

GAZA
The Gaza Strip is about the size of Manhattan with a population of similar size (though that doesn’t stop anti-Zionists from calling it “the world’s largest open-air prison” or the “most densely populated region in the world”). After Israel unilaterally pulled out of the area in 2005, the 1.7 million Arabs there (along with those in the West Bank) promptly voted to have Hamas run their affairs. Instead of building a beautiful “Singapore on the Mediterranean,” Gaza quickly became a launching pad for attacks on Israeli settlements in the Negev. Israel has had to launch three offensives since 2005 to quell the attacks.

JERUSALEM
For Jerusalem—a city embedded into the West Bank, with Samaria to the north and Judea to the south—the security situation has fluctuated. After being divided for 19 years, it was reunited in 1967. The barbed wire and concrete barriers were demolished; and the Mandelbaum Gate, a passageway for foreign travelers crossing no-man’s land between Arab “east” and Jewish “west” Jerusalem, lost its rationale. Today the Gate is recalled by a nondescript sculpture between two of the city’s light-rail stations.

Following the reunification, Jerusalem’s Arabs were granted blue Israeli identification cards, entitling them to vote in municipal elections (few do) and enroll in Israel’s vaunted healthcare system (all have).
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem was also able to return to its original Mount Scopus campus, its home from 1925 to 1948. As soon as the war ended, foreign volunteers joined Israelis to clean up the derelict grounds. And on June 28, 1967, just 18 days after the war ended, Chief of Staff Yitzhak Rabin was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Hebrew University at the very site where, on April 1, 1925, Lord Balfour had declared “with supreme confidence in its future, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem to be opened.”

Between 1948 and 1967, Mount Scopus had been inaccessible and the campus held by an Israel Defense Forces (IDF) garrison. Following the 1967 war, university President Eliahu Eliat said, “The university is now unified again, like the city. We can develop, grow—perhaps, without being presumptuous, the new Jerusalem might become a modern Athens. A city of peace and culture where people from all over the world, not only Jews, would come to perfect their education.”

Today, hundreds of Arabs study at the Hebrew University, which makes concerted efforts to integrate them. You can see students in both hijabs and yarmulkes and hear both Hebrew and Arabic being spoken.

Jerusalem is now the largest city in the Jewish state, with a population of 870,000 (63 percent Jewish and 37 percent Arab). Well over 211,000 Israeli Jews now live in neighborhoods in the east, north, and south of the city that were built on once-vacant plots that have been developed for housing since 1967. These neighborhoods are in what the international community calls “occupied East Jerusalem.”

Jerusalem no longer has the small-town atmosphere it had before the Six-Day War. Though by no means as cosmopolitan as Tel Aviv, it is home to the world-class Israel Museum, scores of art galleries, five-star hotels, an Islamic Museum, endless restaurants, a vibrant fresh-produce market, an active nightlife, and concert halls and theaters.

The First Station—site of the Ottoman-period train station that opened in 1892 and closed in 1998—is the city’s premier public space, offering a range of cultural and recreational activities. There are scenic promenades shared by Jews and Arabs. The city also boasts top-notch hospitals where Arab and Jewish medical personnel tend to Arab and Jewish patients.

MILESTONE YEAR

Though 2017 is the 50th anniversary of the Six-Day War, it is also a year for other anniversaries: the 120th anniversary of the First Zionist Congress, the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, the 70th anniversary of the UN General Assembly Partition Resolution, the 40th anniversary of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat’s visit to Jerusalem, and the 30th anniversary of the first Palestinian intifada (uprising).

The Arabs’ relentless hostility to the Zionist enterprise has proven self-defeating, ruinous, and even tragic for many Palestinian Ambs. The 1967 Six-Day War may have disabused Arab leaders of the notion that they could overwhelm Israel militarily. It has not—truth be told—opened many hearts to the prospect of genuine coexistence and comity.

by Eliot Jager, an American-born Israeli journalist, political scientist, and author who lives in Jerusalem

STORIES FROM THE WAR

Uzi Eilam

Uzi Eilam is a retired brigadier general and was in the vanguard of military research and development as director general of Israel’s Atomic Energy Commission and as chief scientist.

The day the war broke out, I was at the Tel Nof Airbase not far from Rehovot. At age 34, I was the commander of a battalion of paratroopers. I’d recently returned to Israel after studying at Stanford University in California. Gen. Uzi Narkiss, commanding officer of the Central Command, commissioned me a major.

During the lead-up to the war, I constantly drilled my men. I ordered them to jump into trenches they had dug and arranged for a tank to drive over the ditches. I wanted them to experience what combat conditions could be like.

We were assigned to jump into the northern Sinai Peninsula at night and capture the city of El Arish. After Sinai fell into Israel’s hands so quickly, the paratroopers were reassigned to the Jerusalem theatre of operations. [When we arrived] in Jerusalem, there was no operational map. We lacked detailed information about the enemy and the terrain. I happened to be familiar with Jerusalem. So even under nighttime blackout conditions, I basically knew where we were.

In the fighting for Jerusalem, my men in the 71st Battalion took Sheikh Jarrah [on the road to Mount Scopus] and Wadi al-Joz. From there we moved on to the Rockefeller Museum. After a day and a half of fighting, our brigade had 96 dead and hundreds wounded. My battalion lost 12.

I was the first to get to the Western Wall. I sent a soldier to guide Shlomo Goren, the IDF’s chief rabbi, to us near the Wall. He was about to blow the shofar [ram’s horn] at the Western Wall. But Goren was overcome with emotion. He couldn’t get a note out. I told him that I knew how to blow the trumpet and offered to sound the shofar—so I did.

A lesson from 1967 is the importance of humility. Even if you win, you should be humble in order to create the right diplomatic atmosphere.

For the complete interview, go to israelmyglory.org.
How important is Jerusalem to the Jewish people? Their souls have been intertwined with it for more than 3,000 years. Unfortunately, their heartache is not over. This article was written shortly after the Six-Day War and ran in the October/November 1967 issue of Israel My Glory.
recent months the world was amazed to watch Israel’s swift victory over the Arab forces. For years Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser and his allies boasted that they would drive the Jews into the sea. In less than 20 years, little David was forced to accept three times the challenge of Goliath and to bring him low. Not since the times of Pharaoh at the Red Sea has Egypt suffered such a devastating and humiliating defeat. The remarkable prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled: “And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself” (Isa. 19:17, KJV).

On June 9, 1967, the chief chaplain of Israel’s armed forces, Rabbi Shlomo Goren, sounded the ritual ram’s horn at the Wailing [Western] Wall in Jerusalem. Clutching in his arms the scrolls of the Torah, Rabbi Goren cried, “We have taken the city of God. We are now entering the Messianic era for the Jewish people. I promise the Christian world that we will take good care and be responsible for all the holy places in Jerusalem.”

A few days later, happy and excited multitudes of Jews from all over Israel and abroad streamed through the ancient gates and narrow streets of Jerusalem. Young and old, they came; fathers carrying their children on their shoulders and worldly Jews mingled with long-bearded, pious Jews wrapped in their prayer shawls. Praying, laughing, weeping, and singing, their hearts were filled with a rapturous surge of joy and excitement. The words of the psalmist, written almost 3,000 years ago, became a vivid reality:

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing; then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them (Ps. 126:1–2, KJV).

Not since the days of our Lord has Jerusalem seen such throngs within her walls. It is almost impossible to describe the intensity of the Jewish people’s emotional attachment to Jerusalem. It is their holy city, the heart of their nationhood that, for the past 19 centuries, has been ruled by foreign invaders and from which they were completely banished for the past 19 years.

Since AD 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the
Romans, the exiled, plundered, and oppressed Jews have looked with deep yearning toward Zion. Like the Jewish people during the Babylonian exile, they prayed and vowed, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy" (137: 5-6, KJV).

The tortures and bloodshed during the dark centuries of the Catholic Inquisition, the pogroms and persecution in czarist and Communist Russia, and the mass murders of Jewish people in Hitler's Germany and postwar Europe have only intensified the Jewish dream. To the homeless and wandering Jew, the Land of Israel became a biological necessity, a question of sheer survival.

In the 19th century, when Jewish pioneers gradually began to filter back into British-ruled Palestine, which at that time was part of the Ottoman Empire, they joined a remnant of Jews who had always lived there. They found a land full of naked, rocky hills, untilled and long-neglected fields, malaria-infested swamps, and barren sand dunes. Their backbreaking work, their sweat, blood, and tears gradually transformed the wasteland into a fruitful oasis.

They founded new agricultural settlements, villages, and cities. Wherever they went, they brought new life with them. They planted millions of trees and step-by-step transformed the desert into cultivated fields and gardens, able to sustain thousands of new immigrants. They have made the best use of the land's natural resources, its waters, and its minerals.

In 1917, in response to the Jewish people's urgent need for a homeland and in appreciation of their help in winning the war against Germany, the British government issued the famous Balfour Declaration. [Editor's Note: This year is the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration.] This document granted the Jewish people the right to establish a national home in Palestine.

At the same time, the rights of all other inhabitants, which included about half a million Arabs, were also protected. Palestine was to become the home of both Jew and Arab. Had the Arabs accepted this solution, both would have shared and enjoyed a common homeland. But this was not to be. It is not in Ishmael's nature to dwell peacefully with Isaac.

After the end of World War I, Jewish immigration to British Palestine increased substantially. The Jews bought worthless land and paid high prices for it to willing Arab owners. Soon Jewish industry and labor brought a considerable measure of prosperity to the area, and many Arabs from neighboring lands began to flock there.

At first, Arab leaders acquiesced and even welcomed the Balfour Declaration. However, soon Jewish success provoked Arab jealousy and enmity. Arab marauders began to attack Jewish settlements. To appease the Arabs, the British government carved out a major portion of Palestine in 1923, the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan. From then on, Jews were permitted to settle only in the narrow strip of land that remained.

But even this severe truncation did not satisfy the Arabs. They demanded that Britain forbid Jewish immigration altogether. The British repeatedly tried to do so, issuing numerous restrictions to that effect. However, compelled by desperate necessity, the Jews refused to accept the heartless decrees against them.

After the end of World War II, the pitiful survivors of Hitler's concentration camps and murder factories began to flock to the only place they considered their home—the Promised Land. The last years of British rule were an unfortunate example of an impossible triangle between the Arabs, Jews, and British.

It is not in Ishmael's nature to dwell peacefully with Isaac.

The United Nations decided to partition what was left of Palestine between the Jews and Arabs. Israel received merely a narrow strip of land along the shore of the Mediterranean. Jerusalem was divided between the Arabs and Jews. Practically all of ancient Jerusalem went to the Arabs, and the Jews retained the new section of the city and Mount Zion.
The day after Israel declared its independence, May 14, 1948, the Arab armies of the neighboring states invaded Israel, determined to strangle the new nation at birth. The attempt ended in dismal failure.

The events of June 1967 are the latest chapter in the age-old conflict between the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael:

And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight . . . in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called (Gen. 21:9–10, 12, KJV).

The feud goes on. Ishmael continues to mock and hate Isaac. Long ago the Word of God, with remarkable accuracy, described Ishmael’s character and outlined his descendants’ history: “He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him” (16:12, KJV).

Ever since, Ishmael has been “the wild man” of history. Arab history has been a litany of intertribal warfare, endless feuds, bloodshed, and fratricide. The one point on which they have been able to unite is their common hatred of Israel and their desire to destroy her. This hatred has been the dominant theme of Arab politics and propaganda for a long, long time.

As far as the human eye can perceive, Soviet and Arab enmity against the Jewish people will continue until the return of our Lord. This enmity eventually will climax in the battle of Armageddon, when Russia and her satellites will be gathered together in the Valley of Armageddon in an attempt to deal Israel the final blow. At that time, the Lord Himself will come down to deliver His people:

Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that
Since AD 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, the exiled, plundered, and oppressed Jews have looked with deep yearning toward Zion.

And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a prey, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land. And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face (38:11–12, 18, KJV).

The outcome will be Israel’s glorious redemption, not merely from her physical enemies, but also from the power of sin. On that glorious day, Israel will repent of her age-old rejection of her Messiah, Jesus, and will receive Him with open hearts and arms:

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn (Zech. 12:10, KJV).

It may be that at that time, Isaiah’s vision of salvation and reconciliation between Israel and her ancient enemies, Egypt and Assyria, represented today by the Arab world, will at last come to pass.

In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance (Isa. 19:23–25, KJV).

As we look at current events, we do not know what the future will bring. However, of one thing we can be sure: The seemingly diffused and unrelated events of yesterday and today are coming into focus. Events of today are a rehearsal for Armageddon.

Our Lord is marching on.

Victor Bukhsbazen (1903–1974) was the first executive director of The Friends of Israel and served in that capacity and as editor-in-chief of Israel My Glory for 33 years. He was a Polish immigrant to the United States and a Hebrew Christian who was fluent in seven languages, including Hebrew. He held a PhD in theology.
IT’S NOT OVER ’TIL IT’S OVER

A LOOK AT THE REAL REASON BEHIND THE STRUGGLE FOR JERUSALEM

BY CHRIS KATULKA

A city’s significance is often measured by its commercial importance, the height of its skyscrapers, or the grandeur of its architecture. But Jerusalem is not like any other city. Jerusalem’s significance comes from the One who chose to dwell there—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

God has a unique relationship with the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem. The God of peace chose Jerusalem, which means “city of peace,” as the place where the Jewish people should worship Him and from which the Jewish Messiah will one day reign. Because of the city’s crucial role in the plan of God, God’s enemy—Satan—has launched a spiritual war against Jerusalem and the Jewish people.

Satan invests his energy in attacking what God loves, and Jerusalem and God’s Chosen People are prime targets. Consequently, the Jewish people must constantly defend their historical connection to their beloved city.

Jerusalem is embedded in the spiritual fabric of the Jewish community worldwide. Prayers like the Amidah, which have been recited three times a day for nearly two millennia, recall the link between God’s faithfulness and the hope of rebuilding Jerusalem. And the phrase Next year in Jerusalem, recited at the end of Passover and Yom Kippur, expresses the Jewish anticipation of a future Jerusalem where peace will reign.
It's hard to believe that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) approved in 2016 a resolution on “Occupied Palestine.” Supposedly designed to protect Arab culture in eastern Jerusalem, UNESCO knowingly repudiated 3,000 years of Jewish culture by labeling all holy sites solely in Arabic and calling Israel an "occupying power." Even UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon spoke out against the wording that robbed Jerusalem of its Jewish identity.

But nothing is new under the sun. This is not the first or last time nations will attempt to separate what God has knit together. The ugly narrative that defrauds the Jewish people of their unique, historical connection to Jerusalem did not originate with UNESCO.

It is an age-old tale that has been unfolding for millennia. Past kingdoms and empires also tried to sever Jerusalem from the Jewish people and claim God’s eternal city as their own.

In 167 BC, the Greek ruler Antiochus Epiphanes sought to dismantle Judaism from the inside out. His anti-Semitic mission started by outlawing Jewish traditions and rites, such as reading the Torah, performing circumcision, and honoring the Sabbath. He eventually struck at the heart of Judaism, turning Jerusalem into a Greek colony and the Temple into a place of pagan worship. The Hellenization of Jerusalem, however, met its demise when God raised up Judas Maccabeus to fight against the forces of the evil one.

A few centuries later, Roman Emperor Hadrian tried to rewrite Jewish history by renaming Judea and Jerusalem. He removed every ounce of Jewish identity from the city and quelled a massive Jewish uprising led by Simon Bar Kokhba, a Jewish leader who fought for an independent Jewish country and a liberated Jerusalem. Hadrian’s anger led him to rename Judea “Palaestina” and rename Jerusalem Aelia Capitolina, a name that remained until the Arabs seized control from the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire in AD 638.

Satan has been influencing rulers to try to separate God’s Chosen People from God’s city since King David established Jerusalem as the Jewish capital more than 3,000 years ago. One would think the vast amount of empirical evidence from both written and archaeological records connecting the two would quiet such opposition. Yet, even in our advanced and modern age, Jerusalem remains the subject of international dispute. This ongoing tension reveals the deep spiritual battle over the city.

Spiritual warfare is Satan’s battle against God. God is holy, good, and righteous; and Satan—who embodies evil—works tirelessly to thwart God’s sovereign plan to redeem His creation. The apostle Paul said, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).

Why does Satan focus his efforts on Israel? Because Jerusalem plays a vital role in God’s plan to make all things new. Satan and his demonic forces generate lies and hate and cause the darkness, death, and war we observe in the world. They know God plans to redeem His creation and set His King on His holy hill in Jerusalem (Ps. 2:6), defeating sin, death, and Satan once and for all.

God gave the prophet Micah a vision of Jerusalem’s future. He saw Jerusalem lifted above every city as a beacon of light and global epicenter of the world, where God will reign over His creation:

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days, . . . many nations shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Mic. 4:1–2).

Satan believes he can disrupt God’s role for Jerusalem, the city of peace, and obstruct God’s plan to bring everlasting peace on Earth through His Son, Jesus the Messiah. But God will reclaim dominion over this world. Jesus the Messiah will sit on His throne, and Satan’s corrupt rule will end. Truth, justice, and peace will stream from the Temple in Jerusalem, as God’s righteous laws permeate the world like light and guide all nations.

Satan deceives the world into believing Jerusalem does not belong to the God of Israel. Some leaders in the past even have proclaimed: “Raze it, raze it, to its very foundation!” (Ps. 137:7). Today Satan’s lies are somewhat more sophisticated. They come in the form of news headlines and bad resolutions. But Satan will not win (Rev. 20:10).

King David wrote, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: ‘May they prosper who love you’” (Ps. 122:6). When we do so, we ask for God’s victory over the seen and unseen battles between good and evil that wage over Jerusalem.

Final victory will come only when Jesus returns. So as we eagerly await His coming, let us boldly add to our prayer for Jerusalem the Christian anthem, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20).
WHEN HEAVEN COMES TO EARTH

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THE EXPRESSION “IT'S HEAVEN ON EARTH”? WELL, THAT’S LITERALLY WHAT THE NEW JERUSALEM WILL BE.

BY MIKE STALLARD

JERUSALEM.

It is probably the best known and most fought over city in the world. The Jewish people cherish it. The Muslims want to take it. The United Nations wants to divide it. Nations are willing to go to war over it.

But the Jerusalem of today is not the final incarnation of the holy city, which actually belongs to God. He has promised a New Jerusalem—a magnificent, enormous city that will descend to Earth; and it will be glorious.

The key Bible book on the New Jerusalem is Revelation, and the first reference to it is 3:12: Jesus told the apostle John to write, “I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God.”

The future city will descend from heaven to Earth after the following events take place: seven years of tribulation (described in Revelation 6—19), the Second Coming (19:11–16), the Millennial Kingdom (20:1–10), and the Great White Throne final judgment of the lost (vv. 11–15).

The age following the Millennium (Messiah’s 1,000-year reign), when all things are made new and right, is sometimes referred to as the eternal state; and the New Jerusalem is an
integral part of it. In Revelation 21, John described a vision the Lord gave him of this future city. He told of its beauty, location, inhabitants, and its absence of sin and suffering.

**Its Appearance**
The New Jerusalem is described as a “bride adorned for her husband” (21:2), which points to its unsurpassed beauty. It is a great metropolis of matchless glory and brilliant light like that of “a jasper stone, clear as crystal” (v. 11).

It has 12 foundations; and its high wall has 12 gates, three on each side.

Laid out as an even cube, it measures 1,500 miles long, wide, and high, making it enormous (vv. 15–16). The United States is 3,200 miles from coast to coast. The New Jerusalem is so massive every side of the cube could extend almost halfway across the United States.

Its walls are of jasper, and the city is of “pure gold” (v. 18). The 12 foundations are adorned with precious stones, such as jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, and emerald (vv. 19–20). Each gate is composed of a single large pearl, and the street of the city is “pure gold, like transparent glass” (v. 21).

Bible commentator David M. Levy astutely noted, “The walls of jasper and the city of pure gold would look like a sparkling diamond in all its crystalline beauty, designed to reflect the effulgence of God’s radiant glory in every area of the city.”

New Jerusalem is a literal, physical, and spatial city. Though some of its splendor may symbolize the holiness and brilliance of God, the vast number of details provided suggest it is a literal metropolis.

**Its Location**
New Jerusalem is actually heaven (God’s abode) on Earth during the eternal state. After God creates a new Earth, heaven will descend to Earth so that He may dwell with His people forever in a way they have never before experienced:

> Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God... The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are [the city’s] temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light (vv. 3, 22–23).

God’s presence is so bright the light of the sun and moon are not needed.

**Its Inhabitants**
Who enjoys God’s presence in the New Jerusalem? Jesus said only those who have thirsted and taken freely of the water of life (v. 6). Believers from throughout the ages will live there with God. (See also Hebrews 11 and 12:22–24.)

This multitude includes church saints (Rev. 21:9–10), a fact also indicated by the names of the 12 apostles on the city’s 12 foundations (21:14); Jewish and other Old Testament believers; and believers from the Tribulation and even the Millennium. “The names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel” will adorn the city’s 12 gates (v. 12).

**Its Absence of Sin and Suffering**
God’s presence in the New Jerusalem means the elimination of the curse of sin and death: “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (v. 4).

Today we live in a sin-cursed environment. But the Lord will eliminate the curse, not only in New Jerusalem but throughout the new earth. No hospitals, funeral homes, graves, diseases, or wars will exist; and Israel finally will dwell in peace. Nothing will enter the holy city “that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life” (v. 27). And those whose names are written there will “reign forever and ever” in the future city (22:5).

Until then, we must urge unbelievers to trust in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through His Son, Messiah Jesus, so they, too, may share in our glorious hope. As many commentators have pointed out, the Bible’s narrative of human existence begins in a garden, but it ends in a brilliant city—the New Jerusalem on a new earth.

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**ENDNOTES**


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**Mike Stallard**

is the director of International Ministries and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel.
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THE FALL: MYTHOLOGY OR HISTORY?

The book of Genesis records the fall of man—the event where humanity rebelled against God and thus exchanged an innocent nature for a sinful nature, immortality for mortality. Archaeology reveals that an Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) myth shares a similar story. Skeptics claim the similarities nullify the historicity of the biblical account, but the ANE literature actually strengthens the case for the biblical, historical fall of man.

According to Scripture, God created Adam (Hebrew for “man”) and Eve, granted them immortality, and commanded them to eat of every tree in the Garden of Eden except one. Satan (in the form of a serpent) deceived Eve to violate God’s command and to eat from the forbidden tree. Thus Adam and Eve disobeyed God and forfeited immortal life (Gen. 3:1–19).

In the Babylonian story of Adapa (c. 1300 BC), the god Ea created Adapa, whose name means “man.” Ea granted Adapa wisdom (not immortality). One day, after Adapa committed a violation against the sky-god Anu, Anu called Adapa to appear before him. Ea counseled Adapa to show reverence to Anu’s gatekeepers, but not to eat or drink anything Anu offered him. Adapa so pleased Anu’s gatekeepers that Anu decided not to punish Adapa but, rather, to reward him with the gift of immortality. To receive the gift, Adapa had to eat the “bread of life” and drink the “water of life.” But because of Ea’s deception, Adapa refused the gifts; and Anu sent him back to Earth saying, “he had rejected immortality and brought ill upon mankind.”

Although this myth parallels the biblical account in its explanation of why man suffers death, the differences demonstrate that the biblical authors could not have recast their accounts from the myth. Yet the similarities argue for a common historical event.

Like Adam, Adapa was understood to be the first man and divine representative of the creator. Just as Adam was to care for the Garden, so Adapa was to care for Ea’s sanctuary. Just as God placed a “tree of life” in the Garden, so Anu offered Adapa the “bread of life” to gain immortality. Just as the serpent deceived Adam and Eve to disobey God, Ea deceived Adapa into rejecting Anu’s offer. Both were then exiled to experience death as mortals.

The striking similarities reveal that the historical event of the fall of man was passed down after the Noahic Flood (chaps. 6—9) and remained in the common culture. Years later, after the dispersion at Babel (11:1—9), different cultures adapted the event to fit local mythologies. So, contrary to the claims of skeptics, the Babylonian Adapa myth actually reinforces the truth of the historical, biblical account of the fall of man.

There are also stark differences between the accounts that betray any claim the biblical authors might have borrowed from mythology. For example, in the Adapa story, Adapa’s creator god Ea is deceitful and evil, lying to Adapa to keep him from obtaining immortality. The Creator God of Scripture loved Adam, granted him immortality, and desired for him to keep it and live an abundant life.

Both Jesus and the apostle Paul affirmed the Genesis account of the Fall as a literal, historical event. Paul said, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Rom. 5:12; cf. Mt. 19:4; Mk. 10:6; Jn. 8:44; 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:13). Praise God our hope of salvation rests on a firm foundation and on a God who loves us.

ENDNOTES


Randall Price is a university professor, author and coauthor of 30 books, and well-known archaeologist. He is also the founder and president of World of the Bible Ministries (worldofthebible.com) and has taken more than 100 trips to Israel.
The testimony of a new believer in Christ causes other believers to rejoice. Imagine how overjoyed the apostle Paul was to learn of the Thessalonians’ steadfast faith despite their persecution. He rejoiced over them and longed to see them again. But that was not to be.

Soon after the Thessalonians received Christ, Paul fled the city because of great opposition. His soul was in agony as he awaited word on their fate. They were facing great persecution because of their faith in Christ. When word finally arrived from Timothy, Paul rejoiced and praised God.

First Thessalonians 2 closes with Paul reviewing the Thessalonians’ faith, his compassion for them during their persecution, and his crown of rejoicing when they all will be together in the presence of the Lord.

Paul’s Converts

Paul continually thanked God for a number of things concerning the Thessalonians:

For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us [Paul and Silvanus], you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe (v. 13).

The Greek text uses two different words for “receive.” The first (translated “received”) means to receive a message spoken by someone. The second (translated “welcomed” in the NKJV) means to accept the message into the heart as truth. Although the gospel was delivered by a man (Paul), the Thessalonians “received,” or accepted, it as God’s Word.

Paul said the Word “effectively works in you who believe.” God’s Word powerfully transformed the Thessalonians’ lives through the Holy Spirit, turning them from idols to serve the living God (cf. 1:9). Proof of their total commitment was that they “became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus” (2:14). In other words, they imitated Paul and his missionary team’s devotion to Christian living (cf. 1:6), and they imitated the churches in Judea in that they “suffered the same things from [their] own countrymen” (v. 14). Because of their union and communion with Jesus Christ, they suffered persecution and abuse from their own people who opposed their faith, just as believers in Judea suffered extreme persecution at the hands of their unbelieving Jewish brethren.

Paul then launched into a discourse on how viciously many of the Jewish people had treated their own prophets and Jesus Christ Himself: “[They] killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men” (v. 15).

Paul cited three groups that were persecuted and/or murdered: Jesus Christ, the Old Testament prophets, and “us” (Paul and his ministry team). Jesus is cited first because His death was greatest by far. While on Earth, Jesus pointed out that Jewish people killed their own prophets (cf. Mt. 23:34–35, 37; Lk. 11:47–48). In the parable of the wicked vinedressers, He predicted they would be held responsible for His death, as well (Mt. 21:33–41).

Paul knew the Roman governor of Judea, Pontius Pilate, allowed the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, who had prophesied that Gentiles actually would kill Him (Lk. 18:31–33). But the high priest Caiphas, the Jewish body called the Sanhedrin, and Roman ruler Herod Antipas conspired, collaborated, and cooperated in condemning Christ to death. Thus they, too, were responsible. Even the apostle himself persecuted the church before his salvation. That said, we should remember that Christ’s crucifixion was carried out according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts 4:28).

Such persecution did “not please God” and is “contrary [hostile] to all men” (1 Th. 2:15). All persecution (Jewish and Gentile) of Jesus and believers in Him is odious to God, and the persecutors eventually will suffer God’s judgment.

Paul indicated that the Jewish opposition’s goal was to stop the spread of salvation by “forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wraith has come upon them to the uttermost” (v. 16).

It is important to understand that not all Jewish people persecuted believers in Jesus. Many became Christians. In fact, all the apostles were Jewish, as were most of the people in the early church. The persecutors, however, were vicious; and Paul made two points about them:

1. They worked tirelessly to impede Paul and his missionary team from preaching the gospel to Gentiles (cf. Acts 13:45–50; 14:2, 19; 17:5). Their main aim was to deter non-Jews from becoming saved—from experiencing redemption and
deliverance by embracing Jesus as Savior.

2. They were filling up the “measure of their sins” (1 Th. 2:16). That is, they were pouring one sin upon another like one pours liquid into a cup, and they were destined to reap God’s wrath.

Opposition to the gospel has been prevalent for centuries. When the world’s cup of wickedness is full (God alone knows when that will be), God’s judgment will fall. Even in Paul’s day, judgment seemed imminent.

Paul said, “But wrath has come upon them to the uttermost” (v. 16). The words has come indicate God unleashed His wrath in the past on Jewish people who rejected His program for them (see the Hebrew Scriptures; cf. Rom. 9—11), and He will do so in the future until they repent. Jesus predicted a future judgment.

**PAUL’S COMPASSION**

Persecution in Thessalonica forced Paul to leave the city for his own safety: “But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire” (1 Th. 2:17).

The phrase having been taken away from you implies Paul actually was torn away from the Thessalonians. He expressed his separation from them as being orphaned, much like someone is bereft of a parent who dies. Such depth of expression reveals Paul’s anguish, misery, and loneliness. The Thessalonians were extremely dear to him, for they came to the Lord through his preaching. He loved them profoundly. In fact, Paul’s epistles reveal that he bonded with all whom he led to belief in Christ and felt a strong love for them.

Paul thought his separation from the Thessalonians would be “for a short time” and that he would soon return when the persecution passed. But it was not to be. The phrase in presence, not in heart communicates that his heart was still with them. He ached over the loss of their fellowship, and his love for them never quenched his desire to be with them.

The phrase endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire (v. 17) expresses Paul’s diligence and haste to embrace the Thessalonians. He even bared his heart more when he spoke of his “great desire” to see them. But Satan hindered Paul and his team from returning to Thessalonica: “We wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us” (v. 18). How Satan hindered them is not stated.

Satan is a spirit who works in many ways through people and circumstances to accomplish his purposes and to try to disrupt God’s program and impede those serving Him. He has many means available to him, including a host of demonic spirits who try continually to hinder godly endeavors. He is a liar, slanderer, deceiver, accuser, tempter, murderer, false angel of light, the prince of the power of the air, and the god of this world.

The word hinder means “to cut something up” and is used to speak of cutting up a road or making it impassable. How Paul discerned that it was Satan preventing his return to Thessalonica is not stated. Apparently, the indwelling Holy Spirit witnessed to him that the hindrance came from Satan and that God allowed it for a specific reason.

**PAUL’S CROWN**

Paul anticipated his presence with the Thessalonians in the Lord and asked two rhetorical questions to assure them they would be held in high esteem on that day.

First, he asked, “For what [who] is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing?” (v. 19). They were his “hope” (they would fulfill all his expectations for them in their service for Christ), his “joy” (they brought joy to his heart as trophies of God’s grace), and his “crown of rejoicing” (he looked forward to receiving the soul-winner’s crown at the Bema judgment as they looked on). In that day, Paul will glory in what God wrought through his ministry.

Having asked the first question, he answered it with a second question: “Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?” (v. 19). The Thessalonians were Paul’s glory and joy then, and they will be again at the Lord’s coming.

Today there is much talk about mature men mentoring younger men who are going into the ministry. What better mentor could one have than the apostle Paul? And we can appropriate him through an in-depth study of his epistles and his heart for ministry. What was the secret of Paul’s leadership and mentoring?

1. He was a man of integrity in character and conduct.
2. He was trustworthy and truthful, anxious to please God rather than men.
3. He was not authoritarian but, rather, led with tender love.
4. He was not mercenary. He did not minister for money but, rather, paid his own way by working a secular job.
5. He was unselfish, untainted, transparent, and authentic—without reproach in morals, manners, and motives.
6. He was exemplary to all in fulfilling his calling, commission, and commitment to God.

What a model in ministry to imitate!

*by David M. Levy, director of Worldwide Ministry Development and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel*
WHO IS THIS PERSON?

Many people use mirrors. But do they really recognize themselves? Are they using the right type of mirror?

What if you looked in a mirror and were unable to recognize yourself? Unfortunately, this type of thing happens. Sometimes traumatic brain injuries or diseases make it difficult for people to recognize faces, even their own. The condition is known as “face blindness,” and it is a major challenge for those who live with it.

Most of us readily accept the reflection in the mirror looking back at us as our own. We may not like what we see, but once we take inventory, we usually begin the task of making ourselves presentable. Life is messy, and personal grooming is necessary.

Merely looking at our reflection is not vain, but overemphasizing appearance can be dangerous. When the Lord announced, “Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart,” He put us on notice that who we are is far more important than how we look (1 Sam. 16:7).

Since the early days of the church, Christians have struggled with the lure of assessing spiritual maturity based on appearance. Even today we tend to judge godliness based on our personal checklists of visible criteria. Godliness is a character issue, not a method to be learned or a behavior to be modified. Yes, character will be observed, but not always.

Many misjudged Jesus’ character. It’s always more comfortable (and less threatening) to compare ourselves to others, rather than take an honest look in the mirror. Mirrors don’t lie.

The Bible likens itself to a mirror in its unique reflective ability. For those who take the time to look into it, it provides a clear image of our true condition—not physically, but spiritually. God’s Word reveals the thoughts and intents of our hearts (Heb. 4:12). Every time we encounter biblical truth, a spiritual process begins where we are faced with a choice: Will we do something about what was revealed, or will we ignore it (Jas. 1:22–25)?

The book of James illustrates this point with the story of two men: The first saw his face in a mirror, walked away, and basically said, “Forget it!” Why would someone look into God’s mirror and then do nothing about the mess that might be staring back? Do some people have spiritual “face blindness” that blocks their ability to recognize themselves? The biblical cause is clear. “Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (v. 22). The cause is self-deception. The cure is to act, with God’s help, on what you see.

The sin of self-deception is widespread and comes in many forms. The Lord, who searches the heart and tests the mind, declares, “The heart is deceitful above all things . . . who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9.) Yet God knows the secrets of our hearts (Ps. 44:21). And He calls us to recognize spiritual self-deception, which keeps us from recognizing our true condition in the reflective pages of His truth.

James contrasted the self-deceived person with a second man who sees his heart from God’s perspective and does something about it. The result: He is blessed! Being blessed is to experience genuine joy flowing from God’s overwhelming grace and favor. People who live every day in obedient fellowship with Jesus Christ enjoy the tangible benefits of being blessed regardless of their often-difficult circumstances.

The blessed man in James 1:25 followed four principles when he looked at himself in the Word. These simple steps helped him guard his heart from being self-deceived.

ONE: A DESIRE TO LEARN

He “look[ed] into the perfect law of liberty” (v. 25). To “look into” is often translated to “look intently.” It speaks of stooping down to see something that cannot be seen without closer examination. It is used for the angels’ desire to learn about salvation in 1 Peter 1:12.

The “perfect law of liberty” refers to God’s revealed Word. In James’s day, people had the Hebrew Scriptures plus the teaching of Jesus and the apostles. Today we are blessed to have the completed Word of God, which is able both to teach us how to live and correct us when we wander from the path
of righteousness.

When face-to-face with God’s Word, we should lean in to take a closer look at the application and implications for our lives, desiring sincerely to learn the truth about ourselves.

**TWO: A DETERMINATION TO GO THE DISTANCE**

The self-deceived individual in James 1:24 observes himself then leaves. But blessed people look intently then “[continue] in it” (v. 25). They remain in a state of self-examination and learning, regardless of how disturbing their reflections may be. They are determined to see the process through.

They do not view “the perfect law” as a brutal taskmaster or unbearable burden. To them, it is the source of true liberty. They want to know the truth because it sets them free. The Word opens new doors of fellowship with the Savior and teaches them wonderful things about the grace and character of the God in whom they have placed their trust. By submitting to God’s Word, they allow Him to refine them like gold and purge the hidden areas of sin that entangle them; and they grow stronger in their faith.

Are God’s commandments and standards a burden or a joy to be explored? In the busy world in which we live, it is common to have brief encounters in grab-and-go sermons, devotionals, and studies. It is easy to spend more time and energy on what we look like than perfecting who we are.

**THREE: A COMMITMENT TO REMEMBER**

Continuing the comparison, James said one man “immediately forgets what kind of man he was” (v. 24) while the other “is not a forgetful hearer” (v. 25). A self-deceived person neglects what he sees, while a blessed person makes it a priority to remember what he has learned about himself.

Growing up, I attended Christian revivals, retreats, and camps where we were encouraged to consider our spiritual conditions and make a decision. At times, it was a call to put our faith in Jesus’ finished work on the cross for forgiveness and salvation. Other times it was a challenge to believers to repent and commit to living godly lives.

The energy and emotions were always high at those meetings. But, sad to say, many of the decisions were quickly forgotten. Sometimes, when my time in the Word shows me areas I need to correct, I quietly resolve to make the necessary changes, only to have my determination swallowed up by the unruly weeds of life.

True blessing does not come from quick emotional responses to a motivating message or testimony. God calls us to look intently, continue, and never forget who we are and what His grace has done and can do in our lives.

**FOUR: A RESPONSE**

It’s interesting that the blessing promised from responding correctly to God’s Word is only applied when the final principle is implemented: “This one will be blessed in what he does” (v. 25). We are to “be doers of the word, and not hearers only” (v. 22). The blessing comes when we act—whether it means obeying a command, trusting a promise, loving others, or confessing and repenting of our sin.

First John 1:8–9 says, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” We are blessed when we see the truth about ourselves and actively respond in confession. Confession is truly believing and saying the same thing as God about our sins and hearts. When we come to Him honestly, declaring our struggles with sin and self-deception, He meets us with abundant forgiveness and cleansing grace—not with punishment.

Are we among the “face blind” or the blessed? Before entering the holy place in the ancient Tabernacle, the priests would cleanse themselves in a basin made from bronze mirrors. When a priest looked into the basin before dipping his hands, he saw his reflection—a reminder of his need for more than outward cleansing to truly enjoy the blessing of being in the Lord’s presence.

The basin is gone today, but God’s Word remains to give us an even clearer reflection. Someday, when we are finally with Christ, we will be like Him: “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (3:2–3). Until then, we need to make sure we’re not “face blind.”

For study aids and discussion questions regarding this article, go to http://jfs.foi.org.

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Godliness is a character issue, not a method to be learned or a behavior to be modified.

by Clarence Johnson, a Bible teacher and director of The Friends of Israel Institute of Jewish Studies
Israel Hosts Annual Bible Run

If you’re a runner and love Israel, you may be interested in signing up for the third annual Bible Run on October 6, a reenactment of the first-ever recorded marathon—the trek of a Jewish man from the tribe of Benjamin who ran from Afek to Shiloh to tell Eli the high priest the Ark of the Covenant had been captured (1 Sam. 4:12, 17).

The run takes place during the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), when Jews and Christians around the world flock to Israel. It includes a full marathon (26.2 miles), a half marathon (13.1 miles), a 10K (6.2 miles), and a 5K (3.1 miles). Three thousand people ran in 2016, and more are expected to participate in 2017.

The run originated with Yosef Yekutieli, founder of the Maccabiah games, the Olympics for Jewish athletes. Determined to check the veracity of the biblical story, Yekutieli drove from Afek—now located in the bustling city of Rosh HaAyin—to Shiloh, a modern town and ancient historical site in the heart of Israel’s Benjamin region. He was astounded to find the number on his odometer read 42 kilometers (26.2 miles), the exact distance of the modern marathon.

In 1969, a handful of men resurrected the Bible Run as an informal event, but it folded after four years due to lack of interest.

In 2015, a group of Israelis turned it into a national event. They shut down the main highways leading from Rosh HaAyin to Shiloh for one day, and hundreds of people “ran history” and relived the story. In the following two years, participants increased to thousands, including runners from foreign countries.

Today’s route runs from the modern high-tech park of Afek just outside Rosh HaAyin, down Route 5 from Tel Aviv to the city of Ariel, then southward to Shiloh along Route 60.

The 2017 Bible Run promises to be bigger than ever. Organizers are working with American Friends of Ariel to allow runners from around the world to relive history.

For more information, visit www.friendsofariel.org/2016/10/biblemarathon.
FRENCH COURT: JUDEA, SAMARIA BELONG TO ISRAEL

At the recent Mideast peace conference in Paris, a 2013 ruling of the Court of Appeal of Versailles—which acknowledged Israel as the legal occupant of Judea and Samaria (the “West Bank”)—undercut the conference’s goal to “once more depict Israeli settlements as a grave violation of international law,” The Wall Street Journal reported.

The French court’s decision, which the media largely has ignored for years, concluded Arab-Palestinians have no international, legal rights to Judea and Samaria and that Israel legally occupies the land beyond the 1967 line.

The decision followed the Palestine Liberation Organization’s (PLO) lawsuit against French companies Alstom and Veolia for building a light rail system through Jerusalem, which the PLO claims Israel occupies illegally. The court rejected the PLO’s arguments and ruled Israel maintains legal rights to the land.

Although the decision does not affect international law, its use of international law to clarify the legal reality is telling, according to French lawyer Jean-Patrick Grumbrecht. “It is the first time since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 that an independent, non-Israeli court has been called upon to examine the legal status of ‘West Bank’ territories under international law, beyond the political claims of the parties,” Grumbrecht said. “Israel has real rights in Judea and Samaria, . . . [and] its decision to build a light rail or anything else in the area is legal.”

From news reports

U.S., ISRAEL FIGHT CYBERTERRORISM

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed new legislation improving American-Israeli cooperation in global cybersecurity to fight cyberterrorism. “Cybersecurity is the preeminent national security issue of the Information Age. Working together with our allies will be essential to preserving our collective defense in this new domain,” U.S. Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI) said.

The United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2017 creates a cybersecurity grant program for joint research and development projects. Steven Stalinsky, executive director of the Middle East Media Research Institute, said the legislation will benefit both nations in fighting their shared enemies in the cyber realm, “consisting of both jihad groups as well as hacktivist groups . . . who also target the Jewish community worldwide online.”

From news reports

NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNED

For the first time since the Six-Day War, 250 new acres have been attached to Jerusalem, completing a multiyear process enabling the municipality to build a new residential neighborhood in Jerusalem with more than 2,000 housing units.

The area was once an agricultural area of Kibbutz Ramat Rachel. The municipality recently received an official letter from the Interior Minister announcing transfer of the demarcated area. Consequently, the Jerusalem municipality, together with the Housing Ministry and the Israeli Lands Authority, plan to build in this area the Mordot Armona neighborhood.

From news reports

ISRAEL’S ICONIC PHOTOGRAPHER, DAVID RUBINGER, DIES AT 92

World-renowned photographer David Rubinger, the man whose camera chronicled the history of the Jewish state for Time magazine, died in March in Jerusalem. “Think of a photograph from Israel,” wrote Karl Vick in Time, “and chances are it was taken by David Rubinger.”

His most famous photo is of the Israeli paratroopers gazing up at the Western Wall minutes after it was captured during the 1967 Six-Day War (see page 12). Wrote Isabel Kershner in The New York Times, “Mr. Rubinger recalled that he had to lie down in the narrow space between the wall and some houses to shoot it, then rushed home to develop the film.”

“Through his photography, David eternalized history as it will be forever etched in our memories,” said Israeli President Reuven Rivlin. Rubinger’s images and autobiography are compiled in the book Israel Through My Lens: Sixty Years as a Photojournalist.

From news reports

SECRET LETTERS REVEAL NAZI HORRORS

Some 27 secret letters written in urine from the women’s concentration camp in Ravensbruck with information about medical experiments conducted on prisoners have been gifted to a small museum in Poland where they will undergo preservation work.

The letters, gifted to the “Under the Clock” Martyr Museum in Lublin, came from the family of one of its authors, Krystyna Czyz-Wilgat. Texts were written using a thin linden stick. As a result of an acid reaction with the paper, the urine lost its color after a short time and then became invisible. “The letters were ironed and the writing turned brown,” explained Barbara Oratowska, the curator of the museum.

The encrypting messaging now makes public the list of 74 women from Lublin who were subjected to medical experiments by Nazi doctors in Ravensbruck, such as being injected with gangrene to test new drugs.

The letters were sent between 1943 and 1944. Between 1939 and 1945, approximately 132,000 female prisoners passed through Ravensbruck, including Corrie ten Boom, a Dutch evangelical Christian whose family hid Jewish people before being betrayed and deported to concentration camps.

From news reports
I am glad to inform you that I am alive and back home. There were times when it looked as if I would not come out alive. Many of my close buddies fell in battle.

At one time, the Jordanian artillery pinned us down for 20 hours. Finally, the order came to attack. My task as a soldier in the Israel Defense Forces is to go before the troops and clear the minefields so others can follow. We went forward under the heavy fire of the Arab Legion—the best Arab fighters. The first three nights we could not sleep at all until we reached Nabi Samuel, a fortress built around the grave of the prophet Samuel.

There we were allowed to sleep for four hours. We had not been permitted to take off our shoes for two weeks, so the skin on our feet was burned due to the heat and heavy boots. I used the water I was given to drink to wash my feet. Then I fell down and slept. The four hours passed as if they were four minutes.

When I awoke, I saw several soldiers writing little prayer notes and sticking them into the cracks between the stones of the grave of the prophet Samuel. Some of my buddies noticed I did not write any notes. One asked me, “What is the matter with you? Why don’t you pray to the prophet Samuel and thank him that you are still alive?”

I said, “If I were to pray to every prophet, I would have no time left. Instead, I pray to the living God, the God to whom the prophet Samuel himself prayed.”

Then the soldier said, “You are different from the others. What do you believe in?”

“I believe in God and in the Messiah, the Son of David, who came to deliver His people from their sins and is coming again.”

Well, that really started something. One asked, “Why did they call a man like you into military service?”

“I have been a soldier in the Israeli army for the past 20 years,” I answered. “I fought in our War of Independence in 1948. And as far as fighting for Israel is concerned, nobody has ever questioned

by Zvi Kalisher
If I were to pray to every prophet, I would have no time left. Instead, I pray to the living God, the God to whom the prophet Samuel himself prayed.

my citizenship or my qualifications."

Then some of the other men said they also were waiting for the coming of the Messiah ben [son of] David.

As soon as they mentioned the Messiah, a number of soldiers started singing the well-known credo, “I believe in the coming of the Messiah speedily and in our time.”

The song was wafted by the winds across the hills, and the echo went on and on. Some had tears in their eyes as they repeated, “I believe in the coming of the Messiah. I believe in the coming of the Messiah.”

I said, “I, too, have joy in my heart because of the Messiah because He loved me and gave His life for me.”

I sat down with one of the men who sang about the Messiah, and we ate breakfast together. He put his arm around my shoulder and said, “We are comrades in the same battle for the freedom of Israel.”

He shared his water with me since I had used mine. That was the greatest gift he could have offered me, since water was very scarce.

It is good to be back home with my wife and children and especially our new son, whose name is David.

—The Friends of Israel Archives, written during the Six-Day War in 1967
All seemed lost for the Jewish people. They were exiled to a foreign land, Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Temple lay in ruins. Yet even in one of Israel’s darkest moments, God raised up a prophet—Daniel—to give His people hope and to model how a servant of the Lord can live righteously in a wicked world.

Our sovereign God never abandoned His people. He spoke through Daniel to comfort the Jewish people with the truth that one day He would restore Israel’s joy and establish an everlasting Kingdom with the one true King—the exalted Messiah Jesus. Join us as we study the book of Daniel and apply its truths to our lives.

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