



The homeless of Tel Aviv receive home-cooked meals while Ron Cantor (middle), elder of Congregation Tiferet Yeshua, gives them hope for now and eternity.

## PROJECT FEED TEL AVIV

By Moti Cohen

**I**n the darkest places, the light shines the brightest.

Congregation Tiferet Yeshua sits on the border between Tel Aviv's booming financial center and

southern Tel Aviv, home to some of the poorest, most marginalized and needy communities in the country. When we began going out into the streets several years ago to witness and pray for people, we were faced with the dire situation of many who were close to our congregational facilities. God put

it on our hearts to reach out to them, so in December 2017, we began Project Feed Tel Aviv. We prepared pots of warm, home-cooked meals and headed out to Tel Aviv's central bus station—one of the worst areas in Israel, dubbed "Israel's capitol of crime"—a place where the homeless and drug addicted





end up along with illegal foreign workers and refugees from Africa. It's a place of brothels where both women and men who are enslaved by the sex industry meet their clients and drug dealers. In short, it's a place where sin, darkness and hopelessness reign. Since our commission is to show the love of God to our city, we decided this was the place that needed us most.

Every Thursday we bring everything we've prepared to a soup kitchen in one of the hardest areas. We're there from the early evening until late with a nourishing meal, warm clothes, worship songs and the Gospel of Hope. On Fridays, a couple from our congregation, together with other volunteers, cook dinner and serve it out in the open for those who don't have a place to eat. Friday night dinners in Jewish culture are a symbol of family, warmth, and togetherness. So, every Friday evening, in the middle of a public park next to the central bus station, rain or shine, the homeless can come and have a home-cooked Friday night meal and be ministered to with love, care, prayer and the Good News.

#### A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

Having met so many people this last year, we've found the common denominator between all of them is their hopelessness; people are convinced God has cursed them and condemned them to live as the dregs of society. Hundreds of times we've prayed with people to encourage them and to ask God to reveal His love to their hearts and to show them how valuable they are to Him. One time we prayed for a drug-addicted woman who was utterly broken; she had been through countless hospitals and rehab centers and felt there was no one left to help her. She had nearly passed out on a park bench, literally crying out in her pain and misery. We witnessed to her about the power of God to save her, and when we prayed, an amazing peace came over her. The look on her face completely changed. A few days later we were back in the area, and heard she had died. I don't know if she had passed away that same night after we witnessed to her and she prayed with

◀ Moments after taking a hit of "Nice guys," a cheap, toxic high from roach poison, mixed with tobacco, this man went into a zombie-like state.

◀ On any given night you see people shooting up drugs on the streets.

◀ Volunteers handing out hot cups of tea on a cold winter night and sharing a message of hope.

▶ Volunteers from Tiferet Yeshua share a hot drink and the Good News with Tel Aviv's homeless.



us, but I do know that the Lord sent us that day in order to bring her a critical message of hope.

#### A MAN LOOKING FOR A PROSTITUTE FINDS A WORD FROM GOD

Since drugs and prostitution are mainstays for the area where we minister, we run into people coming to purchase drugs or sex. One evening, a man who had come to the area to find a prostitute was intrigued by our presence and asked us who we were and what we were doing. After witnessing to him and sharing with him from scripture

for quite awhile, this man, noticeably touched by our conversation, said, "I came here tonight because of my yetzer harah, (evil nature) looking for sex, but I received God's word instead." He got in his car and said he was going home.

#### A HOMELESS MUSLIM MAN GETS HUNGRY FOR GOD

Almost every time we're in the area, we run into Samir (not his real name), an elderly homeless man who usually sits in a wheelchair at a nearby junction, begging. I once asked him how did he, a Muslim, end up in Tel Aviv. Apparently, he was homeless

in his village too, adding, "In my village, I was completely ignored and got no help whatsoever. At least here in Tel Aviv people have mercy on me and help me." Samir would always talk to us and be pleasant, but he was completely indifferent to the gospel. Also, many of the drug dealers in the area are Muslim, and he was careful not to attract their attention by getting into conversations with us about faith.

Then in December 2018, a group of students from the Bible School Glaubenzentrum in Germany were serving with us at the outreach when one of the young women saw Samir and





felt she was supposed to pray for him. As we stood there on that cold, drizzly street corner, the young woman prayed for Samir in English, I translated, and Samir said he was being filled and surrounded with warmth. Ever since that day, he seeks us out and wants to hear more about Yeshua. I see him every week, and his hunger for God is growing stronger. He no longer cares who hears him talking about “Yeshua with those Jews.” He is not far from the Kingdom of God.

#### OUR VISION FOR PROJECT FEED TEL AVIV IN 2019

This year we want to expand our outreach significantly to reach even more people. Right now, the space where we're preparing all the food for the outreaches has reached its limits. Our goal is to serve one thousand poor and needy each month in our city with a warm meal, fresh vegetables or fruit, something to drink, and, in the cold winter months, warm blankets and clothing.

**\$1.50 will feed one person, \$15.00 ten people.** Through Project Feed Tel

Aviv the Gospel will continue to go forth with the love and mercy of the Messiah to the most needy and will ultimately sound the loudest witness of Yeshua in our city.

*'I was naked and you clothed Me;  
I was sick and you visited Me;  
I was in prison and you came to Me.'*  
Matthew 25:36

Partner today with Project Feed Tel Aviv to bless the poorest of the poor in our city. We need you! ■



Volunteers from our congregation sit at the communal table together with the men from the street, making it more like a family meal where they not only get a nourishing, home-cooked meal, but they can open up and share what's on their hearts, and be ministered to and prayed for. (Most everyone on the street has been exploited and abused in some way.)



From left: Eliezer, wife Hemda, David Judelovitch, a former student of Eliezer who became one of the leading educators bringing Hebrew to the schools of the settlements.

## ELIEZER BEN YEHUDA - PART 7 THE SECRET TO HIS SUCCESS

Dreamer, Visionary, Teacher, Mentor, Lexicographer, Statesman, Organizer, Example, Strategist, Scholar, Fighter, Humble Lover of His People, Student of the Bible

By Shira Sorko-Ram

As the Great War spread to Palestine in 1914, the Ottoman Turks looked for spies and informers among the Jews of Jerusalem and the settlements. They saw Zionism as an enemy and Ben Yehuda was obviously at the top of their list. In fact, if it had not been for a bribe from the philanthropist Baron Rothschild eleven years before, Ben Yehuda would have been hung for treason. His son, Ben Zion, who had changed his journalistic name to Itamar Ben Avi, discreetly closed down their family newspaper as

rumors spread that he might be executed as a traitor.

As the war continued, the Turks demolished the Jewish settlements, taking their animals and tools, cutting down the trees planted by the pioneers and destroying their crops. For Ben Yehuda, his dreams were crashing. For whole days he would not eat.

His wife Hemda was terrified that some Turkish officer might confiscate the manuscripts and notes for the remaining volumes of his dictionary, so she secretly took them to the American consul, who assured her they would be as safe as if in a vault in New York.

With no charity arriving for the ultra-Orthodox Jews and no banks open, famine and poverty, followed by epidemics such as typhus, infested the land. Incredibly, at the same time, a terrible plague of locusts covered the country, devouring what few crops were left.

Hemda was so worried for Eliezer's health and safety that she suggested they leave for America during the war. In the mayhem of Jerusalem, he had simply stopped working on his dictionary. In New York, Hemda explained, he could work on his dictionary in peace. But Ben Yehuda would hear none of it. He would stay with his people, especially in the current dire circumstances.



However, other Zionist leaders in the country were also worried about him and saw no reason to endanger the life of a national treasure. So they decided, together with Hemda, to officially appoint him to travel to the United States for the critically important mission of persuading the American Jewish community to stand with Britain, and not Germany, in the war.

Most Jews in Palestine hoped Britain would ultimately win the war, but they needed America. If, God forbid, Germany were to win, its ally, the Ottoman Turks would also win, resulting in the end of the Zionist dream for Jews to have their own nation in ancient Israel.

#### TURKS REFUSE BEN YEHUDA'S EXIT PERMIT

Finally, Ben Yehuda reluctantly agreed to go to America. But the challenge now became, how could he and his family sneak out of the country? Everyone knew the Turks, for their own reasons, would not allow him to leave. Nevertheless, they headed for Jaffa in the dead of night to take a boat. But the ultra-Orthodox reported their escape to the Turks who caught them when they were already on a barge heading for an offshore ship. On the second attempt the Ottoman military commander in the Haifa bay stamped Eliezer's permit, "Dangerous Journalist, not permitted to leave from any Palestine Port!" and sent them packing back to Jerusalem.

The third time, two of Eliezer's close Arab friends took the military commander out for a long, lazy supper while the wanted man and his family hopped on a boat half full of Jaffa oranges. It was only half full because the Jewish farmer thought it more important to get Ben Yehuda out of the country than to sell his oranges—an enormous economic sacrifice in those difficult days.

#### MEETING FEDERATION OF AMERICAN ZIONISTS

In America, Ben Yehuda was wined and dined like never before in his life. Many renowned Jews already knew

Eliezer and Hemda, because distinguished scholars and politicians and leaders from around the world continually passed through Ben Yehuda's Jerusalem home. So upon their arrival in the U.S., a large reception was arranged for Ben Yehuda to make a speech.

His passion and clarity of the dangers, challenges and possibilities for the Jews of the Land of Israel won the day. He pressed hard: "We Jews," he said, "must show ourselves worthy to be entrusted with our own destiny." In attendance was Dr. Louis Brandeis, confidante to President Woodrow Wilson and the first Jew to ever serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. He asked Eliezer to give the same speech to America's premiere Jewish leaders sympathetic to Zionism. Three days later, these leaders declared themselves on the side of the Allies—an incredibly important win, which ultimately helped lead the United States to join the Allies.

#### FOUR YEARS OF CONCENTRATED WORK ON DICTIONARY

The affluent U.S. Ambassador for the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, arranged a home for the Ben Yehuda's and a special room in the New York Public Library with all the books he needed to work on his dictionary. From 9:00am - 6:00pm, Eliezer was able to work, non-stop, with no worry of food or shelter, and no harassing Orthodox or Turks at his door. Even though his previous notes were stashed away in the American Consulate in Jerusalem, he was able to complete most of his research for the remaining letters of the alphabet!

A massive celebration at Carnegie Hall was organized for Eliezer's 60th birthday. He was praised by one speaker after another—likening him to the prophets of ancient Israel, who were often unpopular, but always true to their calling. And to top it off, America's Jewish community gave them the princely sum of \$10,000 to build their own home in Jerusalem!

#### BRANDEIS SPEAKS WITH PRESIDENT ABOUT ISRAEL

But Ben Yehuda knew he had one more task to fulfill. He must take advantage of his friendship with Judge Brandeis while he had the opportunity and implore him to use all his influence to convince President Wilson to recognize the legitimate rights of the Jews to a national life in their ancient homeland. Unsure, Brandeis asked Ben Yehuda if he actually thought Palestine's Jewish community had enough of an infrastructure to actually establish a sovereign state.



U.S. Supreme Court Judge  
Dr. Louis Brandeis

Credit: Wikimedia

Ben Yehuda answered, "Absolutely!" He explained that there was a vibrant generation of both young immigrants and those already born in the land. And he introduced his son, Ben Zion, who was immediately scooped up to be a spokesman for Israel to Jewish groups across America. So Brandeis opened up the subject with the president who was also quite incredulous about the viability of a Jewish state. Brandeis repeated what Ben Yehuda had told him—especially of the capable new generation of native Jews born and raised in Israel—referencing Ben Zion as an example.

#### BILLY SUNDAY AND BENNY SATURDAY

For the strangest of reasons, President Wilson thought about Billy Sunday, the great American evangelist who happened to be in Washington, D.C. at that very moment, preaching the Gospel. Wilson told Brandeis if he could get Ben Zion on the stage to talk about Israel from a Biblical standpoint, the president would send him as a delegate to a conference to sort out the boundaries of nations after the terrible war. It happened! Billy Sunday, giving the stage to the young man from Jerusalem, said, "Here is a true Israelite from the land of the Bible! Won't you welcome—Benny Saturday!"

Billy Sunday gave him a big hug, patted his back vigorously, and said, "Ben, tell them the truth!" Ben Zion quoted Ezekiel 37, and told his huge Christian audience that God was raising up from the dead a new revived nation of Jews in the Holy Land. The crowd roared its approval and shouted "Benny Saturday! Benny Saturday!"

And that is how Ben Zion, whose name was now Itamar Ben-Avi, became a representative of the Jewish Zionist movement sent by President Wilson to the Conference of Small Nations at the Paris Peace Conference.

Most importantly, 21,000 Christians at Billy Sunday's tent meeting saw with their own eyes, the resurrection of the Jewish people as told by Ben Yehuda's son, "the first Hebrew child," some 30 years before the state was born.

#### THE BIRTH OF THE BALFOUR DECLARATION

Nevertheless, momentum was building for the establishment of a Jewish state. England was winning the war. There were a number of Christian men in the British cabinet sympathetic to the Jewish people. Lord Balfour asked President Woodrow Wilson his thoughts concerning a Jewish state. Wilson was favorable. On November 2, 1917, Balfour announced that the government of Britain looked with favor on the establishment of "a national home for the Jewish people."



Evangelist Billy Sunday

Itamar Ben Avi—originally  
Ben Zion Ben Yehuda

Credit: Wikimedia

#### Evangelist Billy Sunday introduced Ben Yehuda's son to 21,000 Christians at his tent meeting.

Ben Yehuda, though still in the U.S. was ecstatic! He responded with a paraphrase of Psalm 126: "T'was like a dream when the Lord restored Zion from its bondage."

Just two months later, the Turks surrendered the city of Jerusalem to the devout Christian, General Edmund Allenby.

#### GOING HOME

Ben Yehuda wanted one thing and one thing only—to go home. But it was several months before they could find passage on any ship. Hundreds saw him off at the New York pier.

When their ship arrived in Egypt, they

took a train to the Palestinian border. At the front, the new British governor came to greet Ben Yehuda with an outstretched hand, saying with a broad smile on his face, "Shalom alechem [Peace be unto you]!" With all his visionary dreams, Eliezer never imagined a British authority would greet him in Hebrew!

Back in Jerusalem, reality hit. People wouldn't speak to him because he had "fled" during the war. His house had been stripped because his secretary had sold furniture for himself and his family to survive. Only Eliezer's library had not been touched as it had remained locked. But all the other rooms were filled with squatters, and it took a court case to get them out. Most important, his dictionary manuscripts were safely retrieved from the American Consulate.

#### SAN REMO—ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS EVER

But one of the greatest events of Eliezer's entire life was about to unfold—the convening of the San Remo Conference. Although much less recognized and celebrated today than the Balfour Declaration, San Remo was far more important. True, the Balfour Declaration was the first public statement



of support for the idea of establishing a national homeland for the Jewish people. But now 52 nations were gathered together to discuss the division of lands according to winners and losers.

The Jews of Palestine were interested in one thing. What was San Remo doing about a Jewish state? Again, Eliezer wasn't able to eat, sleep or stand still. Not even to work on his dictionary. Then one morning Itamar came running into the house with a cable and announced that 52 nations had unanimously approved a British mandate over Palestine—to be governed along the principles set forth in the Balfour Declaration!!!

### "I HAVE ACCOMPLISHED MY PURPOSE"

Eliezer could not contain his joy. According to his grandson's book, *Fulfillment of Prophecy by Eliezer Ben Yehuda II*, he felt this was all the fulfillment of prophecy. The Messianic days were at hand. He exclaimed, "Now I have accomplished the purpose of my life, and I can die peacefully!"

The San Remo Resolution of April 1920, was certainly much more important than the Balfour Declaration in

### No nation was ever "legalized" more than Israel!

Of course the haters of Zion who claim Israel is illegitimate never bring up the subject of the internationally legal resolution of San Remo. The *Congress of the United States* then endorsed a joint resolution with *The League of Nations* on June 30, 1922, "in favor of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." Yet because of constant Arab violence, it was only on November 29, 1947 the *United Nations* voted to establish a Jewish state in the ancient land of Israel!

terms of international law. Think of it! Fifty two states ratified the Balfour Declaration and mandated that Britain prepare the way for a Jewish state. Moreover, on July 24, 1922, the League of Nations ratified the San Remo Declaration!

### HEBREW BECOMES AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Miracles continued to happen. Great Britain appointed Sir Herbert Samuel, a Jew, to be the British High Commissioner of the British Mandate. Soon after he arrived, Samuel invited Eliezer and Hemda to be his official guests for Sabbath services and lunch. He asked Ben Yehuda if he would teach him and his children Hebrew! It was then Samuel revealed he would officially announce that Hebrew would be one of the three legal languages of his government, along with English and Arabic. It happened on June 11, 1920. Eliezer's joy knew no end.

Samuel did warn Ben Yehuda that now he would have to quickly come up with a whole lot of new words—like hospitals, health clinics, wire service, coffee shops, restaurants, and various government agencies. These were glorious days for Eliezer! Many of Palestine's Jews were convinced their rebirthed nation was just around the corner.

### ARAB VIOLENCE AND THE "WHITE PAPER"

But there were yet many challenges for the Jews of Palestine before that day would come. During Samuel's five years of service, Arab violence and out-of-control riots convinced British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to deliver his tragic "White Paper" on June 3, 1922, declaring that over the next five years, only 75,000 Jews could immigrate to the Holy Land and after that, none would be permitted.

This was terrible news. Chaim Weizmann, the famous chemist who had a great influence on the creation of the Balfour Declaration, went to Israel and realized the Jews were not taking advantage of this small window of opportunity to immigrate to Israel. Jews were not immigrating for fear of the Arab riots.



Dr. Chaim Weizmann, last person to visit Ben Yehuda as they discussed how to urge Jews to immigrate to the Land of Israel. He became the State of Israel's first President.

Weizmann met with Ben Yehuda for several hours. He pleaded with Eliezer to write another clarion call for Jews to come home. No one but Ben Yehuda could pen such a passionate plea and this call was extremely urgent. "The time to come is NOW!" Weizmann implored. "The gates are open, and our people are not coming back. This is an opportune moment that will not last."

Ben Yehuda was worn out. He was coughing constantly, and each bloody cough further weakened him. But when Weizmann insisted, Ben Yehuda answered, "You are the leader. Your wish is a command. I shall write it for you."

For three days, Ben Yehuda tried to write an article. But it wouldn't come. His mind was blank. Hemda came to his study at midnight and told him he could write the next day, but now he must sleep. He lay down on a nearby couch. But in a short while, he called Hemda. He was having trouble breathing. The call for help was instant, and soon five doctors were caring for him while the children gathered around. He was given oxygen and for a minute his eyes brightened and he said in Hebrew, "I believe!" He sank back onto the couch where he was resting. In a few minutes he was gone. It was December 16, 1922. He was 64 years old.

### FIRST STATE FUNERAL OF JEWISH "NATION"

Suddenly his greatness was recognized! At his funeral, 30,000 Jews and Arabs followed the procession to his grave on the Mount of Olives. Settlers from around the entire country came—even the ultra-Orthodox. It was truly the first state funeral of the Jewish nation! Palestine was ordered to observe three days of national mourning.

The Jews of Palestine would have to wait another quarter century to see their nation birthed. But all the schools in Palestine were already teaching in Hebrew. Eliezer and Hemda had produced five volumes of his dictionary. And he had prepared the material for another eleven volumes. The courts, the theater, business, society and public affairs were being conducted in Hebrew in the Jewish community.

### WHAT WAS HIS SECRET?

Eliezer Ben Yehuda lived 41 years with deadly tuberculosis that even killed Devora, his first wife of only 10 years, from that same disease. Three of his children died a couple of months later from a pandemic attack of flu. He lost two more children through disease from his second wife, Hemda. The ultra-Orthodox and the Ottoman Turkish authorities made his life hell. After ten years of blood, sweat and tears in Jerusalem, very few Jews spoke Hebrew as their mother tongue.

He lived through setback after setback trying to create a Hebrew dictionary for his Jewish people. He and his family lived in abject poverty and want, except for the last seven years of his life. All this gives just a glimpse of his struggles and disappointments.

What gave him the ability to survive and succeed facing such crushing misfortunes?

What drove this man to such heroic heights?

The vision. It was the vision.

He shared the answer with his family years before:

*"I had a vision, and in my vision I was removed from Eastern Europe from the cold misery of the winter and passed onto the passage of the Jordan by Jericho where the children of Israel passed over. I was walking towards the water and a voice sounded in my ears and it said, 'The redemption of Israel is in its land and its language!'"*

Who could have given him this vision but God? ■

*Principle Sources: Fulfillment of Prophecy, Eliezer Ben Yehuda, by Eliezer Ben Yehuda (grandson) 2008; Tongue of the Prophets, The Life Story of Eliezer Ben Yehuda by Robert St. John 1952; <https://goo.gl/MVnMUK>; <https://goo.gl/8r29uN>*

Next Month: Epilogue



Eliezer Ben Yehuda, 1858 - 1922. The night of his death, Hemda covered him with a flag containing the Star of David, given to him by the American Jewish community during his four-year "exile" from Jerusalem.





## Tiferet Yeshua's Passover Outreach

By Tamar Afriat

For virtually all Israelis, Jewish holidays are an important part of people's lives, a time for connecting with family and friends around elaborate holiday meals. In the lives of many Israelis who don't consider themselves religious, the holidays serve as a cultural touchstone; most understand they are partaking in thousands-year-old biblically-mandated ceremonies which convey a deep connection to their history and identity as Jews. Of all the Jewish holidays during the year, Passover is unequivocally the most universally observed. On the one hand, the Passover Seder is the quintessential Jewish experience: family fellowship with an abundance of food and blessings. On

the other hand, it is imbued with deep biblical significance as each element in the meal recounts an aspect of the Exodus story.

For believers in Yeshua, the Passover has an even deeper spiritual significance: our Lord Yeshua is the Passover lamb, the Passover Seder is the Last Supper, and the traditional elements of the Seder meal speak of Yeshua the Messiah in amazingly significant ways. Every

year, Tiferet Yeshua hosts a subsidized Passover Seder—participants pay a minimal fee, which is a great blessing to those for whom hosting a Passover meal is a financial burden. For believers, it is a place to share the holiday with their spiritual family and provides a place for those who don't have a place to celebrate the holiday. For the many non-believing family members and friends who attend, it is an awesome opportunity for them to connect with believers and hear the Gospel in the context of the traditional Passover Seder they know and love! Every year we have 80 to 90 participants of whom about 35% are non-believers—most of whom are hearing the Gospel for the first time. It's an incredible opportunity to share the Jewish Messiah through our most prominent Jewish holiday! ■

*Tamar is worship leader and wife of Pastor Gil Afriat of Tiferet Yeshua.*

**Sharing the Jewish Messiah, the fulfillment of the Passover Feast**



## APRIL 9 ELECTIONS:

Who will be Israel's new Prime Minister?

We are electing a prime minister on April 9. Our current Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, was recently indicted for bribery, fraud and breach of trust, allegedly offering favors in order to get good news coverage for himself and bad coverage for his political opponents. He is said to have received hundreds of thousands of shekels in cigars and champagne in exchange for giving friends and relatives business benefits. However, conviction is many months away, and not at all assured.

Netanyahu's present coalition is made up of mainly Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox parties. These conservatives believe Judea and Samaria is promised to the Jewish people by God, and so they will not accept a Palestinian State on central Israel's doorstep.

Unfortunately, they are also very anti-Messianic and spend much time and tax money harassing Jewish believers in their businesses and especially working to deny believers the right to immigrate to Israel. All Jews in the world have automatic rights to immigrate and receive Israeli citizenship—except those who believe in Yeshua.

The ultra-Orthodox, which now number about one million Israelis, constantly drag the Israeli economy down by extracting huge amounts of tax money in exchange for their partnership with Netanyahu's coalition. They use the funds to pay themselves stipends, as only about 50% of Orthodox men work and the rest spend a lifetime studying rabbinical literature in their yeshivas. And their population continues to grow! Most Israelis understandably feel very negative about the Orthodox appropriating such vast sums of money.

On the other hand, Israelis admit

there is no one like Netanyahu with his brilliant handling of the world outside of the country. Who doesn't know we certainly have enemies in every direction. Yet Netanyahu has done wonders.

It would appear to me, that most likely Netanyahu's type of corruption is unfortunately common among politicians in general here. All want good media coverage. All would like to do favors for friends, etc. But the press leans to the left, the media to the far left, so no sin of Netanyahu is left uncovered. Quite a lot of citizens are simply tired of hearing about his corruption in the media day after day.

**Few Israelis have the stomach to see Gaza II rise up a few miles from Israel's largest cities.**

From the party center left, we have General Benny Gantz who is well liked, well respected and fresh out of the army. In fact, Israelis have strong faith in the values and honesty of the IDF. Gantz has joined together with a well-known center left ex-journalist, Yair Lapid, to create the Blue and White party. No one knows exactly what Gantz stands for, but he is hinting that he would not be interested in creating a Palestinian state. (The "normal" Left in Israel is nowhere near the Left's extreme dogma of the U.S. or Europe.)

The Blue and White would most likely give more religious freedom to non-Orthodox citizens – like Messianic Jews. In fact, the Orthodox hate Yair Lapid because of his anti-Orthodox stance. And believe it or not, both of these men are considered clean and honest. But Gantz as a politician is an unknown.

Meanwhile, the mountain of challenges in Israel knows no end. How to keep Iran from developing a nuclear weapon with which they have promised to wipe out Israel. How to deal with Hamas and the Palestinian Authority, both of whose goals are to replace the State of Israel. How to deal with the rising anti-Semitism in Europe—especially France. Already 55,000 Jews have left France for Israel, and the Jewish state is preparing to receive another 200,000. How to deal with President Trump and Jared Kushner if they demand that Israel divide Jerusalem and give the West Bank to the Palestinians.

How to stay prepared in case Hezbollah decides it's time for another war. How to influence the United States to recognize the Golan Heights as belonging to Israel (part of Israel's inheritance according to the Torah). How to bring more Arab and African nations to recognize Israel as a legitimate state.

Perhaps the biggest of all challenges is just what should Israel do about Judea and Samaria? Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas is 82 and ill. No one knows what will happen, except that if an actual election is held in the West Bank, the chances are huge that Hamas will win as they did in Gaza. After 70 years of "no" from the Palestinians, few Israelis have the stomach to see Gaza II rise up a few miles from Tel Aviv, Haifa and inside Jerusalem. The Ben Gurion International airport would become an easy missile target.

Our focus is on the promises of God—that He will bring our Jewish people back to Himself, and give them a new heart and a new spirit. And at the right time, God will also give us back all the Land He promised us some 4,000 years ago.

The two main parties are now neck-and-neck in the polls. Lord, Your Will be done, in Israel, as it is in Heaven! ■

— Shira Sorko-Ram





Moti Cohen, much beloved elder of Congregation Tiferet Yeshua, is the founder and organizer of PROJECT FEED TEL AVIV

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