



January 2024

**Dear Friends,**

Greetings and blessings from Jerusalem!

Many thanks to all those who sent contributions to support, helping the Shiloh Israel Children's Fund, for assistance to wounded soldiers and their families, helping to purchase protective equipment for Israeli soldiers as well as providing food to them and for families relocated from our southern and northern borders.

You are truly partners with us in the vineyard of the Lord as we seek to be blessing at this difficult time and bring the blessings for the Lord to all who seek His presence.

*"For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." (Psalms 1:6)*

What does this New Year have in store for Jews and Christians? October 7, 2024 produced an earthquake in the Jewish world. Some Jews believe they are now dwelling alone in the world without friends and supporters.

*"How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied? For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." (Numbers 23:8-9)*

We are now into the Hebrew month of Tevet which is linked to the Prophet Obadiah. His prophecy consists of a single Chapter about the nation of Edom. According to Rabbinic sources he was a convert who came from Edom. The Rabbinic writings indicate there were seven men who prophesied to non-Jewish nations. In their case they prophesied to the Gentiles. However, Obadiah is not listed among them. The words of his prophecy have many similarities to those of Jeremiah.

*"For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head." (Obadiah 1:15)*

His words ring loudly in our time.

According to the Jewish mystical tradition it is the most inferior of months when the prophet Abraham died and when Esau prevails and calamities come upon the Jewish people.

The month of Tevet falls during Hanukkah and receives the illumination of its lights which influence the entire month. The 36 flames lit during the holiday correspond to 36 days from the beginning of Hanukkah on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev to the end of Tevet. The word Tevet is a cognate of the term *Hatavat Haneivot* (Preparing the lamps). According to Jewish mystical teaching the days of Tevet are days of "concealment". They provide the cure before the disease for the lamps illuminate these days of darkness with light.

When Adam sinned by eating from the Tree of Knowledge he caused some sparks of holiness to descend into the husks which were completely devoid of holiness. It is the Jewish people collectively and individually who are charged with extracting of those sparks of holiness. It is up to man to collect them and utilize them in the service of the Lord. This is the process by which we can correct the world and return it to the perfect state that existed before Adam's sin. These sparks of holiness are present in the souls of non-Jews.

It was the Patriarch Abraham who initiated the process of extracting and refining the sparks of holiness. The word *vnivrachy* (will be blessed) is a cognate of the word *mavrich* which refers the grafting in of branches on a tree.

*"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him, that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 12:3)*

This is the source of Paul's teaching about being grafted into the olive tree of Israel.

*"And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee." (Romans 11:17-18)*



Thus the glory of the Lord will fill the earth and heaven will be perfected and the Lord will be King over the entire earth. The nations of the earth have a right to exist even without worshipping the Lord until the entire world becomes filled with the the knowledge of the Lord.

Let us pray that this New Year will witness the fulfillment of this prophecy as a blessing to all the faithful Jews and Christians.

*"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:9)*

Wishing you many blessings,

Daniel & the AMI staff

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## Is it the Season for Anti-Semitism?

By Daniel Gwertzman

*"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:" (Ecclesiastes 3:1)*

There is a song in which one of the lyrics was, "The words of the prophets are written on subway walls and tenement halls." This was an old song from a turbulent period in American history when there were many demonstrations and social unrest at the time of the Vietnam War. Today, history seems to be repeating itself concerning the spread of global Anti-Semitism.

We live in a progressive age. The driving force of this anti-Semitism is no longer the Right, but rather the Left and the Moslem community. However, not all of the Moslems are fueling it but rather the Jihadists. Their war is not against just Israel, but rather against all Jews, the West, and all Arabs who don't agree with them.

In most Arab countries, Hamas is illegal. The reason has nothing to do with Israel. Rather, Hamas is part of the Moslem Brotherhood which opposes secular Arab rulers and all current governments. It wants to revive the Caliphate. The Caliph was a successor of Mohammed, as temporal and spiritual head of Islam. That means they are also opposed to the rulers of Saudi Arabia. It explains why of the 22 Arab states, none wants to take in Palestinian refugees. What about the 55 members of the Conference of Moslem Nations? Are they prepared to step up and help? Certainly not. This explains why the Palestinian refugee status continues to be inherited.

After World War II, there were in excess of 40 million refugees. All were resettled, including some who returned to their homelands. None have inherited refugee status. They acquired the citizenship of the countries they were born in. UNRWA is separate from the UN refugee Department. It is part of the problem in perpetuating the refugee problem, by educating young Palestinians to hate Jews and be prepared to be martyrs. Therefore, there is no hope of changing this situation unless a new solution is found, as the next generations will continue the cycle of violence.

As a result of the war between Israel and Hamas, there has been an alarming increase of anti-Semitism. Nearly half of British Jewry is contemplating leaving the United Kingdom because of this situation. A recent survey of the "Campaign Against Anti-Semitism", found that 70% of the Jewish community is concealing their identity in response to increasing hostility. More than 60% of the participants report experiencing, witnessing, or knowing someone who has faced anti-Semitism since early October.

It took the United Nations entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, nearly two months to respond after Hamas's brutal rampage of rape, murder, and kidnapping. According to Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen, "The conduct of U.N. Women as well as the U.N. Secretary-General and other U.N. agencies since the October 7 massacre is disgraceful." This is part of the apathy on behalf of leading women's organizations to sexual assault on Israeli women.

In the United Kingdom, there has been a 540 % increase in anti-Semitism, in the Netherlands an 800% jump occurred, and in Brazil 1000% increase, compared to the same period last year.

This has resulted in more Aliyah requests to Israel despite the war. There has been 140% increase in Aliyah applications from the U.S. since October 7, in comparison with the same period in 2022. Where can Israelis go on vacation since the war started? The National Security Council has raised the threat level in 80 countries, for Israelis. Despite this trend, there is a counter trend of support for Israel from Christian groups. They come from the United Kingdom, Moldova, Ireland, the Netherlands, Canada, Germany, Portugal, Singapore, Kenya, and the USA. Most are Evangelicals, although some Catholics and Christians from other denominations are also coming on tours. Since October 7, Christians have contributed \$10 million to an emergency crisis fund for war relief projects. They have



provided 2,200 ceramic bullet-proof vests, 1700 helmets for reserve units, tactical gear, and essential supplies for first responders. There is also a significant feeding initiative with 15,000 grocery boxes distributed nationwide for 50,000 displaced individuals. More than 60,000 hot kosher meals have been served to both soldiers and families. Also 1500 people have been housed at hotels in seven locations, including 400 children.

Some 40% of Ultra Orthodox U.S. Jews are considering *aliyah*, according to a survey conducted by the Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI), and the World Zionist Organization (WZO). In the general Orthodox community, 35% are contemplating *aliyah*. Among Conservative Jews, 16% also want to make *aliyah*. Among Reform Jews, 11 % are considering *aliyah*. Concerning Jews without any specific affiliation, 22% want to make *aliyah*. According to Rabbi Tuly Weisz, Founder of Israel 365 who spoke at the Jerusalem Post event, "The Front - The Battle for Israel and the Jewish People", the war really demonstrates that we are in a crisis and emphasizes how important it is that we reach out to Christians. If we do not do it we are in big trouble and America is in big trouble."

According to Rabbi Dr. Ari Berman, President of Yeshiva University in New York, Jewish students are hiding symbols of their Jewish identity. Yeshiva University is a private Orthodox Jewish Institution, with a dual curriculum blending academic and Torah studies, catering to the Modern Orthodox Community, but has a diverse student body including non-Jews.

At the end of October, 100 universities from across the U.S. and around the globe banded together to express solidarity with Israel, and opposition to Hamas. This

coalition included public and private universities, faith-oriented institutes, and historically black colleges and universities. Their collective statement, made by Berman, signaled a commitment to uphold ethical standards. This led to the formation of a new group, Universities United Against Terrorism. Many students and their parents are reaching out to Berman for guidance or considering transferring to Yeshiva University. Jewish students are seeking a safer more welcoming environment, due to the hostile attacks they face on other campuses. There is a 65% increase of students seeking to join his university in January.

He wants to provide a broader framework of safety and support across other campuses. He wants to push back on the attack of Woke Culture on the Jews, and to create protection on other campuses. This means, acceptance for Jewish students in various educational institutions. Anti-Semitism has become the most divisive issue on campuses in recent history. What is needed is collaboration with allies. While history has shown the Jewish community is the current target, this is not just a Jewish problem; it is a social issue within America. It is clear Jews are not alone, and they must work with other like-minded individuals who share their values.

What is the Biblical lesson we can learn from this anti-Semitic onslaught?

*"Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." (Isaiah 51:7-8)*

## The Coming of the Third Generation

By Daniel Gwertzman

*"And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." (Ecclesiastes 4:12)*

We are now living at the time of the third generation which is a time of transition. The first generation founded the state. The second generation consolidated it, and typically the third-generation squanders what has been built up. It is typically the third generation which takes its privileges for granted and squanders the wealth which has been built up. In the Bible, it was Abraham who discovered God and transformed religious thinking. Isaac translated this revolutionary idea into daily life. While Abraham travelled about as a circuit preacher, Isaac was sedentary and never travelled beyond the

boundaries of Israel. He lived a normal life without wars and without meeting angels. However, Jacob was challenged to protect his heritage.

Often the third generation loses direction, taking ideas and success for granted, and getting caught up in petty rivalries and feuds. Jacob had to preserve family unity and the Jewish destiny. However, it is the challenges that determine the future.

We are now passing through a period in which we find ourselves being called back to our roots, and the sources of our traditions. It is the TikTok generation, born into a prosperous country that now faces this conflict between good and evil.





*"Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord; look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." (Isaiah 51:1-2)*

Major changes are taking place in Israeli society before our eyes, often overlooked by the press. To begin with, one has to see the changes taking place in Israel's Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) community. The slogan of this war which you see on billboards, TV screens, and on bracelets and pendants is *"B'yachad Nenatzeach"* (Together we will win).

This is something that is moving the Haredi community to join with secular Jews in this national effort. Since October 7<sup>th</sup> over 3000 Haredim have joined the IDF. There is a newfound spirit of cooperation with all segments of Israeli society which has not always been present.

The organization Achim La-Oref (Unity in Action), founded by a group of Haredi business and social entrepreneurs, media groups, research institutes, and philanthropic foundations a few months before the war, is taking existing initiatives and encouraging new ones. They want to take part in what is taking place in Israel and not just be onlookers on the side lines.

They are assisting all members of the Israeli population in helping people who lost family members during the attacks, visiting the wounded, providing financial support to families, helping in the picking of fruits, and vegetables, and protecting agricultural lands.

Their purpose in sending people to visit families in mourning is to find out what they need. They are attending to the practical needs of more than 735 families of the 848 families of civilians killed in the attack, ensuring that they have chairs, food, and anything else they might need. They are also preparing and delivering food to soldiers, something that was not done in previous conflicts. They also express their concern for Israel's soldiers by praying for them. They have come to understand that we are involved in a war for our existence, and we need to have unity, despite our differences.

The idea of helping the Home front in the war is a major change in the communities' approach to Israeli society. At this time, the secular community is much more open and receptive than in the past. This community never had an opportunity to offer condolences to the families of soldiers or appoint watchmen to protect agricultural land at the periphery.

They are providing help to wounded soldiers in the hospitals by providing special kits containing shampoo, slippers, and other personal items. They are also meeting with their families, transporting family members to hospitals, providing food, and a place to stay. They have also brought the children of wounded soldiers to visit their fathers. There are no longer any barriers between these groups. Achim La-Oref has placed 1000 volunteers at farms throughout Israel. These haredim have picked peppers, eggplants, and beets, and are learning about agriculture. The farmers are very happy and touched because they are in need of the help.

On the side of the women, an organization called Achayot Mi-Barzel (Sisters of Iron), are active providing personal help with 1000 volunteers, and have now expanded to 2000 volunteers throughout the country. It provides anything a sister would do for a sister. They bring hot cooked meals personally to other families, help with children, or go to a woman's house and take over for a few hours allowing her to go out.

In the beginning, the primary beneficiaries were family members who were wounded, evacuated, or held captive, or families of IDF soldiers who were mobilized or wounded. Their main activity is assisting wives in families of husbands who have been mobilized. They want to continue these activities after the war.

This is the first time they have been doing this outside their own communities. The response from the secular community has been positive. They want to continue to cooperate in the spirit of unity to do great things together.

*"Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." (Isaiah 51:11)*

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