

April 2002
Nisan-Iyar 5762

Mauz Israel

R E P O R T



The Lord
is my Strength

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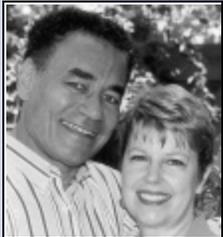
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Ari & Shira Sorko-Ram

WAR-WEARY ISRAEL:

A Nation Losing Ground

Gabi Altaratz is one of the owners of the Caffit café in a suburb of Jerusalem. His café was packed with a lunch crowd of some 50 people, many of who were no longer ready to eat in downtown Jerusalem. When a suspicious looking Arab man was pointed out to him, Altaratz approached him and asked him what he wanted. "A cup of water," he replied. "He asked me who I was with a smile on his face," Altaratz said. "I felt as if the devil was staring at me."

Altaratz called over waiter Shlomi Harel, 23 and asked him to come to his aid. Harel saw he had a huge bag on his back. "I shoved him outside the restaurant," said Harel, a veteran of an elite combat unit who had worked at Caffit for a year and a half. Standing face to face with the terrorist just outside the café, Harel could see a wire protruding from his pack. The wire was connected to a triggering device in his hand, passing through a light coat that he wore despite the balmy weather.

Undeterred by the threat to his own life, Harel jerked out the wire, preventing the bomb from going off, as he and a customer-security officer wrestled the man to the ground.

Arabs from East Jerusalem, doing road

work in the area, scattered as soon as they realized what was happening. "It's a tough situation," said one worker later. "And it is the innocent people of both Jews and Arabs who are suffering the most." Within minutes, the café and the bustling main thoroughfare were deserted, blocked off by police looking for other possible explosives. (Jerusalem Post, Mar. 8, 02)

I felt as if the devil was staring at me.

- Israeli café owner as he approached a suicide bomber

Suicide bomb attacks, drive by shootings, snipers gunning down pedestrians or terrorists spraying bullets at groups celebrating weddings, bar mitzvahs or birthdays, not to speak of ambushing soldiers on patrol, is now an everyday event in Israel.

On March 2, Israel's Channel 2 split viewers' TV screens to supply them with two simultaneous live events: the national football league match of the week and the immediate aftermath of a suicide bombing near Jerusalem's ultra-Orthodox neighborhood, with flames still burning and the casualties still on the street. (Jerusalem Report, Mar. 25, 02)

The double screen was not some cynical display of crass commercialism, but a feeble attempt to create some semblance of normality in the face of a withering, devastating war with life and death.

There are currently about 30 terrorist attacks per day in this tiny country of 5.2 million Jews. What if there were 30 terrorist attacks per day in Chicago or Los Angeles or Paris or London?

As one Jerusalemite put it, "It's Russian roulette. Now you're alive. Now you're dead."

"Non-stop terrorism induces a sense of helplessness against an evil, invisible force - the reverse of the notion of divine protection," says journalist Yossi Klein Halevi. "And so," he says, "Israelis try to reassert mastery over their lives by outguessing the terrorists, avoiding crowded and exposed places that could be targets while frequenting other locations, like malls [enclosed with guards], perceived to be more secure." (Ibid.)

A historian in Jerusalem talks about his children: "No parting is casual anymore; I always have the sense that I may not see them again. I have a son in an elite army unit, but I'm more worried about my two other kids who take city buses to school."

Says Ya'akov Maoz who works with community centers in Israel, "Israelis are looking for something that can give them strength. Death is on everyone's mind. Mine too: I think about my own death and the death of my children all the time." (Ibid.)

Over 325 Israelis have been killed by terrorists since the *intifada* started in September 2000. But that figure does not begin to convey the calamity that has struck Israel. Over 3000 have been wounded, many losing limbs, eyes and ears. Youths are crippled and scarred for life. Yet not even the figure of 3000 can express the enormity of the horror that



has come upon the Israeli people. There is one clinic in Jerusalem that is only for people who have survived two or more terrorist attacks. The doctor in charge admitted that he wasn't sure there was anything that could help these traumatized people. Parents and children don't sleep - or they have nightmares when they do. Whole cities are traumatized. Downtown Jerusalem is empty.

The war has also been devastating to the economy. Eighteen months ago, Israel was enjoying one of its most prosperous periods. Since then, the economy has been battered by an unprecedented recession. True there is a world recession. But Israel has suffered a doubly brutal blow, and it's the effect of the violence that really knocked the economy for a loop, says analyst Judy Maltz. (Ibid.)

There *are* two areas of booming businesses, however: security-related concerns and take-out restaurants. Eateries in the oft-hit cities of Jerusalem, Netanya and Hadera are reporting a 100% increase

in pick up and run orders. Pizza Hut has also doubled its delivery orders in Jerusalem.

One out of every ten Israelis is unemployed, meaning that 258,600 Israelis are out of work, and the figure is expected to rise to 11 % this year. Economic growth will total zero in 2002, creating a deep recession, according to the Bank of Israel Governor David Klein. Tourism is almost non-existent; restaurants and even wedding halls are empty. Shopkeepers in Jerusalem are collapsing like dominos.

According to conservative estimates, the escalating violence is likely to cost another 2% to 3% of GDP (gross

Israel Looks for Help in the Spiritual Realm

A recent cover story in one of the nation's principal Hebrew weekend magazines offered a number of essays under the title, "Do We Have a Future?" One writer insisted that if the current situation continued, Israel would stop existing as a Jewish state within 15 years. Many Israelis are asking themselves just such questions. And there are those leaving the country for good. Some 20% of the population admitted

they or their families have discussed just such a possibility, according to a recent poll.

Others are looking deeper into Orthodoxy for comfort or are turning to New Age.

"That urgent need to find answers to the questions of life and death is at least partly responsible for the astonishing expansion of 'New Age' spirituality. Indeed, every kind of alternative thera-

py and spiritual technique seems to find a ready audience in Israel," reports journalist Yossi Klein Halevi. (JP Mar 25, 02)

"Bookstores now include extensive New Age sections; alternative music and healing festivals that barely drew several thousand participants a few years ago now routinely attract tens of thousands. In fact, labeling the phenomenon "alternative" is misleading: Israeli New Age has gone mainstream," (Ibid.)

domestic product), following last year's 5%. Thus the cumulative loss to the economy from the security situation would reach around 8% or \$8.25 billion.

Yet Israel's international credit rating is still good because of her past record and because her foreign exchange reserves are very high. Furthermore, the economy has a low current account deficit (4.3%) - very low in international terms. However, if the situation doesn't stabilize and there is additional escalation, most analysts tell us the economy can't take much more before it starts to cave.

Interestingly, hi-tech industry in Israel is still seeing investors flocking to invest. "After September 11, the foreign investors came back in droves," said a founder of a venture capital fund in Jerusalem. Most investors seem to be investing in security-oriented companies, which is Israel's strong suit.

The problem, according to Gil Bufman, chief economist at Bank Leumi, is that even when economic policy ideas are proposed, they can't be passed through the Knesset because of preoccupation with the security situation and parliament's fractured political makeup. There is no long-term planning. "The professional staff at the finance ministry clearly knows what to do, but there's a big problem of getting it off the ground. You need a finance minister who is willing to push forward ideas and to put aside all kinds of political interests." (JP, Mar. 7, 02)

In fact, the government has little time for anything outside of security matters. There is horrific political fragmentation which causes the government to remain in constant fear of being brought down at any time. There are environmental catastrophes that draw almost no attention (we are

out of water because of the continuing ten years of drought, with almost nothing being done about it - not even rationing). People just think about staying alive.

Meanwhile 64% of Palestinians continue to support and

applaud suicide bombers and gunmen. (JP Mar. 3, 02) Arafat vows to create a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as capital, even if it costs him his life. "By God, I see it coming, martyred or alive," he said. "May God give me the honor of martyrdom in my steadfastness for Jerusalem." (Ibid., Feb. 14, 02)

"We will make the lives of the infidels hell - millions of martyrs marching to Jerusalem," said Arafat on one of his daily speeches of incitement he makes to his people. (Ibid.)

His obvious aim has been to provoke a massive Israeli response that would bring about international intervention. A senior government official said, "No doubt Arafat has a premeditated plan for escalation through a number of different methods - suicide bombings, rockets,

attacks on tanks. Each success leads to additional attacks."

The source said Arafat's overall strategy is to bring about total chaos, which he thinks will bring about international intervention and force Israel to change its policies - that is, give Arafat what he wants in exchange for nothing. (Ibid., Feb. 17, 02)

As Arafat has stepped up the violence, he believes conditions are shaping up for victory. He knows that President George Bush wants the Israeli-Palestinian front deescalated so that he can gather Arab allies into his coalition against Iraq.

To help achieve his aim to garner Arab allies, President Bush initiated a U.N. Security Council resolution on March 12,



Indeed, astrology, channeling, fortune telling, levitation, talking with the dead and meditation of every kind are all being used to search for comfort and some kind of hope to the lost sheep of Israel.

The publisher of an Israeli New Age magazine estimates that there are some 30,000 Israelis earning their living from New Age-related endeavors, while another 100,000 regard New Age as a major part of their lives. The outer circle sympathetic to New Age ideas is

far larger. Some meditators claim they are dispersing the energy of hatred in Gaza. Another member of a kibbutz says each morning she turns her face toward the Arabs, sending them "a lot of light and love." (Ibid.)

Stand fast now in your spells and in your many sorceries...perhaps you will be able to profit...you are wearied with your many counsels. Let now the astrologers, those who prophesy by the stars,

those who predict by the new moons, stand up and save you from what will come upon you... There is none to save you. Isa. 47: 12-15

Listen to Me, you stubborn-minded who are far from righteousness. I bring near My righteousness, it is not far off and My salvation will not delay. I will grant salvation in Zion, and My glory for Israel. Isa. 46: 12-13 ■

affirming the "vision of a region where two states, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders."

We will make the lives of the infidels hell - millions of martyrs marching to Jerusalem.

- Arafat speaking in Arabic on radio to the Palestinians

...Your name shall be Abraham...And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an EVERLASTING COVENANT, to be God to you and your descendants after you. And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an EVERLASTING COVENANT, to be God to you and your descendants after you. Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan [part of which today is called the West Bank and Gaza], as an EVERLASTING POSSESSION; and I will be their God." Gen. 17:7-8

The world is now declaring that this inheritance will go to a people who have never before been a people, who have never before had Jerusalem as their capital, who have never before had a land with borders and who have conquered Israel's territory through pure, unadulterated terrorism.

Most important in the minds of the Israeli people is the fear that such a state would become a bristling terrorist dictatorship along the entire border of Israel's main population areas. Sadly, many of the Jewish people say they are coming to the realization that the Palestinians have one goal in mind - to eradicate Israel.

Meanwhile, Israelis are quietly preparing their gas masks incase a U.S. attack against Iraq causes Saddam Hussein to respond by sending his advanced rockets with unknown payloads to Israel's cities. ■

If you would like to receive our weekly prayer letter via e-mail, please e-mail us at intercessors@maozisrael.org

The Israel I Don't Know

**By Cookie Schwaeber-Issan
Maoz Administrative Assistant, Tel Aviv**

I think back to nearly eight years ago when I first immigrated to Israel.

It was 1994 and things were so calm that moving about freely was something I took for granted. In those days, we did not hear about suicide bombers or drive-by shootings. On occasion we may have been warned about suspicious packages, but as a whole, day-to-day life was tranquil and uneventful - especially in retrospect.

I can remember driving back then with a friend to Bethlehem, eating in Arab villages and not giving a thought to my safety.

Today, the atmosphere has so drastically changed that I hardly recognize Israel as the same place. I think one of the most shocking things is how suddenly these changes came about and how profoundly they have affected our everyday life to the point of seriously weighing common activities, a simple trip to the mall or dining out for the evening.

These days, a drive into Jerusalem can now mean a high probability of seeing a terrorist attack or being in one, and with terrorists disguising themselves as workers, soldiers or even orthodox Jews, it is not easy to see these things coming.

From my point of view, it seems as though there was a restraining power in this land for those first six

years of my life in Israel and, although it may have existed, no one felt the latent violence, anti-Jewish sentiment and plan of destruction by Israel's enemies until the fall of 2000. Since that time, a heavy unleashing of the wrath of Satan and his willing participants has hit this land with deluge force.

We are consequently experiencing a daily raging battle, and no one seems able to find a solution to turn us back to the time when life had some sense of normalcy and people were unafraid to visit the land of which they'd always dreamed.

Israel desperately needs your prayers. It is my belief that without God's intervention, things will continue to spiral downward and the fight for this sliver of land in the Middle East will intensify to the point of Israel's final battle for her survival.

For those of us who comprise the believing community here, we are the first fruits of those multitudes who will yet arrive. Our role here is important and as times get harder, we rely more and more on your commitment to uphold us in prayer and remember God's plan to restore Israel to her rightful place among the nations and thereby bless the whole earth.

Keep praying and standing with us. ■

April 2002

Dear Maoz Partner,

Did you catch the fact on page two that Israel's bookstores are filling up with New Age books and materials? That 30,000 Israelis are selling products or services connected with this false religion?

Do you feel the hopelessness, the lostness of the people of Israel? There's a famine in the land, and not just of water. Our people are perishing BECAUSE OF LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.

We have on hand the signed contracts to translate and publish the following Gospel books (on page 6) - books that will give life to the Israeli people, that will train leaders, that will help make mature disciples. (Publishing them a few hundred at a time costs approximately \$4.00 per book.)

The number of born-again Israeli believers whose mother tongue is Hebrew - though still small - is critical because it is forming a core for the coming masses of Israelis that will believe in the True Messiah, as promised in the Bible.

Every dollar you give will help us reach more and more Hebrew-speaking Israelis who are searching for an answer.

They are worth the investment!

Pick a book on the backside of this page and take part in its translation and publication. Your book will have a part in the salvation of the Israeli people.

We will thank you. The Israeli believers yet to come will thank you.

Most of all, we believe God Himself will thank you!

The Israeli people, desperate for spiritual reality, are worthy of your help.

He who touches Israel touches the apple of His eye!

For the lost people of Israel,

Ari & Shira Sorko-Ram

P.S. Our Israel office staff prays over all the prayer requests that are sent to us via our offices abroad. Together, we bless our contributors in the name of the Messiah, and we are praying in faith that God will answer your requests.

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Will you translate a book into Hebrew?

Israeli parents who are Messianic believers are often at loss to know how to raise their children with love and truth. They have little or no standards, models or guides to help them in this most important of life-responsibilities. They beg us for practical books in Hebrew on parenting. The New Dare to

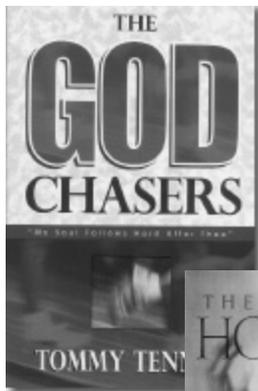
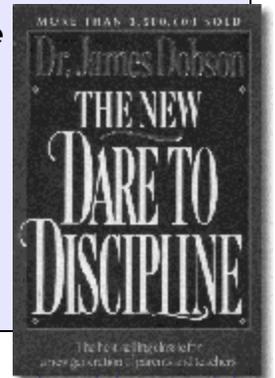
Discipline book is greatly needed to help these young believers raise their families in the fear of the Lord so that our second and third generations will be part of the harvesters as we speed towards the day of awakening for the people of Israel.

THE NEW DARE TO DISCIPLINE

By Dr. James Dobson

276 pages

\$6,500 to translate



THE GOD CHASERS

By Tommy Tenny

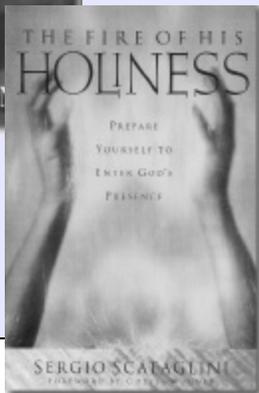
152 pages

\$4,072 to translate

Israelis are attracted to spiritual things

that are radical and demand total commitment. They have no heart for a lukewarm religion. The following two books will challenge our Israeli

people to be a burning fire and a flaming torch for the Lord God of Israel and His Messiah Yeshua Ha Mashiach. These two books will feed the hungry who want more and more and more .



THE FIRE OF HIS HOLINESS

By Sergio Scataglini

191 pages

\$2,563 to translate

This daily devotional, a classic loved by multitudes of believers the world around, can now be made available to Israelis. Daily devotionals are virtually unknown in Israel and would be a tremendous asset to believers who are looking for a way to receive a daily "injection" of faith and truth. *Even believing Israeli soldiers are asking for materials that can be read in ten-*

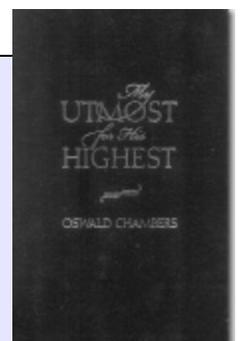
minute intervals because of their unbelievable schedules during their three years stints in the Israel Defence Forces. Oswald Chambers' insight and challenges to the believer's life would be a precious gift to soldiers and civilians alike.

MY UTMOST FOR HIS HIGHEST

By Oswald Chambers

375 pages

\$6,200 to translate



* We have obtained Hebrew publishing rights on these books. Translation costs include editing, proof reading, typesetting and research of Hebrew sources. About 48% of cost is employee/employer taxes plus 17% value added tax.