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R E P O R T

Yes to the Fence

By Barry Rubin

*The barrier is not being built eagerly for political reasons, but reluctantly for self-defense.
The writer is director of the Global Research in International Affairs (GLORIA) Center.*

Israel's most urgent strategic need today is the completion of a comprehensive security fence along the edge of the West Bank. At home, failure to appreciate this vital effort is extraordinarily foolish. Abroad, opponents are denying Israel the most elementary right of defense for its citizens, thus ensuring a longer, bloodier conflict. Moreover, the controversies over the precise route of the fence are a needless distraction.

The current - more limited - plan for the fence's route would affect a tiny portion of the West Bank land and very few Palestinians. But like everything about the Israel-Palestinian conflict, the fence issue has become wrapped in misperceptions and outright lies. Supposedly, the Palestinians want their own state, separate from and alongside Israel. Anything that sets off these two territories, then, is a step in that direction and is in their interests.

But the Palestinian leadership campaigned against the fence, and indeed against the idea of permanent separation initiated by former Prime Minister Ehud Barak, for two reasons.

* First, because the Palestinian leadership's main strategy is based on Israel's population being vulnerable to terrorism.

* Second, because Yasser Arafat's goal remains the conquest of Israel rather than achieving an independent Palestinian state. A state, in his thinking, can be accepted only if it does not interfere with the continued struggle to get everything.

Yet, much of the world has accepted the anti-fence argument. It is portrayed in cartoons as a tool of apartheid, even genocide, or an attempt to grab large portions of the West Bank.

Such is the luxury of people who can pretend that the only problem in the Middle East is Israel's attempt to defend itself, ignoring that there have been scores of attacks across what is actually an open border.



Suicide bombers easily walk or are driven around scattered checkpoints. Explosives are smuggled with relatively little difficulty. Any country faced with such a situation would build a barrier and no one would challenge that right.

Moreover, anti-Israel claims regarding the fence ignore that opposition to it within Israel has come from the right wing.

To them, the fence does not represent “seizing” 3 percent of the West Bank, but in effect giving up 97 percent. Those who embrace this cynical approach believe they will get more support if everyone within Israel face risks equal to those of settlers who have chosen to live deep inside the West Bank or Gaza Strip.

But such right-wing opposition to the fence is a serious mistake. By improving Israel’s defenses, a barrier will open up forces and resources which will enable the army to better concentrate on defending those who live beyond it [i.e., the settlements in the West Bank].

And by reducing Israeli casualties it will strengthen the country’s political will and economic ability to sustain this imposed war.

While the fence does symbolize Israel’s willingness in principle to give up the vast majority of the West Bank, it is a temporary measure against an immediate threat.

This is easily demonstrated by precedent. Israel has repeatedly dismantled expensive security structures in the

Sinai and later in the West Bank when a perceived opportunity for peace and diplomatic agreements required such steps.

In addition, the fence is not being built eagerly for political reasons but reluctantly for self-defense purposes.

Israel has huge social and educational needs. No Israeli decision maker would waste money on a fence if the daily danger had not made it imperative. If Palestinian attacks were to stop, or even if the Palestinian leadership would make a real attempt to prevent them, the fence project would be immediately stopped.

Aside from the political arguments, there are claims that a fence would not be effective.

But we are not talking about some barbed-wire garden fence which can be snipped with metal clippers. The barrier is to be built along the best strategically defensive route. It will utilize state-of-the-art sensors

and electronic surveillance equipment. As a result, nighttime will not offer a cover for infiltrators. If terrorists or scouts approach, troops can quickly be rushed to the scene; if anyone gets through, there will be an immediate warning on that spot and the pursuit can begin before they have gotten very far.

This method has worked on the perimeter of the Gaza Strip and on the Lebanon border. The technology is so good that countries like India are eager to buy it for their own border defenses.

Will this mean the number of successful terrorist attacks within Israel and the immediately adjacent area will fall to zero? Probably not. It will “merely” mean that the overwhelming majority of attacks will be stopped. Hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries will be averted.

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It will “merely” mean that the overwhelming majority of attacks will be stopped. Hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries will be averted.

And despite the complaints of the Palestinian leadership, it will be good for their people also. The fewer successful terrorist attacks in Israel, the less the need for Israeli retaliatory and defensive operations. Lower Israeli casualties will translate into lower Palestinian casualties.

Equally important, by showing that Arafat’s terrorism strategy has failed, it would encourage Palestinians to end the war and engage in serious peace negotiations.

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Israel’s Foreign Ministry has slammed a report put out recently by the UN’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. OCHA claims that some 274,000 Palestinians will be on the Israeli side of the fence, and that 30 percent (680,000 people) of the Palestinians will be affected by it. It also claims that the fence will swallow up 14.5 percent of the West Bank.

These figures are completely inaccurate according to an Israel Foreign Ministry official. He said that the report “simply harms the trustworthiness and credibility of the UN,” and is the result of unprofessional work, and simply

reflects Palestinian propaganda. He noted that another UN department, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), recently reported that 4 percent of the West Bank would be affected by the fence. (According to Israeli sources, the true amount is closer to 3 percent.) Ninety-five percent of the barrier is chain-link fencing with electronic sensors, while only 5 percent consists of sections of concrete anti-sniper wall. (Jerusalem Post Nov. 12, 2003)

Demonstrations to mark International Day Against the Wall were organized in many nations around the world by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

Seven Pillars of Messianic Judaism

By Asher Intrater

Over the years I have often challenged the excesses within the Messianic Jewish movement. We have made our culture more important than the gospel itself and let our ethnic identity become an idol.

At the same time there are many others who have never had a clear understanding of those “Jewish” aspects of the faith. If you ask, “Why Messianic Judaism?”, then this article is for you.

1. Cultural Context of the Gospel

“To the Jews I became as a Jew” – I Corinthians 9:20

In the 1970’s when Jewish people started to open their hearts to the gospel, (according to the timing predicted in the New Covenant – Luke 21:24, Romans 11:25), the need was seen to present the message of salvation in a way that was culturally relevant. If the gospel should be shared with cultural sensitivity to other peoples, how much more so to the Jews.

In the case of the Jewish people, what is culturally relevant also happens to be the actual historic context of the writings of the New Covenant. This had the additional benefit of helping Christians understand the teachings of Yeshua in their original context.

2. Consistent Truth of the Torah

“I came not to destroy the Law or the Prophets” – Matthew 5:17

Through Yeshua’s atonement, we are set free from the punishment that is due us for having broken the Law. In that sense we are no longer “under the Law.” However that does not mean that the moral absolutes of the Law are no longer applicable to us.

The New Covenant does not “do away” with the Law, but rather writes it in our hearts (Jeremiah 31:31). For any system of truth to be valid, it must be consistent with itself. Contradictions disprove truth. If the New Covenant were to contradict previously given scriptures in the Law or the Prophets, then the New Covenant would not be true.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Yeshua instructs us as to what is the true “heart-meaning” of the Law. In that sense He makes the Law even more demanding. For those who say we are not required to keep the Law, I ask, “Just which one of those Ten Commandments were you planning on NOT keeping?” Christianity, without a proper understanding of Torah, loses its own moral courage and integrity.

3. Continuing Destiny of the Jewish Nation

“Has God cast away His people? Certainly not!” – Romans 11:1

“What then will their restoration be?” – Romans 11:15

Replacement and dispensational theology holds that the role of the Jews as the chosen people has only a past meaning, not a present one and not a future one. But Romans 11 teaches that they are still “His people” in the present time, despite their unbelief. And they have a future restoration, which “will then” yet take place.

All true born-again Christians are also “chosen people”. However that universal chosen-ness does not subtract from the calling of the Jewish people, but rather adds to it. The international church is “grafted into” Israel (Romans 11:17).

Rightly understood, the calling of the church actually

reaffirms the calling of Israel, rather than replacing it. During the 1980’s, as so many of the apostolic aspects of the first century church were being restored, so was the importance of the restoration of Israel’s

destiny as a nation rediscovered by many.

4. Crucifixion of Israel’s King

“And the inscription was written above: The King of the Jews.” – Mark 15:26

“Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend from the cross.” – Mark 15:32

Yeshua was crucified not only as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, but also as the King of Israel who will soon return to rule upon the earth. It was the sovereign hand of God that guided Pilate unknowingly to have “King of the Jews” written above Yeshua’s head on the cross. From man’s side, the crucifixion was a rebellion against Yeshua’s authority as King, specifically as King of the Jews. It was a rejection of both His Kingship and His Jewishness.

From God’s side, the cross was a declaration of Yeshua’s authority. God was “staking His claim” to rightful government over this planet (Psalm 2). Yeshua’s general authority comes through His position as King of the Jews. If Yeshua is not the King of the Jews, then He is not the king of anything else either. Therefore to deny His Jewishness is to deny His kingship. The cross is God’s demand to accept Yeshua both as a King and as a Jew.

Yeshua is not only the Son of God, but also the Son of David (Romans 1:3). When He returns, He will still be the Son of David (Revelation 22:16). Yeshua has a personal destiny. That destiny is to be King of the Jews. He did so much for us. What can we do for Him? One of the reasons we preach the gospel is to help Him actualize His own destiny - to one day fulfill His role as King of the Jews.

For those who say we are not required to keep the Law, I ask, "Just which one of those Ten Commandments were you planning on NOT keeping?"

5. Contingency of the Second Coming

"You will not see Me again until you say, 'Blessed is He who comes...'" - Matthew 23:39

God has set a time for the Second Coming in His own sovereign authority. Nothing can stop it. On the other hand, Yeshua gave a certain prerequisite for His return. In speaking to the very same religious leaders in Jerusalem who rejected Him and whom He called "snakes" for their hypocrisy, He categorically stated that He would not return *unless* and *until* they welcomed Him back as King Messiah.

David was anointed to be king early in his childhood (I Samuel 16). However he was not inaugurated as king until the elders of Judah and Israel agreed to do so (II Samuel 5:3). This prerequisite of the leaders in Jerusalem is related to the previous section about Yeshua's role as King of the Jews. He can't come back as King of the Jews until there are a number of Jews who receive Him as King.

Satan knows that his reign and influence on this planet come to an end when Yeshua returns (Revelation 20). Therefore if there is anything the devil wants to fight, it is the possibility of a revival in Jerusalem. (For this reason we see the hatred of Yeshua by religious leaders in Jerusalem as being so satanic in nature.) If there is to be a revival in Israel, then the people must first physically return to the Land. That's why there has been such attack against Zionism - first from Nazism, now from Islamic terrorism.

6. Conflict of the End Times

"I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle." - Zechariah 14:2

A study of eschatology in the Bible soon reveals that all of the conflicts of the end times culminate in one great last battle, in which the nations of the world gather together to attack Israel. It is at that time that Yeshua returns, intervening in the battle. His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:3) and He will destroy those nations that attacked Jerusalem (12:9).

God considers the attack against Jerusalem to be an attack against Yeshua Himself. Anyone found fighting against Jerusalem at the Second Coming will find himself fighting against Yeshua. This is a focal point of both end times prophecy and of spiritual warfare. (I have developed these points at length in the new edition of the book, From Iraq To Armageddon; so please don't miss it.)

It is God who summons this confrontation. It is similar to the way in which God hardened the heart of Pharaoh in order to destroy the armies of Egypt in the Red Sea. God sees the final battle over Jerusalem as the final confrontation between good and evil. In that conflict He looks to demonstrate both His power and His righteousness by destroying the combined forces of evil in a stunning and glorious manner. (It is as if God were saying, "Make My Day!" - that great and terrible Day.)

7. Capital of the Millennial Kingdom

"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." - Isaiah 2:3

The statement that, "Yeshua has fulfilled all the prophecies about the Messiah" is not true. Those prophecies concerning His birth, death, resurrection and ascension have been fulfilled. Those concerning the Second Coming have yet to be fulfilled.

After Yeshua returns, He will establish His kingdom on earth. There will be peace and prosperity (Isaiah 2:3, Micah 4:4). There will be a one-world government, with Yeshua as its King and with Jerusalem as its capital. The nations will come up to Jerusalem, both to celebrate the feasts and to worship Yeshua as King (Zechariah 14:16).

At that time all of the traditional Jewish expectations for the Messianic kingdom will be fulfilled. The Bible even indicates that there will be a rebuilt Temple (Ezekiel 40 ff.). In other words, the future seems pretty Jewish. Yet since it will all take place under the lordship of Yeshua the Messiah, the future will also be quite Messianic.

Jewish people around the world are going to have to get used to that "Jesus" part; and Christians around the world are going to have to get used to that "Jewish" part. So we might as well get started now. And that is what Messianic Judaism is all about. Ultimately, it is not about what Jewish tradition has to say; nor what Christian theology has to say; but what the Bible has to say.

*Asher Intrater is an elder of Congregation Tiferet Yeshua, Tel Aviv and founder of Revive Israel Ministries.
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Want to know how to effectively pray for Israel? Request our weekly prayer letter via e-mail. Please e-mail us at maozisrael@maozisrael.org



Jewels of Israel A Success Story!

Since Jewels of Israel began last summer, Maoz readers and friends have purchased nearly \$30,000 worth of jewelry! And recently, wholesalers from boutiques and shops have begun calling in for additional orders. Tanya, member of our congregation and creator of the jewelry here in Tel Aviv, now employs four full time workers – three who are believers and one who is carefully observing what it means to have a personal relationship with God.

Through Jewels of Israel, Maoz readers have created work for five Israelis, a really tremendous benefit, both to the state of Israel, and to the Body of Messiah in Israel. Moreover, with each piece of jewelry purchased, a percentage of the profit is added to the Coffee House outreach fund!

Now that the rush for holiday gifts is passing, we encourage you to continue buying jewelry from Jewels of Israel so that these Israeli believers can continue to support themselves and their families. Tanya will be adding new pieces of jewelry to her collection on a regular basis which you may view on our website, JewelsofIsrael.net.





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Ari & Shira Sorko-Ram

December 2003

Dear Maoz Partner,

In the year of 2003, our Tel Aviv congregation Tiferet Yeshua (the Glory of Yeshua) grew from approximately 90 people to more than 160 (sometimes up to 200), a 56% increase.

The majority of our members are native-born Israelis – the hardest group in Israel to reach. But we also have a significant number of Jewish Russian immigrants (one out of every five Israelis were born in the Former Soviet Union) and also immigrants from South America who speak Hebrew.

Because there is no translation to other languages in our meetings, the personality of the congregation is distinctly Israeli, and we are able to draw other Israelis into the Kingdom of God in a way that we have never seen before.

At first, having an Israeli congregation of native-born Israelis meant that we were growing very slowly (we started this congregation in 1995), since, as we mentioned, this is the hardest group in Israel to reach.

However, it is clear now that we have reached critical mass, so that when an Israeli enters our congregation and sees a room packed with 160 adults and lots of children running around, his or her set ideas on Jews who believe that Yeshua is the Messiah are completely turned upside down.

Now it is very common for visitors to enter our congregation for the first time and accept the invitation to come forward and receive the salvation of Yeshua into their lives. Of course, those visitors have almost always been witnessed to by the person who brought them to the service.

This combination of members witnessing to their friends and relatives, then bringing them to the congregation where they see other Israelis worshipping and they hear the Word of God in the language of the prophets -- well, that is bringing these new people to make a decision to follow Yeshua.

Last week, our elder, Asher Intrater, in his sermon to the congregation, asked who had witnessed to someone during the last week. To his amazement, about 80% of our members raised their hands. We have a witnessing congregation!

Furthermore, there are those who have accepted Yeshua in home groups that are not yet coming to the congregation. In one home group alone, in a suburb of Tel Aviv, 26 Israelis in the last 12 months have accepted the call to follow Yeshua!

For Israel, this is absolutely amazing!

Now is the time to go a step further – a BIG step further.

For a number of years we have been asking God to provide us with a coffee-house outreach center where our members can bring their friends and acquaintances and where Israelis can walk in and hear the Good News of God's plan for redeeming His people.

We have a place picked out that will attract the people of Tel Aviv – especially the young people who are empty, empty, empty. It is an opportunity to multiply, many fold, what we have already seen.

We are now able to absorb many new people into the congregation because we have a wonderful harvest of leaders and potential leaders who are able to minister to the newcomers.

This coffee house will be an important way to bring many, many more Israelis to the faith.

The coffee house will feature believing musicians and will be staffed with believers who will be ready to share their faith with those who desire. We will have available the books that Maoz has translated and published in Hebrew. We will offer Gospel CD's, another powerful way to move people towards the God of Israel.



Can there be anything more dear to God's heart than to see the people of Israel turning to Him? Israel's revival is a sign of coming revival to all the earth when God will pour out His Spirit on all flesh.

Because of the overcrowded city of Tel Aviv in tiny Israel, the costs of rental are very high. Because of the government's desperate need for money to survive, the taxes and expenses to run such a place are astronomical.

But the return on this investment will be enormous! We have a fund for the coffee house that is growing – we now have \$89,000 in it. In order to open our doors, we need \$400,000. Every cent you send for the coffee house will go into that fund.

It is time for us to possess this vision that God has placed in our hearts and run with it.

Will you run with us?

SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED, as it is written. Rom. 11:26.

For the Salvation of Israel,

Ari & Shira Sorko-Ram