



HOPE FOR ISRAEL

SEED OF ABRAHAM MINISTRIES, INC.



"O Israel put your hope in the LORD..."

- Psalm 130:7

WORD FROM MORAN



Shalom from Jerusalem!

May the grace of our God strengthen you and give you peace in Messiah Yeshua until the day of His return. Our world is quickly changing; from the most recent elections in the USA, to the devastating war in Syria, the uprising of ISIS, "Brexit", the increase in terror attacks throughout the world, and major natural disasters, many of these events can leave us with a level of uncertainty that is uncomfortable to say the least. It's at times such as these that we must challenge ourselves to watch and pray to the One seated on the throne.

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UNESCO vs. Israel...What's the Big Deal?

On Tuesday, Oct. 18th, 2016, yet another UNESCO resolution was adopted by the UNESCO executive board that discusses the Temple Mount and Western Wall using only their Muslim names while accusing Jews of aggression against Muslim religious sites. The irony is that these resolutions are actually being drafted and passed by some of the greatest human rights violators in history: Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman and Qatar. At a time when much of the developed world (including Israel) is successfully overcoming sexism, racism and religious oppression, nations that still majorly violate many of the human rights standards of modern society are accusing Israel of violating the rights of its Muslim residents. Recent resolutions even completely ignore Jewish

ties to the Temple Mount and the Western Wall.

While UN Secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon and UNESCO's Director-general, Irina Bokova have explicitly denounced the anti-Semitic nature of this resolution, the resolution has still managed to be approved not only in UNESCO at large but also in committees such as UNESCO's annual World Heritage Committee on Oct. 26th. On Tuesday, Nov. 8th of this year, while much of the media attention was directed to the U.S. presidential elections, 10 more anti-Israel resolutions were passed at the UN's New York headquarters, including 2 of the anti-Semitic resolutions denying Jewish ties to the Temple Mount and Western Wall.

Why is this significant? Why should we be

concerned by these latest developments? The UN has become the primary conduit for Israel bashing, and it is a significant source of anti-Semitism today. Israel has been referred to as "the occupying power" no less than 530 times in UN General Assembly resolutions and more generally as an occupier no less than 2,350 times in 90% of resolutions dealing with Israel since

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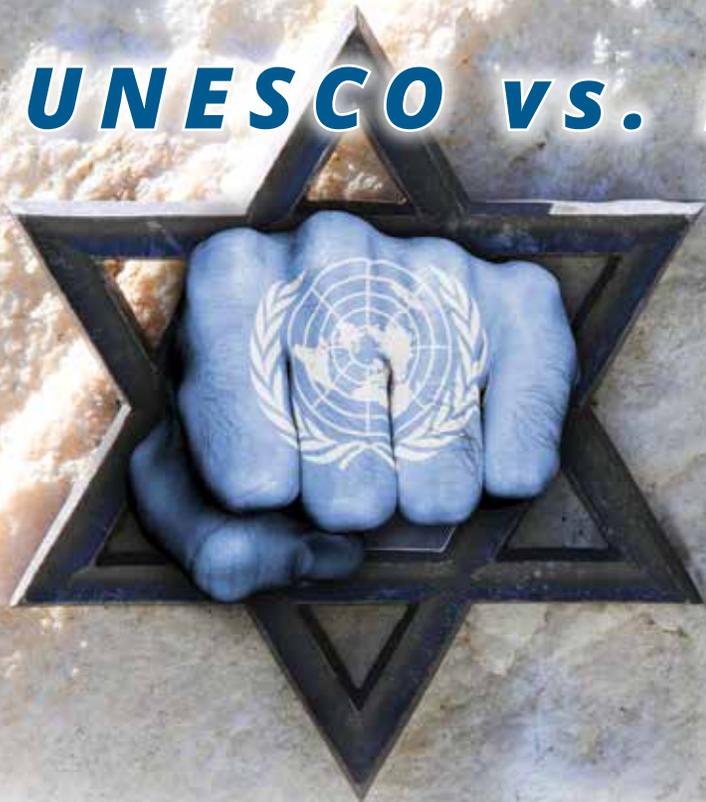


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UNESCO vs. Israel ...

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1967. The anti-Israel bias within the UN is clear when observing that only 15% of the resolutions dealing with other territories viewed as occupied actually speak of the territory as occupied. The title "occupying power" is reserved uniquely for Israel in UN resolutions.

Now UN resolutions are denying Jewish ties to the Temple Mount and the Western Wall while publishing as fact, accusations that really amount to anti-Israel and even anti-Jewish propaganda. The UN and UNESCO, despite the reservations of their leadership, are increasingly becoming a platform for anti-Jewish and anti-Israel propaganda while other nations that should be the focus of UN resolutions are the very nations publishing this propaganda. The UN must be called to return to its express mission: the prevention of another world war. This requires refusing to publish anti-Israel and anti-Jewish propaganda while turning their focus to the more pressing and actual issues in the international community at the moment such as ISIS.



The recent UNESCO resolution is aimed at presenting Muslim sites as endangered while ignoring all Jewish ties to the Temple Mount and the Western Wall. The resolution promotes a bias (the view of Israel as an occupying power) that no peacekeeping organization should promote. Israel is not an occupying power and Muslim sites are in no danger in the state of Israel. There is a vast difference in how much Israel invests in the protection of holy sites versus how much protection these sites receive in Gaza or the Samaria region. From the beginning of the state of Israel, the government has promised and upheld its promise to protect all holy sites in Israel from destruction, even in the midst of war.

Since the days of King David, Israel has been the homeland of the Jewish people and no amount of lies can change this reality. Distracting from this reality with accusations of Jews endangering Muslim religious sites in their homeland is slanderous and dangerous as it incites jihad, Muslim holy war.

In Psalm 120:5, we read, "woe is me" as the writer expresses desperation at being far from home. In verse 2, the writer speaks of a need to be saved from lying lips and a deceitful tongue. The most heart-wrenching reality expressed in Psalm 120, however, is when in verse 7 we read, "I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war."

Psalm 120 offers us the right response to the trends in the UN: we, as believers, must call out to God to unravel the lies of the enemy as

He continues bringing the people of Israel back to their ancient homeland. In light of the recent anti-Jewish propaganda published through UNESCO, in spite of their leader's express reservations regarding the resolution, it is necessary to understand the nature of the Jewish ties to the Temple Mount and to Jerusalem.

A little known fact is that Jewish-Arab tensions were mostly born in the past century—triggered by unrealistic promises made by the former British Empire (controlling nearly 24% of the world's land mass and about 23% of the world's population at the time). Before World War I (1914–1918) under the Ottoman Empire, thousands of Jews were returning to their ancient homeland and legally acquiring agricultural settlements in order to develop a re-invigorated

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Jewish economy in the land of Israel.

In the course of WWI, conflicting promises were made such as the promise of a homeland for the Jews alongside the promise of authority over the Middle East to a ruler in the Arabian Peninsula. These promises could not be fulfilled and Britain instead (temporarily) annexed the territory of Israel to their then massive empire. In the past century, a number of opinions have been developed surrounding these agreements, but the only assertion necessary with reference to the UNESCO resolution is that such international activities in the affairs of Israel mark the beginning of what has now been over a century of Jewish-Arab tensions. There are about 2,900 years of history in which Middle Eastern powers did not attempt to refute the ties between the people of Israel and the Temple Mount. This article will travel back in time to examine examples of this long history of recognition.

From the time of the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem in 636 AD until WWI, Arabs not only recognized Jewish ties to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount but also welcomed Jews back into the holy city after about 500 years of banishment. Until international involvement in the early 1900's, a status quo, as the UN likes to call it, existed in which Jews were free to be Jewish in their ancient homeland. Under the Ottoman Empire,

Jews were even given the freedom to govern themselves so long as their community paid the tax for not being Muslim. Some historians have even argued that because of anti-Semitism in Europe, the Middle East in general and the land of Israel in particular were among the safest places for Jews—Islam, though discriminating against non-Muslims, at least had been committed to the protection of Jews and Christians.

Islamic leaders weren't the first to get a vision for the protection of Jews in their ancient homeland however. Over 2500 years ago, Cyrus the Great, King of Persia (modern day Iran), decreed that the Jewish people be permitted to return and rebuild in the land of Israel (Ezra 1:7-8:11). I have gotten to know a few Iranians in my lifetime, both Muslim and Christian, who have reminded me that since the days of Cyrus until the recent century, Iran had a thriving Jewish community. Iran has a rich history of helping the Jewish people regardless of religious differences. It's sad to see that Iran is one of Israel's most threatening neighbors in the present day. The UN's adoption of resolutions claiming Jewish aggression against Muslim holy sites in no way lessens this threat from Iran.

The return to Israel in the days of Cyrus became known as the "Return to Zion" (Psalm 126:1). This return marked a turning

point in history when special significance was attributed to the "Songs of Ascent," including Psalm 120 (mentioned above). Psalms 120-134 became a reminder to the Jewish people ever since the decree of Cyrus in 539 BC, that it is a privilege to return to God's holy hill to worship Him according to his Word.

The Babylonians (modern day Iraq) were the first nation to destroy Jerusalem and exile the Jewish people from their ancient homeland. It was from this captivity that Cyrus, king of Persia, released the Jewish people. And yet, recent research of Jewish texts from Babylon shows that the Jews were treated well by their captors. While the Bible is silent on the details of the Babylonian captivity, we get a pretty good idea of how they were treated from the al Yahudu tablets (documents from a Judean community in Babylon, written in Babylonian). The Jews were given land in Babylon; they built homes as Jeremiah encouraged (Jeremiah 29:5). The community was referred to as a Jewish community because the Babylonians weren't trying to destroy the Jews; in fact, they were trying to expand their empire and weaken all who might oppose them. The people of what is modern day Iraq were much friendlier to the Jewish people before the recent century. Again, UN resolutions and other international platforms have a huge role to play

in restoring such a reality.

Speaking of the Babylonian captivity, we may now mention the Egyptians. Thanks to comparing between a number of Egyptian, Assyrian, and Babylonian texts, we can understand with some accuracy the sequence of events that led to the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 586 BC. Surprisingly, the Egyptians sought to safeguard the people of Israel against the Babylonians. The Egyptians at the time had achieved a status quo of kinds with Israel in which Israel paid a tax of olive oil and wines and such to Egypt in exchange for peace with the Egyptians and protection from others. We read in the book of Jeremiah that the Egyptians provided so much support to Israel that the people of Israel were fleeing the imminent devastation of Israel and seeking refuge in Egypt (Jeremiah 42:18-19).

The rulers of the regions constituting modern day Egypt, Iraq, and Iran have historically extended protection to the people of Israel. It's only in the recent century that hostilities have led to an assault by Middle Eastern powers on the ancient and continuing ties between the Jewish people and the Temple Mount.

Outside of the Middle East, however, attacks on Jewish connections to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount are much more familiar throughout history.

Already by 430 BC, a Greek historian by the name of Herodotus referred to Jews as the "circumcised Syrians of Palestine." The Philistines had long since become a distant memory, defeated hundreds of years before. Perhaps Herodotus was referring to Jews living in what had once been the home of the Philistines in what was by then, southwest Israel. Such a reference could be an example of Herodotus' love for word play. In Greek, Palestine (the Greek name for the land of the Philistines) sounds much like the Greek word *palestēs*, meaning: enemy, rival, adversary. Calling Jews by the name of their ancient enemy would prepare the way for even greater attacks on Jewish identity in the centuries to come.

By 332 BC, Alexander the Great conquered the Middle East and established an empire that included the land of Israel. Between 319 and 302, Israel found itself in the middle of a heated dispute between rivaling Greek dynasties, and by 168 BC, one of the Greek rulers thought to assert his power in Jerusalem by stopping the daily sacrifice and eventually attempting to convert the Temple on the Temple Mount into a Greek Gymnasium for indoctrination into Greek culture and mythology. This was the first time since the days of King David that a nation would attempt to deny Jewish ties to the Temple Mount and replace it with another religion's idols. It was this moment in

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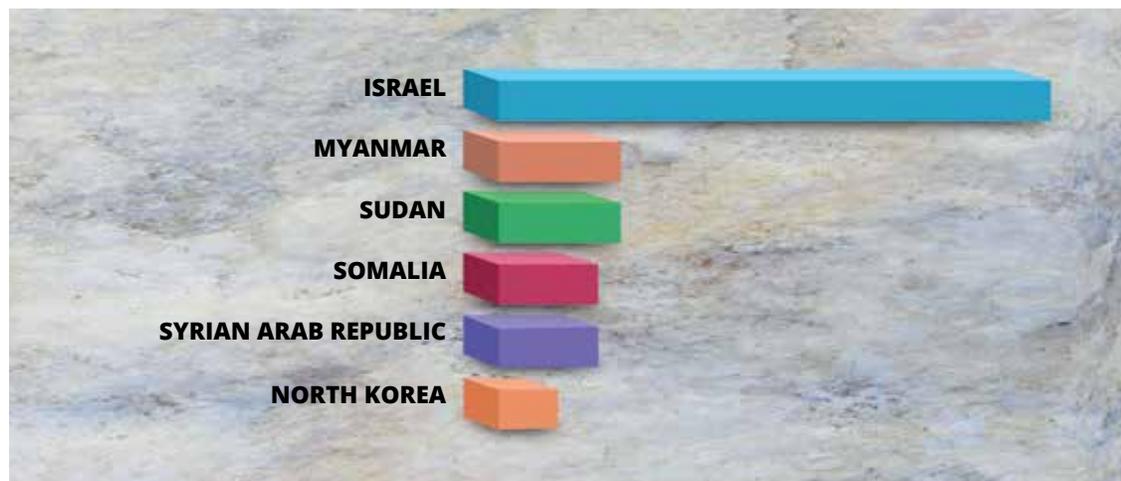
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history that led to the Maccabean revolt and the rededication of the Temple that is celebrated to this day as “Hanukkah” (a celebration in which the people of Yeshua’s day eagerly anticipated the Messiah [John 10:22–39]).

The Jewish community once again flourished in the days of the dynasty established by the Maccabees, but the glory of this dynasty would be short-lived as the Romans conquered and inherited the territory of the previous Greek empire by about 63 BC. During the Roman occupation, the Romans plundered the Temple and killed over 6,000 Jews in Jerusalem. By 66 AD, 129 years after the beginning of the Roman occupation, the Jews succeeded in overthrowing the Roman occupiers in Jerusalem and maintained the city for 4 years until the Romans finally managed to re-enter the city, destroying the Temple.

The Temple remained a heap of ruins until one Roman emperor got the idea to rebuild on the ruins of Jerusalem. For years, his rebuilding project seems to have met little resistance, but at some point, it became clear that the structure that he had built upon the Temple Mount was a temple that he was dedicating to a Roman god. Even into the time of the Muslim conquests, the city of Jerusalem would continue to be known by the name of this emperor (perhaps a testimony to the lack of deference for the city



Here is a look at the level of attention the UN has given Israel in comparison with other nations since 2003.

during the early years of Islam).

The dedication of the new structure on the Temple Mount to a Roman god seems to have led to the Bar Kokhba revolt. The revolt ended with the re-establishment of an independent state of Israel in parts of Judea that lasted for two years until the Romans yet again managed to separate the Jewish people from their ancient capital city. By the spring of 136 AD, the Romans had crushed the short-lived independent state of Israel, exiling some 97,000 Jews, 20,000 of which are said to have been the slaves who built the Coliseum in Rome. The textual evidence as well as Titus’ arch (depicting the plunder of the Jerusalem Temple) suggests that the Romans also used the wealth from the destruction of Jerusalem and the plundering of the Temple in the building of the Coliseum.

Since that time, the region of Judea

became absorbed into Herodotus’ more general title for the whole land of Israel as “Syria-Palestina.” The Jews were banned from ever residing within the city of Jerusalem again, and it wouldn’t be until the Muslim conquests that Jews would be invited back into Jerusalem to live within the borders of their ancient capital. Herodotus’ perhaps anti-Semitic wordplay had now become part of the anti-Semitic policies of the Romans from 136 AD until the modern era.

In contrast to ancient Greece and Rome and modern UN resolutions, history shows that, like Cyrus of Persia (ancient Iran), the Muslim powers, until the modern day were much friendlier toward the Jewish people. Islam is, however, inherently opposed to transferring the control of previously Islamic controlled territories (such as Israel) to non-Islamic governments (such as Israel). This is why extremist Islam must destroy Israel

(not necessarily the Jewish people) in order to restore Islamic rule where it once was. This is an issue that requires much prayer since the nation of Israel must exist until the return of Messiah. Great tribulations lie ahead, but there are things that we can do now to take advantage of the express aim of the United Nations—the promotion of peace.

At this point in history, the Arab nations surrounding Israel are using the UN more effectively than ever as an alternative to terrorism. We must pray that this will allow us to pursue an open discussion of truth in spite of the expectations of radical Islam for the destruction of nations such as Israel. Israel’s neighboring countries are beginning to try to present themselves as adhering to humanitarian values and international law. This works to the advantage of Israel as Israel has adhered to such values since

the establishment of the state and since adherence to law is something that can offer consistently reasonable expectations.

The problem comes in when the UN publishes, without discretion, resolutions that even its leaders agree are biased and deceptive. Moreover, Israel has been accused time and time again of violation of international laws, especially with reference to its post-’67 borders. That is to say that, while it is good that Israel’s neighbors are beginning to engage more effectively in international legal processes, this is also an area in which Israel is currently under attack and portrayed as an aggressor. These international laws must be revised to reflect the historical and present realities, namely that Israel is the only nation that has ever existed with Israel as its homeland or Jerusalem as its capital. We must pray

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WORD FROM MORAN

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Especially for those of us who live in Israel, it is a constant challenge to keep our eyes on the Lord and remember that nothing happens without His permission. One of the most disturbing recent events affecting Israel is the misleading UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) resolution that effectively erases any historical ties of the Jewish people to Jerusalem. This 'resolution' really only shows how far removed are the ways of mankind from God's ways. Much of the world is blinded by sin, so this resolution should really be no surprise to us.

Those of us who know the God of Israel, and who know His Word also know that these things must happen, as they have been foretold in Scripture. In Zechariah, chapter 14, and Joel, chapter 3 (chapter 4 in the Hebrew Scriptures) we are given a grim picture of what will take place in the world, and more specifically in Jerusalem, in the final days.

Zechariah speaks of God's judgment that will come over Jerusalem; it is a holy and righteous judgment by which God will cleanse Jerusalem from all the evil that defiles the name of our Lord. This judgment will come in the form of all of the nations gathering against Jerusalem:

"Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the

spoil taken from you will be divided among you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city." Zechariah 14:1-2

Something drastic will need to take place in order to give the nations cause for such a war; separating the Jewish people's history from Jerusalem effectively lays the foundation for justifying war against Israel, which is deemed a "hostile occupier" of Muslim holy sites. This, my brethren, is not just a matter of rewriting history; there is a spiritual reality to this resolution that we cannot ignore.

This is only the beginning of what we will see in the years to come. We, who know the Word of God, should not be in shock but rather ready for what lies ahead. We must understand that the nations, or in this case, the UN, cannot undo what God has been faithful to begin. I am reminded of the different stories in the Bible when God blinded the eyes of people or hardened their hearts (Pharaoh) in order to accomplish His purpose. We must also understand that as His followers, we play a critical role in His plan for redemption. We must decide if we will choose God or the world—there is no middle ground.

While Jerusalem's final destruction is foretold,

so is her restoration and salvation, but at the expense of the nations that came against her. Again, both prophets Zechariah and Joel foretell of God Himself fighting on Israel's behalf by punishing the nations that rose up against her:

"Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle." Zechariah 14:3

"For behold, in those days and at that time,

When I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem,

I will gather all the nations,

And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat.

Then I will enter into judgment with them there

On behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel,

Whom they have scattered among the nations;

And they have divided up My land." Joel 3:1-2

The inevitability of these events in no way exempts us from proclaiming the truth! Every one of us will one day give account before the Lord, both for what we have done, and for what we chose not to do. I am very concerned for many well-meaning believers who are blind to the truth of God's Word, compromising its message in the name of "love" and "tolerance". We are the Lord's mouthpiece on this earth! Consider the words of the prophet Isaiah:

"On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; All day and all night they will

never keep silent.

You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves;

And give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Isaiah 62:6-7

We are called to be God's watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem; we are to stand for the truth, to speak the truth, and to live for the truth without compromising. I encourage those of you who have answered your call to be watchmen: continue in His strength. I exhort those who have neglected your call: wake up, repent, and start doing what is right in the eyes of the Lord—stand firm in Him, forsake the world's false promises.

God has promised an amazing blessing to those among the nations who stand in righteousness in the final days: *"Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles."* Zechariah 14:16

God will spare a remnant. However, in order to be part of that remnant, we must be set apart for God regardless of the cost. I invite you to join us in standing for the truth of God's Word. God is more powerful than any power or principality on this earth.

For His Kingdom's Sake,

Moran

UNESCO

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that Israel, Gaza and the Samaria regions will one day be reunified as one nation under Israel's flag.

We must also pray for an increase of righteousness among the governmental leaders of Israel as they face heightened legal pressures from the international community while continuing to wrestle with complex security challenges within Israel itself. As the UN so readily recognizes, the people of the Muslim world today have made the Temple Mount a most sacred site to Islam, but only one nation can effectively claim Jerusalem as its capital. Jerusalem must be the capital of the only nation that has ever claimed Jerusalem as its capital—Israel. The Temple Mount and even its Muslim structures are in good hands so long as Jerusalem remains the capital of Israel.

The UN is not going away in the foreseeable future, so it's important that we pray for God to bring about legislation through the UN that reflects his plans for Israel. The UN must cease to be as Rome or Greece and, like Cyrus of Persia, begin to aid the people of Israel in their efforts to establish a just nation in their ancient homeland that will not ignore but will care for the non-Jews within its borders. Just as we read in Psalm 120, God is the one who will deliver Israel from the lies of the enemy and from being distanced from the home of their ancestors. 

Fall Update

At Hope for Israel, we do our best to invest in the next generation of leaders in the body of Messiah during three key stages of their life: during their time with us in the NerYah youth group, during their time in the military (a mandatory next stage of life in Israel), and during their first steps in the “real world.”

One way we invest in the next generation is by investing in education. By investing in education, we empower the next generation to enter the workforce equipped to excel. Equipping young believers to excel in the workplace in turn empowers them to be salt and a light for the Messiah as they begin to build lifelong relationships with those they encounter in the workplace and in their personal life.

A few years ago, we began to pray about offering scholarships to those young believing Israelis who have been part of our program from a young age. We've now had the great privilege of approving seven such scholarships for students from our program who will be studying in a wide variety of areas including law, communications and management, architecture, physics, Middle East studies, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Here are some words from one of the students who've been blessed by this assistance:

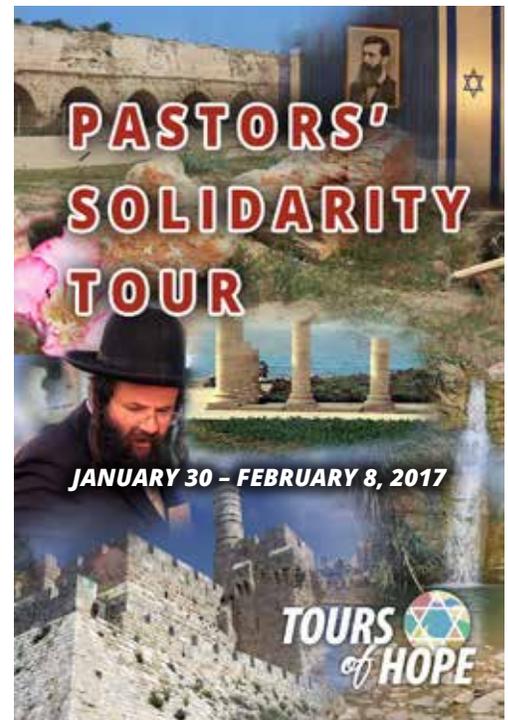
My name is Yael. I'm a 23-year-old from Jerusalem in my 2nd year of studies in the architecture program at the Betsalel Academy in Jerusalem. For the past 2 years, I've been a recipient of educational financial assistance from Hope for Israel that, among other things has even included a laptop computer and materials for my projects in the program. Words cannot describe how thankful I am to Hope for Israel, their staff and those partnering with them both financially and in prayer. I know that aside from the financial and material support of my studies, Hope for Israel is also a place where I always have people praying for me and supporting me throughout the educational process. For this reason, I am truly thankful for Hope for Israel and all who are a part of what God is doing through them.

Because of your very generous love and support, these young men and women have the opportunity to get the education necessary for entering a profession that will support them and the work of the Kingdom in Israel, while empowering them to be salt and light throughout God's Land as they excel in the workplace. Thank you! 🌍



UPCOMING TOURS

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FINAL WORD

In order to accomplish the great work the Lord has for us, we do need your prayer and financial support.

Please prayerfully consider supporting the Hope for Israel ministry.

Please make all checks payable to Hope for Israel.