

Israel Action Committee



Nissan's Tzedakah Highlight

American Friends of Meir Panim

ISRAEL IS UNDER FIRE

MIRACLES ARE HAPPENING. BUT PEOPLE STILL NEED HELP.

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500 ballistic missiles

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The Holiday of Freedom, **now more relevant than ever!**

For generations, we have celebrated Pesach as a reminder that no one should live in bondage—whether physical or economic.

This year, that message feels especially urgent. As people of all ages live under the constant threat of daily missile attacks, the very act of getting through each day carries profound uncertainty and fear.

For thousands of struggling families in Israel, true freedom remains out of reach. Poverty is its own form of bondage—one that can trap parents and children alike in a cycle of hunger and despair. This holiday, let us not only tell the story of freedom, but help bring it to life.



NORPAC MISSION TO WASHINGTON - REGISTER HERE!

MISSION DATE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2026

! NORPAC is a bipartisan, multi-candidate political action committee (PAC) working to strengthen United States-Israel relations.[1] NORPAC has spent the past 30 years building deep ties with candidates for the US House and Senate who advance the alliance between the United States and Israel. Together with a donor network from across the country, NORPAC provides financial, organizational, and educational support for candidates. NORPAC is volunteer-founded and led, with funds going directly to pro-Israel candidates.



Ori Yaish Update!

Last year, Congregation Ahavat Achim had the honor of supporting the bereaved family of Ori Yaish. Sgt. 1st Class (res.) Ori Yaish—an embodiment of goodness—was a 27-year-old from Modi'in who served in the 8119th Battalion of the Jerusalem Brigade. While off duty and on his way home, Ori was murdered in the terrorist attack at Re'em Junction on February 15, 2024, when an armed terrorist arrived in a stolen car and opened fire on civilians waiting at a bus stop.

In the months following October 7th, Ori served along the Gaza border. He was discharged during Hanukkah, but later returned to reserve duty in the Gush Etzion region, where his life was tragically cut short. A deeply sensitive person, Ori always sought out the good in others and related to people without judgment. To his family, he was a true warrior for justice—someone who radiated love and cherished his friends and family above all else.

On 2/23/26, Ori Yaish's family held a Torah Scroll presentation ceremony celebrating his 2nd Yahrzeit by visiting his grave, writing the finals letters into the Torah dedicated in his memory, and sharing special memories of him. Thank you to Tzahi Cohen for reaching out to R' Eli and Orit Zazon, who attended the Ori Yaish Ceremony representing our shul.

They shared, "It is impossible to describe it. It was a very, very moving experience. And the words of the Torah we heard were also exceptional. We were happy every moment we were there. Thank you for allowing us to go!"





*This Week in Worldwide
Jewish News*

The War on Evil

By Jacob Diamant

In the news cycle covering the Iran war an interesting item came across.

Joe Kent, the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, resigned because of his objection to US involvement in the Iran war.

His statement said: 'Iran posed no imminent threat to our nation, and it is clear that we started this war due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American Lobby.'

This short statement packs quite an Anti Semitic punch. The resignation itself is largely irrelevant, but the direction and the directness make the agenda troublesome.


By all accounts, this war is not popular in America. I am not suggesting that Anti Semitism is the only factor making it so, not even that it's the biggest opinion mover. It's reasonable to assume that most Americans would oppose almost any war, especially given our experience in recent decades but it would be foolish to assume Anti Semitism is not a significant phenomenon in America today.

In my view, strictly from an American perspective, leading this war is both wise and just. Wise - because regardless of what Joe Kent says, the IRGC does pose a threat to America and Americans, and if not now then not long from now. As well, Iran's partnership with Russia and China is a very real looming threat.

Just - because the IRGC threatens the existence of an American ally, and it threatens not by words but with very tangible actions i.e.; nuclear program, ballistic missiles, proxies.

If you don't understand the geopolitics and you don't care about Israel, but consider yourself a decent human being, you should support the action for one reason. The IRGC holds power by massacring its opposition. That cannot be acceptable to the leading democracy on earth. We cannot ignore the Iranian people's cry for help.

For Israel there are no options. It has to remove an existential threat from its citizenry. The political spectrum in Israel is diverse. No party or politician including the ruling coalition holds anywhere close to majority support. All Zionist parties do hold a united position on the need to end the IRGC threat once and for all. It's a difficult time for all our Israeli brethren. They have been going in and out of shelters multiple times a day (and night). We personally communicate with our family (about 100 of them) regularly. They are as tough as nails! Israelis deserve our admiration, support and prayers for a quick and successful ending to the war.





Why the War in Iran is in America's National Interest

By Fern Strich

There are many obvious reasons why the United States has launched this war in Iran but there are a few critical but less evident ones which I would like to explore in this article.

It is true that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East which shares the Judea Christian values of America and the Western Civilization which it represents. It is true that the US was interested in not repeating the mistakes they made in North Korea which allowed that country to develop a nuclear weapon. A nuclear Iran could threaten not only Israel but its regional neighbors as well as the rest of the world. It is true that since the Ayatollahs seized power in 1979, thousands of Americans have been killed by Iran and their proxies. Over 300 alone were murdered in the bombing of the US military barracks in Lebanon in the 1980s and many more servicemen were killed or wounded by roadside IEDs in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The question is why act now after the US has been dealing with the Iranian regime's threat for almost half a century? Given Trump's traditional aversion to foreign involvements and given his *America First Policy*, what motivated the government to act at this juncture?

If we reflect on recent global events, the picture becomes clearer. US actions in Greenland, in Venezuela and in Iran were not random isolated events, but rather part of a much larger coordinated plan. That plan is to stop China, the world's second largest economy, from achieving its long-term goal of global domination. China has spent the last several decades implementing its *Belt & Road Initiative* which is meant to extend its sphere of influence worldwide by aiding underdeveloped countries and then gaining a foothold in those nations and ultimately taking control of their natural resources. China has been successful in

doing so in Africa, in Latin America, in Europe via Greenland, and now in the Middle East. China has been providing Iran with weaponry in exchange for their much-needed oil. China gets 90 percent of their oil from Iran and absorbs about 55 to 80 percent of Venezuela's monthly oil exports. Aside from Greenland's strategic location between US, Europe and Russia, its access to northern shipping routes, it also is rich in oil, gas and rare earth minerals vital to the manufacture of everything from EVs to wind turbines to military equipment. Whereas the United States is energy independent but lacks rare earth minerals China has plenty of the latter but none of the former. Beijing is doing everything it can to ensure its future supply of oil and gas.

In the backdrop of all these events, the scheduled meeting between Xi Jinping and Donald Trump looms large and is set to take place next month. Is it not within the realm of possibility that our President's actions were intended to create leverage in those negotiations with the President of China? After all, it is no coincidence that when our military bombed Kharg Island this week, we did not hit any of the oil infrastructure and we asked Israel to avoid any such action. Continued access to Iranian and Venezuelan oil in exchange for the continued flow of rare minerals out of China (at least until we succeed in developing our own resources) could well be the endgame and thus best serve America's national economic as well as security interests.





Keep the Fire Burning

By Deborah Kempin

As photos fill my newsfeed, I watch the Iranian night sky erupt with the firepower of brave Israeli and American pilots, risking everything in a desperate effort to change the course of the Middle East. For the first time in a long while, I feel a flicker of hope about a situation that has seemed so daunting for so many years.

It is no secret that for more than a decade Israel allowed Qatar to send millions of dollars into the Gaza Strip, hoping to maintain a fragile calm by essentially “buying quiet.” The strategy was also meant to keep Hamas strong as a counterweight to the Palestinian Authority. In hindsight, it was clearly a flawed tactic. Yet it emerged from the painful reality of a beleaguered country, weary of constant threats from its neighbors and from Iran. Over time, Israel—like many nations facing unrelenting hostility—fell into a dangerous pattern of disillusionment, at times choosing to close its eyes to the smoldering hatred that continued to burn in the hearts of its enemies.

Who could blame them? After so many years of war and so many lives lost, the nation simply longed for a break. It was easier to put our heads in the sand and hope the flames of hatred might somehow die down on their own.

But the Torah reminds us that some fires cannot be ignored.

In this week’s Parsha, Tzav, which we read on Shabbat HaGadol, Hashem tells Moshe not once but twice to command Aharon and his sons:

“Fire shall be kept burning upon the altar continually; it shall not go out” (Leviticus 6:6).

On this verse, the Jerusalem Talmud comments: “Continually—even on Shabbat; continually—even in a state of impurity.”

Throughout these recent parshiot, Hashem repeatedly insists that the fire must never be allowed to go out, no matter the circumstances. At first glance, the fire represents Hashem’s presence—a source of holiness, comfort, and spiritual connection. Yet the Torah hints at an even deeper meaning. Fire can also symbolize passion.

Rabbi Dovber offered a powerful interpretation of the phrase “It shall not be put out.” Instead of reading it passively, he suggests reading it actively: the fire will put out the “not.” The fire of love—love of Hashem, Torah, and the Jewish people—extinguishes negativity. It carries a Jew beyond the moment of hesitation when he might otherwise say “no.” The flame burns away doubt, overcomes fear, and dissolves the negative energy that holds us back.

But to extinguish that “no,” the fire must be continuous. It must be sustained through a constant attachment to Torah and mitzvot. “Once,” “occasionally,” or “not long ago” are not enough. When the fire is neglected, it weakens. Coldness creeps in, and the “no” begins to regain its dominion.

The Torah teaches us a profound partnership: “Although fire comes down from Heaven, it is also a commandment for man to bring fire.”

Today, in the wake of unimaginable pain, Israel has been forced to rediscover that fire within itself. Not only the fire of defense and determination, but the deeper flame that has sustained the Jewish people throughout history—the fire of faith, unity, and responsibility for one another.

When that fire burns brightly enough, it has the power to extinguish the “no”: the despair, the fear, and the forces that seek to weaken us.

And like the fire upon the altar, it must never be allowed to go out because even the smallest flame can illuminate the darkest night.

Shabbat Shalom!



The Blessing of Aliyah: Pride, Distance, and Family

By Marty and Betsy Sonnenblick

We are often asked how we feel about the fact that our daughter Esti lives in Israel. This was true even before the current situation with the missile attacks from Iran and Hezbollah.

There are of course many feelings such as missing her, not being able to help out with babysitting, whether Shilat, Yosef or Yishai are sick or the Gan is closed for other reasons, and of course the anxiety and fear about the constant sirens. However, the overwhelming feeling is one of pride. Esti had wanted to live in Israel since our family trip there in 2001 with the Eretz Israel Movement. During high school she would send us emails showcasing apartments that we should buy in Israel. How I now wish we had bought one of those apartments even if we weren't planning on making Aliyah at that time.

When Esti spent her year in Israel at Bravenders, she asked to have some classes with the girls in the Israeli program. The education that we chose for our children and the summer camps that they went to were very Zionist in their philosophy. How could we then fault her for wanting to make Aliyah.

When I look at the life that she has in Mitzpeh Yericho it is very fulfilling, but definitely not easy. As a dentist in Israel she makes a somewhat less than she made when living in the US. I see my grandchildren speaking Hebrew as their primary language and am so proud. They are living in a true Torah environment both in the home and on the Yishuv in general. Esti has been able to successfully adjust to Israeli life which is due in no small part to the support of her Israeli husband Orel and his family who welcomed Esti so warmly from the very beginning. It was and continues to be a comfort to us knowing that she has a loving and close-knit family there.

When we go to Israel to visit, we are awestruck by the beauty of the land that is evident from views all over the Yishuv. In many ways we are envious of the life she has there which wasn't something that we were able to do when we got married due to the family obligations that we couldn't leave behind. The distance at that time also seemed much further due to the difficulty communicating with those in the US.

We have to say that What's App video calls has made the distance more bearable. We get to speak to Esti and our grandchildren every day. We sing, read books and play with toys together with them. When we go visit and pick them up at Gan they come running as they know who we are from all the video calls. As we are now retired, we are able to go more often and to stay for a longer amount of time as well.

During the war in June 2025, we were in Israel and that has made it a little easier during the current war as we know what it's like to hear the sirens and go into a shelter or mamad. Betsy also copes by keeping the Homefront Command app on her phone so that we know when they are getting warnings and sirens on the Yishuv. It helps knowing what is happening in Mitzpeh Yericho in real time. We look forward each week to opening our phones after Shabbat and seeing a Shavua Tov message from Esti and Orel.

Overall, although it is difficult having a daughter, son-in law and grandchildren so far away, we are proud that she is living in Israel which is our homeland and where we all belong. If she had moved so far away to a country other than Israel, it would have been even more difficult for us. Hopefully we'll be able to go and visit them soon.




[Click Here](#) to Visit Mitzpe Yericho

[Click Here](#) to Learn Some Interesting History from the Torah

VISITING HAIFA ELIJAHU'S CAVE

By Oded Strich



המרכז הלאומי לשימור אתרים קדושים
THE HOLY SITES AUTHORITY

CAVE OF ELIJAH THE PROPHET

אתר המסוקסס לזכור את אלהים ונביאיו. זהו מקום קדוש ומוקדס. זהו מקום בו התרחש אחד מסיפורי הנביא אליהו הנביא. זהו מקום בו התרחש אחד מסיפורי הנביא אליהו הנביא. זהו מקום בו התרחש אחד מסיפורי הנביא אליהו הנביא.

מערת אליהו הנביא

מערת אליהו הנביא היא מערה חצובה בסלע בגבעה הרומלית. חלל המערה מוקדש לזכור את אלהים ונביאיו. זהו מקום קדוש ומוקדס. זהו מקום בו התרחש אחד מסיפורי הנביא אליהו הנביא. זהו מקום בו התרחש אחד מסיפורי הנביא אליהו הנביא.

Elijah's Cave is a carved grotto in the Carmel Mountain. While Elijah often sought refuge in the deserts of the south, it is possible that he also hid for a time on Mount Carmel, where he confronted the prophets of Baal. This may also be the cave where Obadiah the prophet hid the prophets of God from Queen Jezebel during the drought (1 Kings 17).

Elijah continued to come and go from Ahab's palace, where war raged with the Arameans to the north. One day, Elijah learned of an injustice orchestrated by Jezebel: Ahab coveted the vineyard of his neighbor, Naboth the Jezreelite, and orchestrated a sham trial that led to Naboth's execution.

Ahab then seized the vineyard. Confronting this moral corruption, Elijah confronted and also taken possession? (1 Kings 21). Elijah prophesied the downfall of Ahab's dynasty, and Ahab himself died a shameful death at the very site where Naboth was executed—just as Elijah foretold.

After three years of severe drought, God commanded Elijah to return to Ahab and predict the coming rain. When Elijah reappeared, Ahab, who had been searching for him unsuccessfully, could hardly believe his eyes.

Elijah instructed Ahab to gather all of Israel on Mount Carmel, along with hundreds of prophets of Baal and Asherah loyal to Queen Jezebel.

There, Elijah posed a challenge to the people: "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; and if Baal, follow him" (1 Kings 18).

Elijah's prayer was answered immediately when fire descended on his altar, despite it being drenched with water. To the cries of the masses declaring, "The Lord, He is God!" and with the end of the long drought, the skies filled with clouds, and rain began to fall.

Despite the triumph on Mount Carmel, Elijah was forced to flee again into the wilderness from Queen Jezebel's wrath. He reached Mount Horeb, where God appeared to him and instructed him to anoint Elisha as his prophetic successor.



My family has been living in Haifa since 1924. I grew up in Haifa before relocating in my early twenties. I visit the city every time that I am in Israel and last month for the first time in my life, I visited Elijahu's Cave; which is located on the northern slope of Mount Carmel overlooking the Mediterranean Sea.

According to tradition, Elijahu Hanavi is believed to have prayed at the grotto (cave) before challenging the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel and to have hidden there from the wrath of Jezabel.

For centuries, the cave has been a pilgrimage destination for Jews, Christians, Muslims and Druze alike. The cave has been considered by some as miracle-working, especially for people with health issues. Sick people are said to be brought to the Cave in hopes that they will be cured. Currently the cave has separate men and women sections with seats for prayers and contemplation. It has daily minyans and there is a room that can accommodate a kiddush.

The cave is in a well-kept renovated site that is about a 15-minute walk from the Bat Galim train station or a 10-minute walk from the bottom station of the cable car that runs between the southern end of Bat Galim beach and Stela Maris. Haifa has many other attractions and interesting neighborhoods so you can easily spend a whole day exploring the city.



Jewish Community Events and Israel

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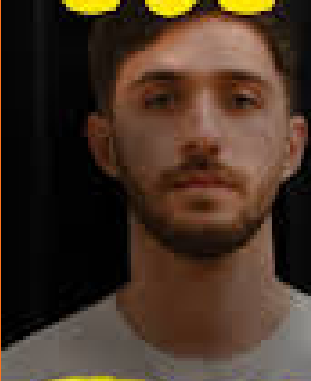
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