

icnext 3

2015 Israel Mission Sourcebook

This book belongs to _____

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Introduction to the Israel.cleveland.next (icnext) Cleveland Mission

June 14-24, 2015

Israel Mission Itinerary

During your 10 days in Israel, you will explore half the length and all the breadth of Modern Israel. You will come to know the topography and the history of this fascinating land. In the course of exploring its centrality to Judaism and Jewish History, you will also consider the issues that confront Israel in the start of the 21st century and meet some of the people who make up the mosaic of life in Israel today.

The goals of this mission are to learn cultural, demographic and geographic facts, along with security challenges that face Israel. We will work on sharpening your Israel content knowledge skills, and using this acquired knowledge as a resource for engagement activities on behalf of Israel with other teens.

The itinerary is driven by the desire to see and experience as much as possible in the short time you have in Israel. The mission staff will be available to you to help make this an enjoyable, as well as a meaningful and insightful experience.

The Israel content knowledge approach for the icnext Cleveland Israel Mission:

1. Geo-political knowledge: Experience and learn the demographic, historic, and geographic facts, along with Israeli security challenges.
2. Culture knowledge: Experience the Israeli narrative (culture, the mosaic of Israeli people). **The theme of the 2015 mission is "Blue, Brown and Much More"**
3. Mifgash: intimate (gathering, meetings) with Israeli teens at the Beit Shean/Emek Hamayanot Cleveland partnership.

icnext Cleveland - Written Expectations

True to the mission of the icnext program, in Israel you will be expected to:

1. Listen to speakers and take brief notes about the most important points.
2. When possible, pose carefully worded questions to interview speakers: Ask yourself and the speakers, 'What is the relevance of this experience for Israel engagement?'
3. Interview other Israelis whom you may meet.

4. **WRITE** about the above in letters to the editor, longer op-eds and newspaper articles, blog entries and Facebook observations.
5. What you write will also be the basis of the magazine project to be completed during your second year. No one is exempt from these assignments.
6. Remember, we use WRITING in this program for a reason; **writing clearly and persuasively** is the desired end result after you listen, ask, observe and gather your thoughts. Sharpening these skills will serve you well in Israel, in college, and in life!

The Interview Process

- Your first job is doing your homework about the person(s) you are interviewing. Learn a little about the group or denomination to which they belong. Write down some questions IN ADVANCE. Next, put them at ease by beginning with non- confrontational, non-threatening questions such as "Tell me something about yourself. Where were you born? Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories growing up?"
- If the interviewee seems relaxed at this point you might ask about unpleasant memories. If the answer is one, two or three words - "my first Hebrew teacher" - pursue the idea and ask what exactly was unpleasant about that teacher or experience.
- After you have gone through a few "softball" questions, you can begin with more in-depth questions. For example, you might ask an Ethiopian Jew whether or not he or she has ever experienced discrimination. If you get a one-word answer, DO NOT STOP THERE.
- If the interviewee says he or she did experience discrimination, ask for a specific example or two. If the example isn't clear to you, ask for further clarification. If the example is not a strong one, ask for a second or third example.
- If the interviewee says he or she did not experience discrimination, give an example that person might not have thought of like: Did you ever feel you lost out on a job, or an apartment you wanted to rent, because of your skin color? Did anyone ever call you a slang name or not invite you to join a sports team or a party because of your color?
- Ask the person if he (or she) could change one thing about the way he is looked at or treated, what would it be? Again, if you get a brief answer, ASK FOR MORE SPECIFICS!
- Always appear interested and engaged in your interviewee's answers. Nothing stifles open responses more than someone who seems bored or is just asking questions by rote! Listen carefully to answers given as these may suggest/lead to questions you hadn't thought of before.

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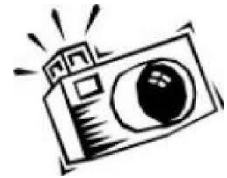
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- Finally, NEVER rely on your memory for the answers to questions you've asked. Always have a notebook and pen ready or some kind of tablet or recorder to get the answers down in the interviewee's own words!
- Get the CORRECT SPELLING of that person's name!

icnext Cleveland – Visual Storytelling Expectations

Your camera is your second tool to document your experience. Please use it as much as possible in a sensitive and thoughtful way:

1. Document the most important experiences.
2. Make sure that the situation background clues will be in each picture. This will add to a better visual storytelling image.
3. Remember that next year's **icnext** exhibit will document the theme of **“Blue, Brown and Much More”**. This exhibit will be based on **you taking high quality images** that document the Israeli families' experiences.
4. Remember to take high quality images (not with a phone).
5. Please download your images to a portable hard drive (the mission staff will have it handy every day).
6. Posing the subject:
 - a. Posture – should match the theme of the image.
 - b. Point the chin level with the camera and slightly to one side, elongate the neck to create shadows under the face.
 - c. Watch the small details such as hand positioning, how the subject is holding their body and “stray hairs”, etc.
 - d. Natural expression – it's better to get your subject to express a real emotion rather than to ‘fake it’ – get them laughing rather than asking them to just smile.
7. Landscape tips:
 - a. Stabilize your camera! Lean against something, set your camera on a surface. Minimize camera shake when you take a photo.



- b. Shoot during golden hour (when you can) the first and last hours of sunlight create long shadows, which make a more interesting image.
- c. Consider the sky. If the clouds are interesting, let them be a major part of the image. If the sky is dull, only let it occupy a small part of the image. (A third even?)
- d. Interesting foreground. When you find an interesting landscape, make it more interesting by putting something visual in the foreground.
- e. Subject. One of the more difficult things about landscape photography is clearly defining your subject. Use composition rules to make it clear what the subject of your photo is.

Specific Assignments

1. Each day two or more **icnext** fellows will be in charge of posting to the **icnext** Cleveland blog.
2. Each student is expected to take many pictures that document the Israel families' experiences:
 - a. With your Beit Shean/Haemek Hamayanot host family
 - b. During other mission's families related opportunities.
3. Each students will have to submit a family narrative with each picture
4. Carry a notebook, paper and camera to write down any memorable quotes or important lessons or facts learned that day. Each quote or fact learned must be accompanied by the name and identifying credential of the person making the statement.



We will then share these quotes and observations in our daily Reflection sessions.

Prior to our Israel Mission, please finish viewing the following articles:

1. Farcical ministerial appointments may signal beginning of end for Netanyahu (p. 16)
2. West making big mistake in fighting ISIS, says senior Israeli officer (p. 23)
3. Netanyahu two-faced on two states? Maybe not (p. 25)
4. Israel's relations with US 'in crisis', says Shimon Peres (p. 28)
5. Jerusalem: Heart of Our Heart (p.43)
6. For Jerusalem, a response to Elie Wiesel (p. 45)
7. The Galilee and Golan Heights (p. 58)
8. Israeli Arabs Ethnic and religious groupings (p. 63)
9. If This is Our Future (p. 74)

While reading the articles write one or two sentences for each film summarizing the subject matter. Bring these brief summaries to Israel where we will be either talking with the filmmaker or visiting the places profiled in the film. They will be good "refreshers" for discussions on the trip.

Prior to our Israel Mission, please finish viewing the following films:

1. Rutenberg

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5uXHMYSxKIObTcxNmEwWVNQVTg/view?usp=sharing>

2. Naharaim

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mS1VWqLCttw&feature=youtu.be>

3. How Israel became a leader in water use in the Middle East

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=taMWUjda3fA>

4. KM Orly Levy Abekasis

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJifRB1UObw>

5. Jiser Az Zarka

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=14&v=Xp-sLAHfQgk>

While watching the films write one or two sentences for each film summarizing the subject matter. Bring these brief summaries to Israel where we will be either talking with the filmmaker or visiting the places profiled in the film. They will be good "refreshers" for discussions on the trip.

Photographic and written assignments

Magazine assignment – All members of **icnext** Cohort 3 will submit an article for the **icnext** magazine based on the blogging assignments below. Specific focus for the blog will be determined through discussion with Tina Keller and Amnon Ophir.

(by 6/12) - Pre mission

- Explanation, expectation of our mission to explore the mission theme: **“Blue, Brown and Much More”**
- Rebecca S, Keeva S

6/14

- **Photographers for the Day** - Shane S, Daniel S.
- **Writers for the Day**
 - Airport interviews – Eli A, Lindsey B, Hannah B, Elon B

6/15

- **Photographers for the Day** - Shane S, Daniel S.
- **Writers for the Day**
 - Israeli society update with Gil Hoffman – Eliana B.

6/16

- **Photographers of the Day** - Barak S., Gabe S.
- **Writers for the Day**
 - State and Religion in Israel with Dr. Guy Ben-Porat – Syndi B.
 - Testimony Theater - Emily E.
 - Gaza border and Sderot – Josh C.
 - Gaza border and Sderot - Hannah C.
 - Hard advocacy Seminar with Neil Lazarus - Aidan G.
 - The Museum on the Seam - Jeremy G.

6/17

- **Photographers of the Day** - Samantha S., Benjamin R.
- **Writers for the Day**
 - “Jews on the Holy Basin” tour with Yaron Ovadia – Ellie L.
 - Outreach/Engagement Israel Advocacy Seminar with "Stand With Us - Rebecca L.
 - The separation wall, East Jerusalem tour - Yoni P.
 - The Evening concert - Rebecca Sh.

6/18

- **Photographers of the Day** - Jeremy G., Emily E.
- **Writers for the Day**
 - Jerusalem other narrative update with Ir Amim – Miriam P.
 - Israel Museum - Daniel S.
 - The Gilboa Hydroelectric Plant - Barak S.

6/19

- **Photographers of the Day** - Rebecca L., Yoni P.

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- **Writers for the Day**
 - Eden Farm – Benjamin R.
 - A tour in the water – Samantha S.
 - Take a picture activity – Gabe S., Shane S., Lindsey B.

6/20

- **Photographers of the Day** -icnext 3
- **Writers for the Day**
 - The Shabbat Experience – Eli A., Emma B.
 - Our Beit Shean Friends - Hannah B., Eliana B.

6/21

- **Photographers of the Day** -Syndi B., Hannah C.
- **Writers for the Day**
 - Northern border with Sarit Zavi – Elon B.,
 - The Kinneret water research lab – Josh C.
 - A visit to the Christian Holy Sites on the shores of the Kinneret - Emily E.
 - The Naaraim story (a tour of the Rutenberg first hydroelectric plan in Israel) - Jeremy G.

6/22

- **Photographers of the Day** -Eliana B., Hannah B.
- **Writers for the Day**
 - A visit to the Hedera desalination Plant - Ellie L.
 - Environmental tour of the Carmel sea shore – Rebecca L.
 - Jesar A-Zarka – Yoni P., Miriam P.

6/23

- **Photographers of the Day** -Lindsay B, Eli A..
- **Writers for the Day**
 - Morning interviews on the Tel Aviv Beach - Benjamin R., Keeva S., Samantha S., Gabe S..
 - “This Place”at the Tel Aviv Museum – Rebecca Sh.
 - The Sharon (Hiriya) Recycling Park - Barak S. Shane, Syndi B.

6/24

- **Photographers of the Day** -Ellie L., Rebecca L.
- **Writers for the Day**
 - Yad VaShem- Hannah C..
 - Shafdan– Daniel S..
 - Hadar Glick workshop - Eli A.

Post mission (by 6/28)

- **Mission Reflection** - Emma B., Aidan G.

icnext Cohort 3 – Year 2 Brit

All members of Cohort 3 are responsible for at least **5 things** during their second year:

- 1. Submitting article/s to the icnext Magazine**
- 2. Submitting image/s to the second year “Blue, Brown and Much More” Exhibit**
- 3. Participating in the Year 3 meetings**
- 4. Participating in the Year 2 Engagement Projects**
- 5. Participating in iDay**

Second year Engagement Projects

Magazine	Exhibit	Political Advocacy	iDay	Youth Movement	Other
Rebecca Shankman-Editor Emma Bloomberg Aidan Geis Keeva Schneider	Hannah Caplin Rebecca Levine Ellie Levine Miriam Pincus (docent @Fuchs)	Barak Spector Josh Caplan Jeremy Gimbel	Emily Einhorn Danny Simon Sydni Burg Ben Roter	Emma Bloomberg-NFTY Rebecca Shankman-NFTY Hannah Borow-USY Ellie Levine-USY Eliana Bortz-BBYO Elon Bortz-BBYO Gabe Shapera-BBYO Joni Peleg-BBYO	Eli Atzenhoffer-BITWT Shane Strongosky-BITWT Samantha Shaffer-JC Lindsay Blashka-JC

Year 2 Meeting dates TBD:

- Day 1 TBD
- Day 2 TBD
- Day 3 TBD
- February 28, 2015 (iDay)

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Welcome to Israel

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Excerpt from Herzl's *The Jewish State* (1896)

The Jewish question persists wherever Jews live in appreciable numbers. Wherever it does not exist, it is brought in together with Jewish immigrants. We are naturally drawn into those places where we are not persecuted, and our appearance there gives rise to persecution. This is the case, and will inevitably be so, everywhere, even in highly civilized countries—see, for instance, France—so long as the Jewish question is not solved on the political level. The unfortunate Jews are now carrying the seeds of anti-Semitism into England; they have already introduced it into America...

We have sincerely tried everywhere to merge with the national communities in which we live, seeking only to preserve the faith of our fathers. It is not permitted us. In vain are we loyal patriots, sometimes super-loyal; in vain do we make the same sacrifices of life and property as our fellow citizens; in vain do we strive to enhance the fame of our native lands in the arts and sciences, or her wealth by trade and commerce. In our native lands where we have lived for centuries we are still decried as aliens, often by men whose ancestors had not yet come at a time when Jewish sighs had long been heard in the country. The majority decide who the "alien" is; this, and all else in the relations between peoples, is a matter of power. I do not surrender any part of our prescriptive right when I make this statement merely in my own name, as an individual. In the world as it now is and will probably remain, for an indefinite period, might takes precedence over right. It is without avail, therefore, for us to be loyal patriots, as were the Huguenots, who were forced to emigrate. If we were left in peace...

But I think we shall not be left in peace.

Prayer for the State of Israel

אבינו שבשמים, צור ישראל וגואלו, בָּרַךְ אֶת מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, רֵאשִׁית צְמִיחַת גְּאֻלְתָּנוּ. הִגְן עָלֶיךָ בְּאֶבְרַת חֶסֶדְךָ, וּפְרַשׁ עָלֶיךָ סֶכֶת שְׁלוֹמְךָ, וּשְׁלַח אוֹרְךָ וְאַמְתָּךְ לְרֵאשִׁיָּהּ, שְׂרֵיָהּ וְיִוְעָצֶיָהּ, וְתִקְנֵם בְּעֵצָה טוֹבָה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ. חֹזֵק אֶת יָדֵי מַגְנֵי אֶרֶץ קְדֻשָׁנוּ, וְהִנְחִילֵם אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְשׁוּעָה וְעֲטָרַת נֶצְחוֹן תְּעַטְרֵם, וְנִתַּת שְׁלוֹם בְּאֶרֶץ וְשִׁמְחַת עוֹלָם לְיוֹשְׁבֶיהָ. וְאֵת אַחֵינוּ כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל פְּקַד-נָא בְּכָל אַרְצוֹת פְּזוּרֵיהֶם, וְתוֹלִיכֶם מִהֲרָה קוֹמָמוֹת לְצִיּוֹן עִירָךְ וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם מִשְׁכַּן שְׁמֶךָ, כְּכַתוּב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עֲבָדְךָ: "אִם יִהְיֶה נִדְחָךְ בְּקִצֵּה הַשָּׁמַיִם, מִשָּׁם יִקְבָּצֶךָ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּמִשָּׁם יִקְחֶךָ. וְהִבִּיאֶךָ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יָרְשׁוּ אֲבֹתֶיךָ וִירְשֶׁתָּהּ, וְהִיטִבֶּךָ וְהִרְבֶּךָ מֵאֲבֹתֶיךָ" (דברים ל, ד-ה). וְיַחַד לְבַבְנוּ לְאַהֲבָה וּלְיִרְאָה אֶת שְׁמֶךָ, וּלְשֹׁמֵר אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָתְךָ. וּשְׁלַח לָנוּ מִהֲרָה בֶן דָּוִד מְשִׁיחַ צְדָקָה, לְפָדוֹת מַחְכֵי קַץ יְשׁוּעָתְךָ. הוֹפֵעַ בְּהַדָּר גָּאוֹן עֲזָךְ עַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵּבֵל אֶרְצְךָ, וַיֹּאמֶר כָּל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמָה בְּאֶפְרוֹ: "ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מְלֶכֶךָ, וּמַלְכוּתוֹ בְּכָל מְשָׁלָה". אָמֵן סְלָה.

Our God in Heaven, Rock and Redeemer of Israel, bless the State of Israel, the first manifestation of the approach of our redemption. Shield it with Your loving-kindness, envelop it in Your peace, and bestow Your light and truth upon its leaders, ministers, and advisors, and grace them with Your good counsel. Strengthen the hands of those who defend our holy land, grant them deliverance, and adorn them in a mantle of victory. Ordain peace in the land and grant its inhabitants eternal happiness. Lead them, swiftly and upright, to Your city Zion and to Jerusalem, the abode of Your Name, as is written in the Torah of Your servant Moses: "Even if your outcasts are at the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you, from there He will fetch you. And the Lord your God will bring you to the land that your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will make you more prosperous and more numerous than your fathers." Draw our hearts together to revere and venerate Your name and to observe all the precepts of Your Torah, and send us quickly the Messiah son of David, agent of Your vindication, to redeem those who await Your deliverance. Manifest Yourself in the splendor of Your boldness before the eyes of all inhabitants of Your world, and may everyone endowed with a soul affirm that the Lord, God of Israel, is king and his dominion is absolute. Amen forevermore.

Prayer for the IDF

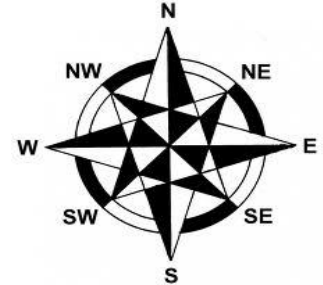
מִי שֶׁבְּרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, הוּא יְבָרַךְ אֶת חַיְלֵי צְבָא הַגְּנָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, הַעוֹמְדִים עַל מִשְׁמַר אֶרְצֵנוּ וְעָרֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִגְּבוּל הַלְּבָנוֹן וְעַד מִדְּבַר מִצְרַיִם וּמִן הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל עַד לְבוֹא הָעֶרְבָה בִּיבֻשָׁה בְּאוֹר וּבַיָּם. יְתֵן ה' אֶת אוֹיְבֵינוּ הַקָּמִים עָלֵינוּ נִגְפִים לְפָנֵיהֶם. הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יִשְׁמַר וְיַצִּיל אֶת חַיְלֵינוּ מִכָּל צָרָה וְצוּקָה וּמִכָּל נִגַע וּמַחֲלָה וְיִשְׁלַח בְּרָכָה וְהַצְלָחָה בְּכָל מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵיהֶם. יִדְבֵר שׁוֹנְאֵינוּ תַּחְתֵּיהֶם וַיַּעֲטֵרֵם בְּכִתְרֵי יְשׁוּעָה וּבְעֲטָרַת נֶצְחוֹן. וַיִּקְיֵם בָּהֶם הַכְּתוּב: כִּי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הֵחֵלְךָ עִמָּכֶם לְהִלָּחֵם לְכֶם עִם אִיבֵיכֶם לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתְכֶם: וְנֹאמֶר אָמֵן:

God Who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, -- may God bless the fighters of the Israel Defense Forces, who stand guard over our land and the cities of our God, from the border of the Lebanon to the desert of Egypt, and from the Great Sea unto the approach of the Aravah, on the land, in the air, and on the sea. May the Almighty cause the enemies who rise up against us to be struck down before them. May the Holy One, Blessed is God, preserve and rescue our fighters from every trouble and distress and from every plague and illness, and may He send blessing and success in their every endeavor.

May God lead our enemies under our soldiers' sway and may God grant them salvation and crown them with victory. And may there be fulfilled for them the verse: For it is the Lord your God, Who goes with you to battle your enemies for you to save you. Now let us respond: Amen.

The Story of the Compass

“When I was a child I had a beloved uncle who brought gifts every time he visited. One day he gave me a little compass and taught me how to find the north. I took the compass with me everywhere I went, and the first thing I did was find out where the north was. In every place the needle showed the north. At school, in the playground, in my room, in Father’s store. On his next visit, my uncle asked me a riddle: If you stand right at the north pole, where will the needle point?



His question stumped me, and he rejected every answer I could think of. Then he told me: There, in the north pole, the needle will go mad. It will point up, down, sideways, every which way. The compass is good for showing the north in every place on Earth except for the north itself.

That is what my uncle said. And the moral?

How easy was Zionism when all it consisted of was longings for Zion. In all the corners of the Diaspora, in Poland and Russia and Yemen and Morocco, the needle pointed the way, showed us what must be done. But from the moment we came here, to Zion, the needle went mad.”

(“The World A Moment Later” by Amir Gutfreund)

Poems by Yehuda Amichai

Tourists

Visits of condolence is all we get from them.
They squat at the Holocaust Memorial,
They put on grave faces at the Wailing Wall
And they laugh behind heavy curtains
In their hotels.
They have their pictures taken
Together with our famous dead
At Rachel's Tomb and Herzl's Tomb
And on Ammunition Hill.
They weep over our sweet boys
And lust after our tough girls
And hang up their underwear
To dry quickly
In cool, blue bathrooms.

Once I sat on the steps by agate at David's Tower,
I placed my two heavy baskets at my side. A group of tourists
was standing around their guide and I became their target marker. "You see
that man with the baskets? Just right of his head there's an arch
from the Roman period. Just right of his head." "But he's moving, he's moving!"
I said to myself: redemption will come only if their guide tells them,
"You see that arch from the Roman period? It's not important: but next to it,
left and down a bit, there sits a man who's bought fruit and vegetables for his family."

An Arab Shepherd Is Searching For His Goat On Mount Zion

An Arab shepherd is searching for his goat on Mount Zion
And on the opposite hill I am searching for my little boy.
An Arab shepherd and a Jewish father
Both in their temporary failure.
Our two voices met above
The Sultan's Pool in the valley between us.
Neither of us wants the boy or the goat
To get caught in the wheels
Of the "Had Gadya" machine.

Afterward we found them among the bushes,
And our voices came back inside us
Laughing and crying.

Searching for a goat or for a child has always been
The beginning of a new religion in these mountains.

Farcical ministerial appointments may signal beginning of end for Netanyahu

The only logic behind the otherwise incomprehensible staffing of Israel's new government is that the PM is desperate to marginalize any potential challengers. It may not work

By: Haviv Rettig Gur

May 25, 2015

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition-building has been "a disaster," even "a farce," Israeli pundits almost universally agreed in recent weeks. And it is true that Israel's new government, its 34th in 67 years, takes some explaining. The list of seemingly incoherent appointments is a long one. The minister of justice has no background in law, the minister of science none in science, the minister of tourism is also in charge of the police and prisons. There is a full minister in the Communications Ministry, but he's not the communications minister; that title is reserved for the prime minister, who is also the minister of health (but promises not to act as such) and of foreign affairs, a portfolio effectively leaderless at a time of growing diplomatic tensions. The absorption minister is also the strategic affairs minister, while the transportation minister is also in charge of a newly christened "Intelligence Ministry." And on and on.

Worse than all that is the fact that the cabinet that was sworn in two weeks ago isn't even finalized. Netanyahu is begging Likud number-two Gilad Erdan to join his government, promising him the Internal Security Ministry (to be taken from Tourism Minister Yariv Levin), the Strategic Affairs Ministry (to be taken from Absorption Minister Ze'ev Elkin), a reshuffle of the security cabinet to allow Erdan in, and other dignities besides.

A possibly final vote on the finishing touches of the cabinet will take place in the Knesset on Monday – assuming Netanyahu can finalize by then who will oversee which ministry, cabinet committee or government agency.

Indeed, with all the maneuvering and ministry-shuffling, one might be forgiven for wondering if politicians grasp that the ministries changing hands are organs of government, funded by taxpayers and ostensibly intended to serve them, rather than playing cards to be traded around two or even three times in the space of a single week to satisfy the wounded dignities of public servants.

Thus one finds a Communications Ministry that lost not only its minister this month (Erdan), but its director-general, who Netanyahu fired in a peremptory phone call in what many pundits maintained was a message to Erdan. The Interior Ministry saw its planning department

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excised and moved to the treasury to satisfy the demands of the new finance minister, while the Settlement Division was moved from the PMO to the Agriculture Ministry to satisfy the West Bank annexationists in the Jewish Home party.

Billions of shekels are now promised to the Education Ministry and various welfare agencies — not because anyone sat down and worked out what exactly was needed in each place, but because ministers demanded it as a condition for taking their posts. Countless millions are now being promised to the police, if only Erdan agrees to join the government. If Erdan chooses to stay out, in a flagrant challenge to Netanyahu's authority, then by the magical logic of coalition-building the Israel Police apparently no longer need the money.

And yet, even as Netanyahu squanders no small amount of his new government's dignity on these cabinet acrobatics in order to placate the ambitions of coalition partners and Likud leaders, nobody seems happy.

Education Minister Naftali Bennett wasn't shy about his disappointment at landing the job. Tzachi Hanegbi, who announced earlier this month that he saw himself a candidate for foreign minister, calls his relegation to the post of coalition chairman a pre-college "year of service in the Knesset." Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon flatly threatened to violate the coalition agreement with Jewish Home by denying his new deputy Eli Ben-Dahan control over the IDF's Civil Administration in the West Bank. And most spectacularly, Erdan was so deeply insulted by Netanyahu's refusal to give him the combined internal security and interior portfolios, as he'd asked, that he declined to join the government at all, spending much of the past three weeks going from one television studio to another railing against his own party leader.

The tortured logic of Netanyahu's coalition-building, in other words, is not his fault alone. The problem is deeper, cultural.

It is a problem hinted at by former Meretz education minister Yossi Sarid, who recalled this week that "in those days [the 1990s], offering someone a post like 'deputy prime minister' was an insult." It amounted to a prime minister telling the cabinet minister "that he thinks he could be bought by meaningless titles."

In the intervening years, through the Barak, Sharon, Olmert and Netanyahu governments, the institution of deputy prime minister, still powerless, has become a basic ingredient in the egodriven glue of titles that holds together a coalition. Loyalties to party or cause have given way to personal ambition — and that's no accident.

Method in the madness

It is not hard to trace what Netanyahu was trying to accomplish at each step in the construction of the current ministerial morass, nor is it difficult to ascertain what went wrong each time.

For example, the cleaving of the Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Intelligence, split in two and handed to Elkin and Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz respectively, was a tactical decision by Netanyahu to preserve the loyal majority he enjoys in the security cabinet, the cabinet's most powerful subcommittee. By virtue of their new titles, both Elkin and Katz were made members of the now-11-member security cabinet, offsetting additions Netanyahu was forced to make from other parties — such as Jewish Home's Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked.

Such maneuvers account for other idiosyncrasies of the cabinet. The Foreign Ministry is ministerless because Netanyahu is holding on to hope that he can attract into his 61-seat coalition at least one opposition party — Labor, Yisrael Beytenu, even Yesh Atid — to cement his majority. Holding open such a senior post is meant to signal how serious he is about sharing power with anyone willing to be his next ally.

The Health Ministry, too, is without a full minister, this time because the party running it, the ultraOrthodox non-Zionist United Torah Judaism, refuses to allow its Knesset representatives to sit at the cabinet table of the State of Israel. Luckily, deputy ministers don't face such encumbrances, so UTJ's Yaakov Litzman, now deputy health minister, holds de facto control of the Health Ministry despite being technically subordinate to the absentee Health Minister Netanyahu.

Such antics convey the extent to which governing an Israeli coalition has become an act of nearly superhuman juggling of allegiances, portfolios, priorities, agendas, budgets and, of course, egos.

What remains to be seen — and it is a mystery on which the coalition and perhaps the future of national politics depend — is whether Netanyahu, despite his own stumbles and the obstacles placed in his path by Israel's chaotic political structures, can still govern.

Close to Home

Despite his Likud winning 30 seats in the March 17 election, better than any party's showing since 2003, Netanyahu watched his coalition talks run away from him in recent weeks. Avigdor Liberman's Yisrael Beytenu, for reasons of its own, pulled out of the coalition, while Zionist Union party leader Isaac Herzog eventually — one senses with no small measure of regret

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– turned down the premier’s advances so as not to compromise his own standing in next year’s Labor primaries. That left Netanyahu with a 61-59 majority – and even that only after giving Jewish Home the Justice Ministry in a last-minute squeeze by the right-wing party.

Netanyahu blamed the electoral system for his near-failure to form a coalition, charging Liberman with “twisting the voters’ decision.” By Netanyahu’s logic, the right, broadly understood as Likud, Jewish Home and Yisrael Beytenu, won a plurality of the electorate, and Liberman’s volte-face to the opposition was a betrayal of that trust.

The greedy Jewish Home, the capricious Yisrael Beytenu, an electoral system that denies any premier even the distant hope of a clear unassailable majority — in the prime minister’s telling, it was these factors that resulted inexorably in Netanyahu’s now desperately thin majority in parliament.

It was a convincing argument. Parties did indeed seem to switch from coalition to opposition too easily, threatened to topple the government at nearly monthly intervals over the past two years, and demanded power and ministries that the size of their constituencies didn’t justify, but which no prime minister could have rejected if they wished to cement their parliamentary majority.

But something changed over the past three weeks, when Netanyahu’s theory of who is to blame for his political woes was tested within his own party.

Likud has a long-standing culture of loyalty toward the party leader. It has had only four leaders since 1948: Menachem Begin, Yitzhak Shamir, Ariel Sharon and Benjamin Netanyahu. Contrast that with Labor’s nine leadership changes since 1995 and one begins to understand a key cause for Netanyahu’s remarkably long run as premier.

But lately, that devotion has been severely tested by Netanyahu, who has taken to explicitly treating even his close allies in the party as potential enemies, backtracking on promises, and leaving a long train of disappointed and insulted party power-brokers in his wake.

One current example: Hanegbi is slated to leave his post as coalition chairman and join the cabinet as a minister at the end of the coalition’s first year. But will he? One might ask the new tourism minister, Yariv Levin, who was also promised a cabinet appointment after his first year as coalition chairman in the last Knesset — a promise Netanyahu reneged on, even after the resignation of Gideon Sa’ar opened up a cabinet seat.

Levin is the most dramatic winner in the new cabinet, but here, too, the story is not about Levin’s success, but about how Netanyahu used him to stymie the ambitions of others. A respected lawmaker and former attorney, Levin asked to be tourism minister and was handed the job without argument. But then Netanyahu heaped on him posts he didn’t even dream of:

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internal security minister; minister-liaison between the cabinet and the Knesset; deputy chairman of the Ministerial Committee for Legislation, the cabinet committee that votes to grant cabinet support for bills, often all but assuring their passage into law.

The last post is especially surprising. Levin is one of the most outspoken critics of the powers of Israel's High Court of Justice, yet has been placed in a post that was created by Netanyahu largely in order to veto right-wing decisions by the committee's chair, Justice Minister Shaked, including her plans to push through precisely those reforms Levin has long supported. Levin now faces the very real prospect of being forced to veto legislation he has long tried to advance – or risk losing the fickle favor of the prime minister yet again.

How did Levin become so powerful, winning positions of influence he didn't even seek and which may soon pit him against his own longstanding principles? The answer is simple: where once Netanyahu ignored Levin to the point of neglecting his own promises to him, Levin is now a safe pair of hands in which to place powers the prime minister is trying to keep away from others — holding the internal security portfolio for Erdan or a future Labor or Yesh Atid minister, and keeping the legislation committee post away from rising new security cabinet members such as Elkin or Katz, who Netanyahu fears may be growing too influential.

It is possible, of course, that Levin's cartoonish number of appointments — even he has admitted that the Tourism Ministry “can't be run by a part-time minister,” and that he hopes to get to be its full-time minister soon — reflect nothing more than Netanyahu's faith in the lawmaker. But Netanyahu's history suggests he is more calculating than that. And more importantly, these maneuvers are being read inside Likud, and especially by Erdan, as efforts to contain the popularity of other ministers and prevent the rise of any serious challengers within the party.

After the collapse of the ideological certainties of left and right in the waning years of the Oslo peace process and in the Second Intifada, a new age of personality politics dawned. The electorate was far more concerned with the fact that Ariel Sharon was Ariel Sharon than with the fact that he led either Likud or Kadima. Netanyahu, too, is far more trusted by today's voters than is his party. Yair Lapid, Moshe Kahlon, the fretful revolving-door leadership races of the weakened Labor party all speak to the rising importance of personality over party. And as parties grow more dependent on their leaders than the leaders are on them, successful leaders grow harder to oust. Rising powers tend to discover there is little room at the top of the party machine for anyone who might challenge the leader.

Netanyahu's treatment of fellow Likud leaders, illustrated circumstantially in the above examples, isn't new, and it has led to an exodus of some of Likud's best and brightest in recent years. Some of these political refugees need little introduction. Moshe Kahlon left the party in

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2013 when his popularity outstripped his opportunities for advancement. Some two years later, in late 2014, Gideon Sa'ar did the same.

Thus, the more popular Kahlon grew, the less Likud could contain him. So he left, and within three years was leading a slate of his own, Kulanu, that basked in his popularity; indeed, that offered voters little more than the promise that Kahlon himself would be looking out for them. He won 10 seats.

Since Sa'ar's retirement, the Israeli press has hardly been able to contain its excitement over every politically suggestive tweet he has published.

And so all eyes are now turned to Erdan, who has transformed in the eyes of many into a weathervane of the party's future and a potential challenger to Netanyahu. Over the past two weeks, Erdan did something new and unexpected: he stayed.

Kahlon and Sa'ar didn't want to be crushed and eventually subsumed by a party that could not be dislodged from its subservience to Netanyahu. Erdan is equally popular in the party, well thought-of in the electorate, and equally ambitious. So will he leave? And if so, why hasn't he done so already? One possibility openly discussed in recent days within Likud ranks suggests that Erdan senses a change in the party. The number of powerbrokers embittered by Netanyahu has only grown during his long rule. Meanwhile, some party activists look at Kahlon's success outside Likud's ranks and wonder if Netanyahu's chokehold on power isn't costing the party some of those seats.

To be sure, these sentiments alone would not be enough to justify considering a challenge to Netanyahu. That would require not only the presence of large groups in Likud's base and institutions who would challenge Netanyahu, but enough of them to make a pitched battle against a sitting prime minister — unthinkable in Sa'ar's case only a year ago, and nearly unprecedented in Likud's long history — worth the risk.

Erdan may yet take Netanyahu's offer of the internal security portfolio and let the moment of tension pass. But its significance won't be forgotten.

The more Netanyahu must maneuver against his own Likud colleagues — indeed, the more billions of shekels he promises away in the ad-hominem policymaking on display this past month — the clearer he is signaling his awareness of the subterranean but undeniable shift in mood in Likud.

Netanyahu has not faced a serious challenge to his leadership in years. The recent candidacies of the likes of Moshe Feiglin or Danny Danon did not leave pundits guessing as to who would win the contest. But if in an upcoming leadership race, Netanyahu suddenly faces a Sa'ar or an Erdan, there isn't a pundit, pollster or prime minister who can say for certain how that race would end.

Netanyahu remains the top dog in the ruling party. But as would-be challengers accumulate and enemies multiply, it is possible that the nation is seeing the beginning of the end of the Netanyahu era in Israeli politics.

West making big mistake in fighting ISIS, says senior Israeli officer

IDF Northern Command officer says he thinks the U.S.-led coalition intervened too early against the Sunni militants, and 'not necessarily in the right direction.'

By: Gili Cohen

Oct. 31, 2014

A senior Northern Command officer said Thursday that the Western coalition is making a big mistake in fighting against ISIS.

The coalition forces' attacks against the Islamic State support the "radical Shi'ite axis," the unnamed officer said. "A strange situation has been created in which the United States, Canada and France are on the same side as Hezbollah, Iran and Assad. That doesn't make sense," he said.

It was easier to deal with terrorism in its early stages [ISIS] than to face an Iranian threat and the Hezbollah, he said. "I believe the West intervened too early and not necessarily in the right direction," he said.

The unnamed officer said the Iranian presence in Syria is increasing, but neither Iran nor Syria has an interest in starting a war against Israel. He predicted that Assad's regime would last for several more years of "ups and downs" before crumbling completely.

The officer spoke about the change in Hezbollah's policy as reflected in its retaliation to Israel. "It's obvious Hezbollah has no intention of twiddling its thumbs every time Israel does something, openly or covertly, to prevent it from building up its power," he said.

It would not be correct to say that Israel's deterrence in the north has "evaporated" but is no longer complete, either, he said.

The IDF will not be able to defeat Hezbollah in a ground operation but only by using its entire power, the officer said. "[When Israel fought against them] Hezbollah were capable of shutting down Ben Gurion Airport down and paralyzing Haifa Port," he said.

"If Hezbollah decides to use its full power, there will be no choice but to use the IDF as well – and quickly, not slowly," he said.

"We in the IDF must be able to remove threats quickly and I don't know how that can be done without using the ground forces. Is there a chance of defeating Hezbollah by bombs alone? Definitely not," he said.

The officer blasted the IDF for failing to train the troops over the past year and said the army had reached a "red line" as far as the soldiers' competence was concerned.

"From May 2013 to November 2014 we were in bad shape. When an infantry soldier (in Operation Protective Edge) sees a device he has to use for the first time in the gathering area [before going into action] it's unacceptable," he said.

The officer said the ground forces' training is indispensable, as accurate intelligence and aerial strikes are not enough to defeat an enemy.

Netanyahu two-faced on two states? Maybe not

Don't be fooled: the PM's reported willingness to discuss borders only seems like a breakthrough; in fact, he still sees a two-state outcome as desirable, but currently impossible.

*By: Raphael Ahren
May 26, 2015*

In the US, they call it a flipflop. In Israel it's a zigzag and in France a volte-face, but no matter what name you give it, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has apparently become a master of changing his mind, at least on the issue of Palestinian statehood.

Or so it sometimes seems. But look a little deeper and the prime minister's stance has remained constant — a view of a two-state solution as an ideal, though one that can't be realized now.

One could be forgiven for failing to get a good read on where the prime minister actually stands on the issue. In the past months alone, he seemingly reversed his pre-election position right after the vote, made various statements about construction in East Jerusalem and seeking alliances with moderate Arab states, and appointed hawkish politicians such as Tzipi Hotovely and Silvan Shalom to crucial posts — all of which provide more questions than answers.

Adding to the general befuddlement was a report Tuesday that Netanyahu showed willingness, for the first time ever, to discuss the contours of borders between Israel and a future Palestinian state by determining which settlement blocs would remain under Israeli rule in a future peace deal.

"It's clear there are areas that will remain under Israeli control under any agreement, just as it's clear there are areas that will remain under Palestinian control under any agreement," the prime minister reportedly said during a meeting with European Union foreign policy czar Federica Mogherini.

On the one hand, Netanyahu said (during his joint press conference with Mogherini last week) that he supports the principle of two states for two peoples and desires the speedy resumption of peace talks. On the other hand, he said (in the closed meeting with Mogherini that followed) that the Palestinians are running away from peace, taking unilateral hostile actions against Israel and posing preconditions that make an agreement impossible.

It is no wonder that the Europeans left the meeting skeptical, heartened by Netanyahu's declared commitment to Palestinian statehood but still unsure about the sincerity of his words.

But the truth is that Netanyahu's position is not all that difficult to figure out. In principle, he knows that a one-state solution would lead to a bi-national state, which would spell the end of the Zionist dream. This realization, joined with ever-increasing international pressure, led him to endorse the two-state solution.

He first expressed the willingness to accept a demilitarized Palestinian state that recognized Israel as the Jewish homeland in a historic 2009 Bar-Ilan University speech. And several statements geared to a right-wing electorate ahead of the recent elections notwithstanding, Netanyahu has never really reneged on his commitment to the principle of two states for two peoples.

At the same time, however, he is convinced that the current geopolitical realities would turn a future Palestine into a hotbed for terrorists that would jeopardize Israel's survival. Furthermore, he interprets the Palestinians' refusal to recognize Israel as a Jewish state as an indication that the current Palestinian leadership is not ready to drop all claims against Israel once and for all and coexist peacefully.

Lastly, his political base is such that it can swallow a rhetorical commitment to the two-state solution, but he fears it would rebel if he were to make concrete moves to divide the Land of Israel.

It's the clash between what Netanyahu considers a dreamy ideal and the harsh reality that dooms his position on Palestinian statehood to a debilitating deadlock.

Hence, his reported willingness to delineate areas Israel would keep under a future agreement Tuesday should not be seen as an indication of a new flexibility. Rather, it is probably little more than a maneuver to placate the international community and to secure international legitimacy for the settlements blocs, so he can continue building there without being hammered by the world every time a new tender is issued.

Those seeing a true "possibility of a breakthrough," as Israeli and European officials told Haaretz about Netanyahu's closed meeting with Mogherini, are likely to be sorely disappointed. All Netanyahu said to the EU chief was that he remains generally committed to the peace process and a two-state solution, and wishes for peace talks to resume. He did not present any

maps or indicate how much of the West Bank he is willing to give to the Palestinians, nor did he so much as mention concrete proposals or policy initiatives.

For the Europeans, as for the US administration, the question is no longer whether the Israeli government embraces or rejects the two-state solution. A Palestinian state based roughly on the 1967 lines is the only game in town for them, and they wonder now what exactly Netanyahu means when he speaks of two states for two peoples. If he envisions a State of Palestine on an area comprising only 60-odd percent of the West Bank, without East Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley, his vague commitment to a two-state solution will not satisfy them for very long.

Netanyahu thinks he can get away with this because he is banking on Palestinian recalcitrance. If I stretch out my hand with an offer to discuss the borders of the settlement blocs and the Palestinians turn it down, he might like to think, the international community will have no other choice but to refocus its pressure on Ramallah.

The first part of this scenario has already come true. It only took a few hours after the report emerged until the Palestinian Authority unequivocally nipped Netanyahu's ostensible proposal in the bud.

"Nothing relating to final status issues can be segmented or postponed," spokesperson Nabil Abu Rudeineh said. "The basis for any negotiations must be recognition of the 1967 borders, Jerusalem as the capital of an independent Palestinian state... along with a complete halt to settlement [construction] and the release of the fourth group of [security] prisoners jailed before Oslo."

This more or less describes the international community's vision of a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well, and therefore it may be doubted whether Netanyahu's strategy will succeed.

If the EU, and more significantly US President Barack Obama, arrive at the conclusion that Netanyahu's heart is not where they'd like it to be on the Palestinian question, he will soon discover that a verbal commitment to a two-state solution will not get him off the hook.

Israel's relations with US 'in crisis', says Shimon Peres

Interview: The former president says the Palestinian leader is a partner for peace and urges Israel to "go for a two-state solution"

By: David Blair

May 19 2015

Israel must overcome a "crisis" in relations with America by rebuilding its bipartisan support among Democrats and Republicans, Shimon Peres said on Tuesday.

The former president of Israel told The Telegraph that reviving the "two-state solution" to the conflict with the Palestinians offered the best way of healing the rift with Washington. But Mr Peres conceded that he did not know whether Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, genuinely favoured this formula or not.

During a career stretching back to the 1950s, Mr Peres served in 12 governments and was prime minister three times. Along the way, he was the defence minister who authorised the rescue of 102 hostages from Entebbe in Uganda in 1976 – one of Israel's most celebrated feats of arms - and won the Nobel Peace Prize for helping to negotiate the Oslo accords.

Mr Peres later served as president until his retirement last July. During a visit to London, the 91-year-old elder statesman carefully avoided any explicit criticism of his old rival, Mr Netanyahu.

But Mr Peres voiced his unease about Israel's current predicament and, in particular, the breach with America.

"I'm very concerned, but I think it can be corrected," said Mr Peres. "And I don't see any reason why it shouldn't be done."

In March, Mr Netanyahu broke with established convention by accepting an invitation from the Republican leadership to address both Houses of Congress. The prime minister then used his speech to condemn President Barack Obama's policy towards Iran – infuriating the White House and many Democrats.

"We have to straighten out that we are working with the two parties the whole time," said Mr Peres. "Israel, for all our life, enjoyed bipartisan support. There are various impressions that we are not following the rules. We have to return to the two-party support, because basically the sympathy for Israel remains."

Mr Peres observed that relations with the US were in a "crisis that we have to overcome".

Asked who was responsible, he replied: "It's unimportant. Everybody knows there were things and I don't see any reason for me to go into it and say 'this was wrong, that was wrong'.

don't think it's helpful. Suppose I should find the person who is to be blamed? Believe me, I'm not going to hang him, nor am I going to hang up on him."

Mr Peres added: "I think as much as I can about the future, how to repair it. And I think it's possible. I think if Israel will go for a two-state solution, most of the crisis will disappear." But Mr Netanyahu appeared to abandon his support for the two-state solution during his successful campaign to win re-election in March. In one speech, he promised "no concessions" and "no withdrawals" from occupied Palestinian land.

Mr Peres admitted that he did not know the current stance of Israel's government. "Well, there were different positions. But when it was published that Netanyahu gave it up [the two-state solution], he denied it. I really don't know. We shall taste the pudding very quickly," he said.

Later, Mr Netanyahu perhaps gave a sign of the flavour of the pudding by appointing Silvan Shalom, a critic of the two-state solution, as Israel's chief negotiator with the Palestinians.

Nonetheless, Mr Peres urged Israel's leaders to join America in a new effort to settle the conflict. "We have to try together, along with the Europeans, to find the time and the solution to bring an end to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict," he said. "It's not the largest conflict – and not even the most complicated one – but the effect is very large."

Mr Netanyahu has accused Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the Palestinian Authority, of celebrating terrorists and inciting violence. One Israeli minister, Yuval Steinitz, went so far as to label Mr Abbas the "number one anti-Semitic leader in the world".

But Mr Peres, who has known the Palestinian leader for decades, offered a profoundly different view. Asked whether Mr Abbas could be Israel's partner for peace, he replied immediately: "Yes."

Mr Peres added: "I know him and, look, he agreed to many things. And it wasn't simple." Mr Peres went on: "He [Mr Abbas] made compromises. He also made mistakes. But you negotiate because you don't agree. We have enough disagreements to negotiate. And I believe we have enough ingenuity to find unused solutions."

Mr Netanyahu's central diplomatic objective, however, is to kill an emerging agreement between America and Iran over the latter's nuclear programme. The prime minister has denounced last month's framework nuclear deal as a "historic mistake".

But Mr Peres offered a more sanguine view of America's diplomacy towards Iran's nuclear ambitions. "Some people were very quick to offer a military solution. Obama put all options on the table – including also the non-military options. For that too you need a very wide

coalition. The first need of President Obama was to hammer out a coalition with the Chinese, the Russians, the Europeans.”

Mr Peres said that Iran posed a “danger” to the region, but he rejected the idea that the Islamic Republic might come to dominate the Middle East. “I suggest that everybody has to keep a sense of balance,” he said.

“Iran wants to run the Middle East? Can they? Suppose Iran will take over Syria and Iraq and the Yemen and whatever it is. Are they going to have a honeymoon there? England knows what an empire is. At the beginning it’s very promising; at the end it’s very disappointing. When you come in with force, at the beginning you have some advantages. But then you create resentment and terror – and then you leave. Is Iran greater than England, greater than France? Nonsense.”

Our Logistic Leader and Educator



Our logistic leader and educator in Israel will be **Tal Bouhnik**. Tal was born and raised in Ashkelon, which is in the South of Israel. During his high school years he was an active member in the Scouts movement as a Chanich and Madrich. He also played the saxophone. After school he did a year of service (ShinShin) where he spent a year in Baltimore volunteering in the Jewish community. It was a very meaningful and eye opening experience for Tal, as he experienced the life of American Jews.

During his army he served in the intelligence force. After his army service he worked for at the Israel Experience for the summer. During the past 9 months Tal has worked at the Alexander Muss high school in Israel.

Sunday, June 14

Departure from Cleveland



Photographs of the Day - Shane S., Daniel S.

Airport Interviews



Eli A., Lindsey B., Hannah B., Elom B

Monday, June 16 (Arrival in Israel- 3:15pm)



Photographs of the Day - Shane S., Daniel S.

6:00- The Israeli society an update with Gil Hoffman



Eliana B.

8:30- Arrive in Kramim

8:30 Dinner at hostel

9:45- 11:00 Reflection



Lunch: Snack at the airport

Dinner: Gan Kramim hostel

Overnight: Gan Kramim hostel





Gil Hoffman is the chief political correspondent and analyst for The Jerusalem Post. Well-connected to Israeli and Palestinian leaders, Hoffman has interviewed every major figure across the Israeli political spectrum, has been interviewed by top media on six continents and is a regular analyst on CNN, Al-Jazeera and other news outlets. Called "The most optimistic man in Israel" by Israel Television, Hoffman's writing and TV appearances provide a behind the scenes look at both the intrigue and humor in the Israeli political arena. Hoffman, who was raised in Chicago, graduated Magna Cum Laude from Northwestern University's School of Journalism and wrote for the Miami Herald and Arizona Republic before moving to Israel. A reserve soldier in the IDF's Spokesman's Unit, he has lectured in nine countries and all 46 contiguous states not named Dakota. He lives with his family in Jerusalem.

Tuesday, June 16



Photographs of the Day - Barak S., Gabe S.

07:30 Breakfast at Gan Kramim hotel

08:00-10:00 State and Religion in Israel with Dr. Guy Ben-Porat at Ben Gurion University

BLOG

Syndi B.

10:30-12:00 Visit to Testimony Theater

BLOG

Emily E.

12:30-4:00 Security tour along Gaza border and a visit to Sderot and the Gaza border

BLOG

Josh C., Hannah C.

1:00 Cash lunch at Sderot

4:00-5:30 Drive to Jerusalem

6:30-8:00 Welcome to the Middle East- Hard advocacy seminar with Neil Lazarus

BLOG

Aidan G.

8:00-10:00 Seams Museum, "And the Trees Went Forth to Seek a King" exhibit

BLOG

Jeremy G.

10:30 - 00:30 - Reflection time

Lunch: Cash lunch in Sderot

Dinner: Packed dinner

Overnight: Rabin hostel, Jerusalem



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Dr Guy Ben-Porat was born in Israel (1967), studied at Tel-Aviv University and Johns Hopkins University (Ph.D. in Political Science). In his first book *Global Liberalism, Local Populism; Peace and Conflict in Israel/Palestine and Northern Ireland* he explored the peace process in Israel and Northern Ireland. His latest book engages with processes and dilemmas of secularization in contemporary Israel. He is the father of two daughters and lives in Lehavim, in the south of Israel.



Neil Lazarus is an internationally acclaimed expert in the fields of Middle East politics, public diplomacy and effective communication training. Described as "Mr Israel Advocacy" by the Times of Israel, he is fast emerging as one of Israel's leading key note speakers. His presentations are motivating, informative and challenging. Neil speaks to over 30,000 people a year and his presentations are causing an international sensation. He is a favored speaker for Jewish Federations, Community Leadership as well as student leadership groups. He is a welcomed guest at many Christian friends of Israel organizations. Neil Lazarus has helped train a new generation of Israeli diplomats and spokespeople. He is the author of "The New 5 Rules of Effective Israel Advocacy". His client list is extensive and have included; The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Israeli Ministry of Tourism, Jewish Federations, JCRCs, Sky TV, Russian English TV, Keshet Television, Harvard University Extension Courses in Israel, Yad Vashem, Hillel, Hadassah, Birthright and The Jewish Agency of Israel, The Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzalia, and many more. He acted as the public diplomacy policy advisor for Israel's leading reality television program, "The Ambassador." Born in Britain he received his first degree in Political Science at the University of Wales. Neil immigrated to Israel in 1988 and soon after received his Masters Degree at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The Negev



For many visitors, the Negev, the desert part of the trip, leaves the strongest impression of Israel. It does not have as many historical sites as Jerusalem or the Galilee, but it probably looks much more like the Israel many first timers expect to see, with vast empty spaces and camels and Bedouin on the horizon. The Negev has an important role in Israel's heritage and a chief role in the vision of the future.

The word Negev appears in the Bible and translates to “dry”. The Biblical commentator Rashi explains “it is called Negev because at all times it is dry, there is no shade from trees and the sun is always shining and drying it out.” The modern Hebrew word for desert, “*Midbar*”, means place of grazing. The Bedouin sheep and goats will also depict that aspect of the desert. Since the Negev is in the southern part of the country, “*Negev*” took on the meaning “south” as well.

The Negev is the name of the southern “triangle” of the State of Israel. Its north and east borders are natural borders: the Arava rift valley in the west (which is also the border with Jordan) and the Beer Sheva valley in the north. The eastern border of the Negev—a straight line—is the Sinai Peninsula and the international border of Egypt. There are no natural landmarks that delineate this border. The Negev highlands are made up of mountains between 600 and 1000 meters tall. The climate in the Negev is dry—200mm of rain fall annually in the Beer Sheva area, 100mm in Mitzpeh Ramon, and only 25mm in Eilat. Even though rain is sparse in the Negev, flash floods in the river beds are common in the winter months, but the rocky terrain doesn't allow for infiltration of the water. The Negev has unique geological formations such as the three Machtshim (craters), and has natural resources important for different industries.

The Negev holds an important role in Jewish history as well. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived in the Negev. King Solomon made a road that ran through the Negev, connecting Judeah to Eilat (Etzion Gever). Similar to today, this road connected the Jewish kingdom to the markets of the Far East. The scenery of the Negev was also the inspiration for some of the Psalms and for the

words of the prophets. These deep roots led the Negev to be central in David Ben Gurion's Zionist vision of the development of the Negev.

Today the Negev is home to a wide variety of lifestyles. Beer Sheva is the capital of the Negev and has all the provisions of a modern city, such as a university, a hospital, a shopping mall, etc. The Negev is home to development towns, kibbutzim, moshavim, Bedouin towns and encampments, and the many hikers and nature lovers from all over the country that find inner peace in its wilderness.



(Witness) Testimony Theater was imported to New York in 2012. Ezra Dagan — an actor, director and professor at the University of Haifa — and his wife Irit, an actor, stage director and drama teacher, had initiated the

project in Israel. Together they conceived a months-long theatrical, therapeutic process to pass on firsthand testimony of the Holocaust.

The project has three phases: Participants get to know each other; survivors tell their stories; and then, the participants perform a dramatization of the survivors' stories onstage.

Witness Theater allows a dwindling population of survivors to relate experiences to the next generation, who can continue telling their stories and preserving the memory of the Holocaust for decades to come.

Sderot



Sderot is a western Negev city in the Southern District of Israel. According to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), at the end of 2006 the city had a total population of 19,300. The city has been an ongoing target of Qassam rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip. In March 2008, the mayor said the population had declined by 10%-15% (aid organizations say the figure is closer to 25%) as families left the city

in desperation. Many of the families that remain cannot afford to move out or are unable to sell their homes.

Less than a mile from Gaza, Sderot has been the target of Palestinian rocket attacks that have killed 13 residents, wounded hundreds, caused millions of dollars in damage, disrupted daily life and wreaked havoc on the local economy. According to MSNBC, “nearly everyone [has been] traumatized by the frequent sound of air-raid sirens and explosions of incoming projectiles”. All local schools have been fortified. From mid-June 2007 to mid-February 2008, 771 rockets and 857 mortar bombs were fired at Sderot and the western Negev, an average of three or four each a day.

The Museum on the Seam



The Museum on the Seam is a socio-political contemporary art museum located in Jerusalem. The Museum in its unique way, presents art as a language with no boundaries in order to raise controversial social issues for public discussion. At the center of the changing exhibitions in the Museum stand the national, ethnic and economic seam lines in their local and universal contexts. The exhibition "And the Trees Went Forth to Seek a King" critically examines the complex inter-relationship between leaders and their subjects. The name of the exhibition is derived from the opening phrase of "Jotham's parable" (Judges: 9), the first anarchistic manifest in the Bible, and one of the earliest texts describing human nature's search for a leader.



Wednesday, June 17 - Jerusalem of Complexity - Part 1

Photographs of the Day - Samantha S., Benjamin R.

07:30 Breakfast: At the hotel in Jerusalem

09:00-12:30 "Jews on the Holy Basin" tour with Yaron Ovadia, including the temple mount (security permitting) and the old city of Jerusalem (For the Temple Mount dress very modestly: long pants and shirts, up to the neck, not tight pants, none of Jewish or military symbols and without any of the holy books. If it will be the beginning of Ramadan, we will respect it and avoid eating in Arab areas.)

BLOG

Ellie L.

12:30- 1:30 Lunch

1:30-3:30 Outreach/Engagement Israel Advocacy Seminar with "Stand With Us"

BLOG

Rebecca L.

4:00-6:30 The separation wall, East Jerusalem tour (starting at Mt. Scopus \ Sheikh Jarrah) with Yaron Ovadia

BLOG

Yoni P.

6:30-11:00 Dinner and Daklon and Sagiv Cohen Concert

BLOG

Rebecca Sh.

11:30 - 12:00 Reflection in the hotel

Lunch: Packed lunch

Dinner: Packed dinner

Overnight: Bait VaGan hostel, Jerusalem



Yaron Ovdia was born in Jerusalem and spent most of his life in the ancient city. His Favorite Tours are related to The Israeli-Arab conflict, relations between the religions and Jerusalem in the conflict. B.A. in Middle East studies and Islam from the Hebrew University Masters Degree in Middle East studies and Islam from Ben Gurion University, Thesis paper about the Palestinian National Identity. Nature guide from the society for the protection of nature in Israel (SPNI) israel tour guide – Tourist guide from the ministry of tourism Linguistic editor from Beit-Berl College.

Holy Basin

Jerusalem has long been considered a huge issue in the Israeli-Palestinians Question. In 1947, when the United Nations put forward a plan to partition the land into two states, it proposed placing Greater Jerusalem and Greater Bethlehem into an international zone called the “Holy Basin.” This Holy Basin would be neither part of Israel nor Palestine, to remove the sensitive region from the conflict. However, as fate would have it, the partition plan was rejected by the Palestinians who then launched a war to destroy Israel in May 1948, together with armies from Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Iraq. At war’s end, the Holy Basin was divided with the western half of Greater Jerusalem and Hebrew University falling under Israeli control, and Greater Bethlehem and the eastern half of Jerusalem falling under Arab control (Jordan annexed the area and granted the Palestinian Arabs there citizenship). The sensitivity over the Holy Basin is due to the fact that it holds many holy sites for the three monotheistic religions. A short list includes:

- The Temple Mount/ The Noble Sanctuary (Jerusalem). *Jewish and Muslim*
- Al Aqsa Mosque (Jerusalem). *Muslim*
- Dome of the Rock (Jerusalem). *Jewish and Muslim*
- The Wailing Wall / Kotel (Jerusalem). *Jewish*
- Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Jerusalem). *Christian*
- Dormition Abbey (Jerusalem). *Christian*

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- The Old City (Jerusalem). *Jewish*
- Church of the Nativity (Bethlehem). *Christian*
- The Tomb of Rachel (Bethlehem). *Jewish*

There are many other churches, synagogues and mosques in the Holy Basin, however, these sites are considered sacred as various events are believed to have occurred at these locations. For Christians, the churches were built on the various spots where Jesus and Mary are thought to have had significant life events. For Muslims, the Al Aqsa Mosque is considered to be the place where Mohammed ascended to heaven. For Jews, the Temple Mount is not only considered to be the place of two Temples, but also the spot where Abraham brought Isaac for a sacrifice.

StandWithUs



StandWithUs is an international, non-profit organization. They believe that education is the road to peace. StandWithUs is dedicated to informing the public about Israel and to combating the extremism and anti-Semitism that often distorts the issues. They believe that knowledge of the facts will correct common prejudices about the Arab-Israeli conflict, and will promote discussions and policies that can help promote peace in the region. Through print materials, speakers, programs, conferences, missions to Israel, campaigns, social media and

internet resources, they ensure that the story of Israel's achievements and ongoing challenges is told on campuses and in communities around the world. Based in Los Angeles, StandWithUs has sixteen offices across the U.S., Canada, Israel and in the UK.

Daklon and Sagiv Cohen Concert



Yosef ("Daklon") Levy was born in 1944 in Tel Aviv's Kerem Hateimanim (Yemenite) neighborhood, son of Yemenite Jewish immigrants from the Shar'ab region in Yemen.^[2]

Daklon explains the source of his nickname: "In those days everyone in the Kerem had a nickname. Your given name was only good for your ID. As a kid I was very small and thin, almost skinny (Hebrew: דק, *dak*; *daq*).

Therefore they called me *Daklon*." He started his musical career as an 11-year-old when his

teacher sent him to do a spot for a religious music radio show. Daklon was first inspired to take his music more seriously by Morocco-born singer Joe Amar at the end of the 1950s. Daklon took Greek and Indian songs and put Hebrew words to them in the 1960s when his career was launched. He is famed for his performances with Yemenite virtuosos Haim Moshe and Avihu Medina.

Daklon songs are usually themed on his love for the land of Israel and the God of Israel. Daklon's music draws on centuries of Hebrew poetry and musical traditions of the Yemenite.

Sagiv Cohen (born 20 February 1975) is an Israeli singer, mostly famous as a singer of Mizrahi (Middle Eastern Jewish) music. He performed and recorded several times together with Daklon.



Jerusalem: Heart of Our Heart By Elie Wiesel

Jerusalem is above politics.

Nobel Prize-winning author and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel today took out a full-page ad in the Wall Street Journal, in the form an open letter to President Obama, with whom Wiesel visited the Buchenwald death camp last year. Here is the text of the letter.

For Jerusalem

It was inevitable: Jerusalem once again is at the center of political debates and international storms. New and old tensions surface at a disturbing pace. Seventeen times destroyed and seventeen times rebuilt, it is still in the middle of diplomatic confrontations that could lead to armed conflict. Neither Athens nor Rome has aroused that many passions.

For me, the Jew that I am, Jerusalem is above politics. It is mentioned more than six hundred times in Scripture-and not a single time in the Koran. Its presence in Jewish history is overwhelming. There is no more moving prayer in Jewish history than the one expressing our yearning to return to Jerusalem. To many theologians, it IS Jewish history, to many poets, a source of inspiration. It belongs to the Jewish people and is much more than a city, it is what binds one Jew to another in a way that remains hard to explain. When a Jew visits Jerusalem for the first time, it is not the first time; it is a homecoming. The first song I heard was my mother's lullaby about and for Jerusalem. Its sadness and its joy are part of our collective memory.

When a Jew visits Jerusalem for the first time, it is a homecoming.

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Since King David took Jerusalem as his capital, Jews have dwelled inside its walls with only two interruptions; when Roman invaders forbade them access to the city and again, when under Jordanian occupation. Jews, regardless of nationality, were refused entry into the old Jewish quarter to meditate and pray at the Wall, the last vestige of Solomon's temple. It is important to remember: had Jordan not joined Egypt and Syria in the 1967 war against Israel, the old city of Jerusalem would still be Arab. Clearly, while Jews were ready to die for Jerusalem they would not kill for Jerusalem.

Today, for the first time in history, Jews, Christians and Muslims all may freely worship at their shrines. And, contrary to certain media reports, Jews, Christians and Muslims ARE allowed to build their homes anywhere in the city. The anguish over Jerusalem is not about real estate but about memory.

What is the solution? Pressure will not produce a solution. Is there a solution? There must be, there will be. Why tackle the most complex and sensitive problem prematurely? Why not first take steps which will allow the Israeli and Palestinian communities to find ways to live together in an atmosphere of security. Why not leave the most difficult, the most sensitive issue, for such a time?

Jerusalem must remain the world's Jewish spiritual capital, not a symbol of anguish and bitterness, but a symbol of trust and hope. As the Hasidic master Rebbe Nahman of Bratslav said, "Everything in this world has a heart; the heart itself has its own heart."

Jerusalem is the heart of our heart, the soul of our soul.

For Jerusalem, a response to Elie Wiesel

The fact is and always will be that this city is holy to everyone - such is its blessing and its curse.

By Yossi Sarid

For Jerusalem's sake I, like you, will not rest.

With great interest I read the beautiful open letter you penned to the U.S. president that appeared in the Washington Post, Wall Street Journal and International Herald Tribune on Friday, and which will appear in the New York Times today. From it I learned that you know much about heavenly Jerusalem, but less so about its counterpart here on earth.

An outsider reading your letter would probably have concluded that peace has already taken root in the City of Peace. He would learn that in Jerusalem, Jews, Christians and Muslims worship their gods unimpeded, that "all are allowed to build their homes anywhere in the city."

Someone has deceived you, my dear friend. Not only may an Arab not build "anywhere," but he may thank his god if he is not evicted from his home and thrown out onto the street with his family and property. Perhaps you've heard about Arab residents in Sheikh Jarrah, having lived there since 1948, who are again being uprooted and made refugees because certain Jews are chafing from Jerusalem's space constraints.

Those same zealous Jews insist on inserting themselves like so many bones in the throats of Arab neighborhoods, purifying and Judaizing them with the help of rich American benefactors, several of whom you may know personally. Behind the scenes our prime minister and Jerusalem's mayor are pulling the strings of this puppet show while in public deflecting responsibility for this lawlessness and greed. That is the real reason for the "new and old tensions surfacing at a disturbing pace" of which you warn in your letter.

For some reason your historical survey missed an event of the utmost importance, namely the destruction of the Temple. If we are already citing events that happened here 2,000 years ago, let us recall the Sicarii, who blinded by religious zeal murdered opponents within the Jewish community and brought on us the disaster of our 2,000-year exile. We have no choice, you and I, but to ask whether history is now repeating itself.

You, my dear friend, evoke the Jews' biblical deed to Jerusalem, thereby imbuing our current conflict with messianic hues. As if our diplomatic quarrels weren't enough, the worst of our

enemies would be glad to dress this epic conflict in the garb of a holy war. We had better not join ranks with them, even if unintentionally.

The fact is and always will be that this city is holy to everyone - such is its blessing and its curse. That's why the solution to the Jerusalem problem can't wait for the end of the Middle East conflict as you suggest, because it will have no end if its resolution is postponed until "the Israeli and Palestinian communities find ways to live together in an atmosphere of security."

"Jerusalem is above politics," you write. It is unfortunate that a man of your standing must confuse fundamental issues and confound the reader. Is it not politics that deals with mankind's weightiest issues, with matters of war and peace, life and death? And is life itself not holier than historical rights, than national and personal memory - holier even than Jerusalem? The living always take precedence over the dead, as must the present and future over the past.

There is nothing in our world "above politics." Yes, politics creates problems, but only through it can those same problems be resolved.

Barack Obama appears well aware of his obligations to try to resolve the world's ills, particularly ours here. Why then undercut him and tie his hands? On the contrary, let's allow him to use his clout to save us from ourselves, to help both bruised and battered nations and free them from their prison. Then he can push both sides to divide the city into two capitals - to give Jewish areas to the Jews and Arab areas to the Arabs - and assign the Holy Basin to an agreed-on international authority.

Only then can Jerusalem be maintained as "the world's Jewish spiritual capital," as you write. The Jewish spirit does not need Sheikh Jarrah, Silwan, Abu Dis and Shoafat to fulfill God's command to Abraham to "Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it."

Thursday, June 18 - Jerusalem of Complexity Part 2 and First Night in Beit She'an



Photographs of the Day – Jeremy G., Emily E.

07:30 Breakfast at the hotel in Jerusalem

08:30-9:30 Jerusalem other Narrative update with Ir Amim

BLOG

Miriam P.

10:30-12:00 Israel Museum - A visit to the Shrine of Books and the model of Jerusalem in the 2nd temple era and "1965 today" exhibit

BLOG

Daniel S.

12:00-12:30- Packed lunch

12:30-1:50- Israel Museum - A visit to the Shrine of Books and the model of Jerusalem in the 2nd temple era and "1965 today" exhibit

2:00-4:00 Drive to Beit Shean

4:00- A view to the Gilboa Hydroelectric Plant

BLOG

Barak S.

The Mifgash

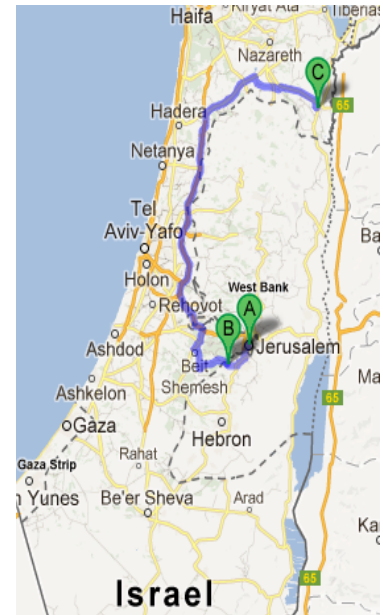
5:00-8:00 Begin Partnership Program in Beit Shean

8:00 Pick up by host families and home hospitality

Lunch: Packed lunch

Dinner: Home hospitality in Beit She'an

Overnight: Home hospitality





Ir Amim (“City of Nations” or “City of Peoples”) is a non-profit organization that focuses on Jerusalem within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Ir Amim seeks to render Jerusalem a more equitable and sustainable city for the Israelis and Palestinians who share it. Ir Amim envisions a city that ensures the dignity and welfare of all its residents

and that safeguards their holy places, as well as their historical and cultural heritages -- today, as well as in the future. Ir Amim also aspires to a sustainable political future for Jerusalem, achievable only through a negotiated process between Israel and the Palestinians. Ir Amim was founded in 2000, and became active as a non-profit organization in 2004.



The **Shrine of the Book** is a wing of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. It houses several exceptional archaeological finds, including the Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in 1947-56 in 11 caves in and around the Wadi Qumran. The dome covers a structure that is two-thirds below the ground, and is reflected in a pool of water that surrounds it. The striking juxtaposition of the white dome and black basalt wall, precise and opposing geometrical shapes, creates a monumental effect and an extraordinary phenomenon in the Israeli landscape.

In honor of 50 years since it first opened, the Israel Museum is launching a new exhibition that takes us back in time and drops us into the year 1965. Travel through an immersive and sensory experience of ordinary life, set against the backdrop of the cultural and artistic landscape of the period.



1965 Today Exhibit offers the chance to change perspective and see the Israeli experience through the eyes of a local contemporary in the 1960s. The exhibit begins with an installation of commonplace objects from the time, illustrating Israel’s material culture in 1965 from an authentic point of view.



Alstom to construct, operate and maintain Israel's first pumped storage power station in Gilboa - Alstom has signed two contracts totaling around €120 million¹ with PSP Investment Ltd for the supply of two 150 MW pump turbines with the associated balance of plant equipment and Alstom's Distributed Control System (DCS) for the 300 MW Gilboa pumped storage power plant in Israel. Alstom also signed an eighteen-year

operation & maintenance (O&M) agreement, covering day today operation and maintenance of the power plant. The project represents Alstom's first entry into the Israeli hydro market and will be the country's first pumped storage power station.

מִפְגָּשׁ Mifgásh

Etymology - From the root ש־פ־ג (p-g-sh).

Noun - מִפְגָּשׁ (mifgásh) m (plural indefinite form מפגשים, singular construct form מפגש, plural construct form מפגשי)

1. A gathering, meet-up, convention: a pre-planned meeting of members of an organization, party, movement, or the like.

פְּגִישָׁה (p'gishá) f (plural indefinite form פגישות, singular construct form פגישת, plural construct form פגישות)

1. A meeting: an instance of meeting.
2. Meeting: the act of meeting.

PGISHA, CHATZI PGISHA	MEETING, HALF A MEETING	פגישת, חצי פגישת / רחל
Pgisha, chatzi pgisha, mabat echad mahir, Kitei nivim stumim - ze dai Veshuv hetzif hakol, ve shuv hakol his'ir Mishbar ha'osher vehadvai.	Meeting, half a meeting, a quick glance, pieces of vague phrases enough And again flooded, and again stormed all a heavy wave of happiness and distress.	פגישת, חצי פגישת, מבט אחד מהיר, קטעי ניבים סתומים זה די... ושוב הצירוף הכל, ושוב הכל הסעיר משבר האשר והדוי.
Af secher shichechah - baniti li magen Hinnech haya kelo haya. Ve'al birkai echra , al sfat agam so'en Lishtot mimmeno li rvayah	Even a dam of forgetting - I built a shield Here it is as it never was. And I will fall on my knees, on a roaring lake's shore, to drink my fill from it.	אף סכר שכחה בניתי לי מגן הנה הנה כלא הנה. ועל ברכי אקרע על שפת אגם סואן לשתות ממנו לרויה!



The Region - Beit She'an is a city in the North district of Israel, which has played an important role historically due to its geographical location at the junction of the Jordan River Valley and Jezreel Valley.

The mayor of Beit She'an is Jacky Levy. Beit She'an was the hometown and political power base of his father, David Levy, a prominent figure in Israeli politics. About 18,000 people live in the municipality.

The Beit-She'an-Valley of Springs-Cleveland Partnership

The Beit-She'an-Valley of Springs-Cleveland Partnership is one of the veteran partnerships in the unique initiative of the Jewish Agency, to build connections between Israel communities and Jewish communities around the world. It began in 1995 and has been a platform for community development and various connections between Beit She'an, Valley of Springs and Cleveland ever since. Every activity emphasizes using empowering cooperation, and creates interpersonal and inter-community relationships which affect different aspects of life – whether it's community pride and responsibility or Jewish and Zionist identity – of all the participants and their various social circles.



The Partnership is being lead by a steering committee, combined of municipalities' representatives and volunteers, residents of the region's community and Cleveland.

As part of the Strategic Planning Process, which took place in 2011-2012, it has been decided that the Partnership will focus on three main fields: education, community development and tourism. This will be done through the two unique tools of the Partnership: volunteerism and the connection to the Jewish community in Cleveland.

Valley of Springs is a regional council in northern Israel that encompasses most of the settlements in the Beit She'an Valley. Each Kibbutz and Moshav has a fascinating history. The mayor of Valley of Springs Regional Council is Yoram Karin. About 13,000 people live in the

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sixteen Kibbutzim and six Moshavim located in its municipal territory. Tourists from all over the world and Israel travel to Beit She'an, to tour the impressive dig site and learn about 5,000 years of history. And there's more to see and taste in the region – parks and springs, delicious meals from the home hospitality project, unique agricultural farms and sites such as *Eden farm* or *Bio Bee*, beautiful private gardens and collections, fascinating people who tell the stories of the region and its history.

The main means of transport in Beit She'an is the bus, and the city is served by the Egged buses for long-distance (bus 961 to and from Jerusalem) and Kavim for short-distances (411 and 412 to and from Afula).

Friday, June 19 - Mifgash



Photographs of the Day – Rebecca L., Yoni P.

08:00 A visit to Eden Farm

BLOG

Benjamin R.

11:00 A tour in the water – Samantha S.

BLOG

Samantha S.

2:00 Take a picture with your host

BLOG

Gabe S., Shane S., Lindsey B.

Shabbat with Host Families

Shabbat, June 20 - Mifgash Second Day

Shabbat with Host Families

After Shabbat – a meeting with KM Orly Levy Abekasis

BLOG

Emma B.

BLOG

**The Shabbat Experience – Eli A.
Our Beit Shean Friends - Hannah B., Eliana B.**

Overnight: Home hospitality



Israel Beytenu's MK Orly Levy Abekasis - is particularly dedicated to child welfare and helping those suffering from abuse. She has advanced much legislation in those areas. After a successful television career, MK Levy-Abekasis joined Yisrael Beytenu in 2008. Her father, David Levy, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, is her political role model and inspiration. Born in November 1973, Orly Levy-Abekasis is married with three children. In addition to

serving as Deputy Speaker of the Knesset, MK Levy-Abekasis serves on the following Knesset Committees and Lobbies:

Committees:

- Chair, Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Member, Labor, Welfare and Health Committee
- Member, Subcommittee for the Regulations for Equal Rights for the Handicapped Law
- Member, Joint Committee for Health and the Environment
- Member, Subcommittee for Pensions in the Evolving Kibbutz
- Member, Committee on the Rights of the Child

Lobbies:

- Chair, Lobby for Children and Youth at Risk
- Chair, Lobby for Public Housing
- Member, Lobby for Direct Employment
- Member, Lobby for The Social Worker
- Member, Lobby for the IDF Disabled, Bereaved Families, Widows, and Orphans
- Member, Lobby to Increase Tolerance Between the Religious and Secular
- Member, Lobby for Strengthening the Periphery
- Member, Lobby for Furthering Relations Between Israel and Europe
- Member, Lobby for Single Parent Families in Israel

Sunday, June 21 - Israel's Northern Borders, Water And Christianity around the Sea of Galilee



Photographs of the Day - Syndi B., Hannah C.

8:00 At the partnership office

9:00-12:00 Tour of the northern borders with Sarit Zehavi

BLOG

Elon B.

12:00-12:30 lunch

12:00-2:30 Tour of the National Water Carrier of Israel

BLOG

Josh C.

3:00-5:00 Christian Holy Sites on the shores of the Kinneret with a local tour guide

BLOG

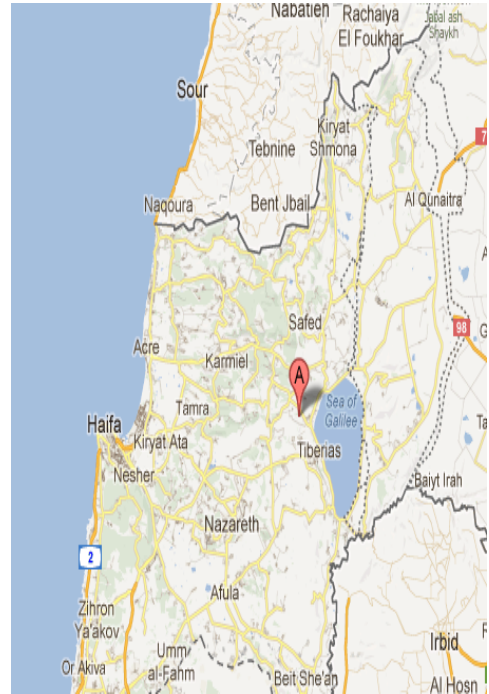
Emily E.

5:30-6:30 The Naarim story (a tour of the Rutenberg first hydroelectric plan in Israel)

BLOG

Jeremy G.

6:30-9:00 The Mifgash Continue... (Dinner and final activity in Beit Shean)



Lunch: Packed lunch

Dinner: Home hospitality

Overnight: Home hospitality





Major (Res.) Sarit Zehavi served for over 14 years in the Israeli Defense Forces specializing in the Military Intelligence Corps - first at the Research and Analysis Division, followed by a stint at the OC Northern Command. During her distinguished military service, she gained wide experiences in briefing hundreds of delegations, ranging from US Senators and politicians, in addition to global military VIP's as well as journalists and visiting delegations – including JFNA, Keren Hayesod and many global Jewish organizations..

Sarit focuses on multi-disciplined material, based on her expertise on the Arab media specializing in: Lebanon, Turkey, and national security issues and challenges along Israel's volatile northern border. She also holds an M.A. degree on Middle East Studies from Ben Gurion University. Sarit is a mother of three and a proud resident of the northern Galilee.



The Sapir station - Israel's first pumping station of the National Water Carrier is located the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Named after Pinhas Sapir, one of the initiators of the national conduit project, the station offers a guided tour, including a talk about water in Israel, a documentary about the construction of the water carrier and – the climax – a visit deep into the earth to see the pumps.



The Galilee Mountains, fertile valleys, water sources, olive trees, and green landscapes make up the scenery of the Galil, the northern part of Israel. It is traditionally divided into two geographical units: the Upper Galil and the Lower Galil with the Bet Hakerem valley running between them. In the Lower Galil, the mountain peaks reach a maximum height of 600 meters (1968 ft). The Upper Galil has peaks reaching double that height with the tallest mountain, Mount Meron, measuring 1200m (3937 ft). The region borders the Mediterranean Sea to the west and the Jordan Valley to the east. The northern part of the Galil borders Lebanon and the southern part runs along the Jezereel Valley.

The Galil has always been a prominent stage for Jewish history, at times even more than Jerusalem. When Jews were exiled from Jerusalem and its environs at various times in the past, Jewish settlements flourished in the Galil. Jews settled in the Galil ever since the conquest of the Land of Israel by the twelve tribes in the days of Joshua and the Judges. Important Biblical battles were fought in the Galil, such as the battle of Deborah and Barak against Siserah, the battle of Gideon against the Midianites, and the fateful battle of King Saul against the Philistines in which he was killed. After the destruction of the Second Temple, the Jewish governing body, the Sanhedrin, moved its center to the Galil. During the Arab and Crusader periods, the pulse of the Jewish world moved to Babylon and Jewish settlements dwindled. Small communities of Jews existed in and around Tzefat and Tiberias. Only in the 16th century, after the Spanish inquisition, did Jews come back to Eretz Yisrael. Many settled in Tzefat, making the city and the Galil as a whole a Jewish center once again. It is no wonder that the settlers of the First Aliyah in 1882 chose to live in the Galil, establishing Rosh Pina (the corner stone). It was also in the Galil that the first Kibbutz, Degania, was established in 1910 as well as the first Moshav, Nahalal, founded by pioneers of the Second Aliyah. Even today the Galil remains the home of the pioneering spirit and new settlements are continually forming.

In the Galil you will meet diverse people such as Hassidim and Kabbalists in Tzefat, secular farmers on different kibbutzim, new immigrants from Ethiopia and the former Soviet Union in the development towns of Kiryat Shemona and Carmiel, as well as Sabras whose families originate from the four corners of the world. Christianity was born in the Galil and the many Christian holy sites attract thousands of pilgrims every year. Christian and Muslim Arab villages dot the Galil. Other minorities also live in the Galil-the Druze and Bahai, (breakaway

religions from Islam), settled in the mountains in order to escape the scrutinizing eyes of Muslim rulers.



The Golan Heights is a high basalt plateau in the northeastern corner of Israel. It was formed millions of years ago by erupting volcanoes, whose extinct cones, such as Mt. Bental, still line its eastern rim. Beneath its otherwise mostly flat rocky landscape are huge bodies of ground water (aquifers), which fill up from cold wet winters and melting snow from neighboring Mt. Hermon. This is the source of the region's numerous perennial streams and beautiful waterfalls, such as Yehudiya, Zavitan, and Devora, which flow into the Sea of Galilee and Jordan River. In addition to being attractive hiking and swimming spots, these waters provide Israel with 30% of its fresh drinking water.

The Golan Heights, (or Ramat Hagolan), has been inhabited since prehistoric times. In the Bible, it is referred to by several different names: Golan, Horon, and Bashan. Sometimes people say the “dolmens” (the giant stone ‘tables’) scattered about the region are the furniture of Og, King of Bashan, who the Bible claims was a giant. During the Second Temple period, the Golan Heights had a large Jewish population and it was a center of olive oil production. In 66 CE when the Great Revolt against Rome began, the Roman army placed an emphasis on conquering major Jewish centers in the Golan Heights in order to sever the link between the Jews of Eretz Yisrael and their brethren in the Diaspora. A particularly fierce battle was fought at Gamla, which became known as the “Masada of the North”.

Jewish life in the Golan Heights didn't end with the destruction of Gamla. In the Mishnaic and Talmudic periods, the Golan's Jewish communities flourished, as attested to by the numerous ancient synagogues discovered throughout the region. The “Talmudic Village” and basalt stone synagogue in Katzrin are particularly fine examples of the rich Jewish material culture at this time.

Over the past 30 years, the Golan has been a source of contention between Israel and Syria. Prior to 1967, the Golan was in Syrian territory. The Syrian army took advantage of its dominant elevation over farms and villages “below” in Israel to shell and snipe at them on a regular basis. Numerous casualties were inflicted on the Israeli civilian population. Many children in the kibbutzim below the Heights spent virtually every night of their childhood in

bomb shelters. On one occasion, the Syrians even tried to divert the headwaters of the Jordan River at the Banias in order to deprive Israel of its main source of fresh drinking water.

This changed in June 1967. In a series of lightning strikes over 2 days, Israel captured the Golan Heights during the Six Day War. This began a new period in the history of the region. In the wake of the soldiers came civilians who began exploring the region as hikers, scientists, and archaeologists. Soon kibbutzim, moshavim, and other settlements began to appear, as a new generation of Israeli pioneers began to follow in the footsteps of their ancient and modern forefathers.

The peace of the region was shattered once again on Yom Kippur 1973. A column of Syrian tanks tried to break through the Israeli lines at Kuneitra and several other points. In the course of 3 days of intense fighting in Emek Habacha (the Valley of Tears) a small number of Israeli tank soldiers defeated a far superior Syrian force in numbers and sophistication of equipment. By the time a cease-fire was declared, the Israeli army was “banging on the door to Damascus”. Today there are 30 Jewish settlements in the Golan and over 18,000 residents.

Monday, June 22 - On the way to Tel Aviv



Photographers of the Day -Eliana B., Hannah B.

08:30 At the Partnership office
9:00 Drive to Hedera
10:30-12:00 Visit to the Hedera desalination plant

BLOG

Ellie L.

12:00-1:00 Lunch
1:00-4:00 Environmental tour of the Carmel sea shore

BLOG

Rebecca L.

4:30-7:00 Visit to Jiser Az-Zarka, Arab Village, including dinner on the Mediterranean beach

BLOG

Yoni P., Miriam P.

7:00-9:00 Drive to Tel Aviv
9:00-10:00 Reflection in Tel Aviv hotel

Lunch: Packed Lunch

Dinner: at Jasar Az Zarka

Overnight: Sea Net Hotel, Tel Aviv



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Hadera Desalination Plant - Israel has experienced water shortages for a long time. The government had approved bills to construct desalination plants such as the Ashkelon facility, which has the capacity to generate 100 million m³ of fresh water a year, the Palmachim facility, which has a production capacity of 30 million m³ a year, and the Ashdod facility, which has a production capacity of an additional 100 million m³, to overcome these problems.

Despite these installations, Israel still needs more potable water. The government therefore passed a bill to increase the output capacities of the above facilities by an additional 75 million m³. The Hadera project is divided into two plants: eastern and western. Both have the same production capacity and can be operated independently. The plant houses pre-treatment and high-pressure pump facilities and an efficient energy recovery system, membrane assembly and post-treatment facilities. The plant was designed to produce 388,000m³ of drinking water per day, although the production capacity was later extended to 462,000m³ per day to address water shortages.



Israeli Arabs Ethnic and religious groupings

In 2006, the official number of Arab residents in Israel (including East Jerusalem permanent residents many of whom are not citizens) was 1,413,500, about 20% of Israel's population. According to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (May 2003), Muslims, including Bedouins, make up 82% of the entire Arab population in Israel, with around 9% Druze and 9% Christians.

The national language and mother tongue of Arab citizens, including the Druze, is Arabic, and the colloquial

spoken language is of the Palestinian Arabic dialect. Knowledge and command of Modern Standard Arabic varies.

Muslims

Outside of the Bedouin population, traditionally settled communities of Muslim Arabs comprise about 70% of the Arab population in Israel.

Muslims in Israel have the highest birthrate of any group: 4.0 children per woman, as opposed to 2.7 for Jewish Israelis, a natural reproduction rate of 3% compared to 1.5%. Around 25% of the children in Israel today were born to Muslim parents. The Muslim population is mostly young: 42% of Muslims are children under the age of 15, compared with 26% of the Jewish population. The median age of Muslim Israelis is 18, while the median age of Jewish Israelis is 30. The percentage of people over 65 is less than 3% for Muslims, compared with 12% for the Jewish population. According to forecasts, the Muslim population will grow to over 2,000,000 people, or 24-26% of the population within the next 15 years. They will also comprise 85% of the Arab population in Israeli in 2020 (Up 3% from 2005). (See the section on Demographics below for more on this issue.)

Druze

The Druze are members of a sect residing in many countries, although predominantly in mountainous regions in Israel, Lebanon and Syria. Druze in Israel live mainly in the north, notably in Carmel City, near Haifa. There are also Druze localities in the Golan Heights, such as Majdal Shams, which were captured in 1967 from Syria and annexed to Israel in 1981.

It is in keeping with Druze religious practice to always serve the country in which they live; therefore the Druze population in Israel are Arabic speakers like their counterparts in Syria

and Lebanon, they often consider themselves Israeli, and unlike the Arab Muslims and Arab Christians in Israel they rarely identify themselves as Palestinians. As early as 1939, the leadership of one Druze village formally allied itself with pre-Israeli militias, like the Haganah. A separate "Israeli Druze" identity was encouraged by the Israeli government who formally recognized the Druze religious community as independent of the Muslim religious community in Israeli law as early as 1957.

The Druze are defined as a distinct ethnic group in the Israeli Ministry of Interior's census registration. While the Israeli education system is basically divided into Hebrew and Arabic speaking schools, the Druze have autonomy within the Arabic speaking branch.



The Druze of British Mandate Palestine showed little interest in Arab nationalism that was on the rise in the 20th century, and did not take part in the early Arab-Jewish skirmishes of the era either. By 1948, many young Druze volunteered for the Israeli army and actively fought on their side. Unlike their Christian and Muslim counterparts, no Druze villages were destroyed in the 1948 war and no Druze left their settlements permanently. Unlike most other Arab citizens of Israel, right-wing Israeli political parties have appealed to many Druze. Ayoob Kara, for example, represented the conservative Likud in the Knesset, and other parties such as Shas and Yisrael Beiteinu have likewise attracted Druze voters. Currently, a Druze MK, Majalli Wahabi of the centrist Kadima, as Deputy Speaker of the Knesset, is next in line to the acting presidency.

Christians

Christian Arabs comprise about 9% of the Arab population in Israel, and approximately 70% reside in the North District (Israel) in the towns of Jish, Eilabun, Kafr Yasif, Kafr Kanna, I'billin, Shefa-'Amr and many reside in Nazareth. Several other villages, including a number of Druze villages such as Hurfeish, Maghar, are inhabited by Christian Arabs. Nazareth has the largest Christian Arab population. There are 117,000 or more Christian Arabs in Israel. Christian Arabs have been prominent in Arab political parties in



Israel and these leaders have included Archbishop George Hakim, Emile Toma, Tawfik Toubi, Emile Habibi and Azmi Bishara.

Notable Christian religious figures in Israel include the Melkite Archbishops of the Galilee Elias Chacour and Boutros Mouallem, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Michel Sabbah, and Munib Younan of the Lutheran Church of Palestine and Jordan.

The only non-Jewish Arab judge to receive a permanent appointment to preside over Israel's Supreme Court is a Christian Arab, Salim Jubran.

Self-identification

The relationship of Arab citizens to the State of Israel is often fraught with tension and can be regarded in the context of relations between minority populations and state authorities elsewhere in the world. Arab citizens consider themselves to be an indigenous people, though this has been disputed by some pro-Israel advocates, like Joan Peters in her book *From Time Immemorial*. The tension between their Palestinian Arab national identity and their identity as citizens of Israel was famously described by an Arab public figure as, "My state is at war with my nation".

According to the 2008 National Resilience Survey, conducted by Tel Aviv University, 43% of Muslims refer to themselves as "Palestinian-Arabs"; only 15% defined themselves as "Arab-Israelis" and 4% of those surveyed said they considered themselves "Muslim-Israelis". According to the same survey, 24% of Christians in Israel said they defined themselves as "Arab-Palestinians", 24% referred to themselves as "Arab-Israelis" and an equal number of respondents said they considered themselves "Christian-Israelis". In 2008 more than 94% of Druze youngsters classified themselves as "Druze-Israelis" in the religious and national context.

Military conscription

Muslims are not required to serve in the Israeli military, and outside the Bedouin community, very few (around 120 a year) volunteer. Until 2000, each year between 5%-10% of the Bedouin population of draft age (holding a unique status as volunteers) volunteered for the Israeli army. The legendary Israeli soldier, Amos Yarkoni, first commander of the Shaked Reconnaissance Battalion in the Givati Brigade, was a Bedouin (born Abd el-Majid Hidir). Today the number of Bedouin in the army may be less than 1%. A 2003 report stated that willingness among Bedouin to serve in the army had drastically dropped in recent years, as the Israeli government has failed to fulfill promises of equal service provision to Bedouin citizens.

IDF figures indicate that in 2002 and 2003, Christians represented 0.1% of all recruits. In 2004, the number of recruits doubled. Altogether, in 2003 the percentage of Christians serving had grown by 16% since the year 2000. The IDF does not publish figures on the exact number of recruits by religious denomination, but it is estimated that merely a few dozen Christians currently serve in the IDF.

Druze are required to serve in the IDF in accordance with an agreement between their local religious leaders and the Israeli government in 1956. Opposition to the decision among the Druze populace was immediately evident, but the decision remained. It's estimated that 85% of Druze men in Israel serve in the army. In recent years, a growing minority from within the Druze community have denounced this mandatory enrollment and refused to serve. In 2001, Said Nafa, who identifies as a Palestinian Druze and serves as the head of the Balad party's national council, founded the "Pact of Free Druze", an organization that aims "to stop the conscription of the Druze and claims the community is an inalienable part of the Arabs in Israel and the Palestinian nation at large."

Demographics

Arab citizens of Israel form a majority of the population (52%) in Israel's Northern District and about 50% of the Arab population lives in 114 different localities throughout Israel. In total there are 122 primarily if not entirely Arab localities in Israel, 89 of them having populations over two thousand. The seven townships as well as the Abu Basma Regional Council that have been constructed by the government for the Bedouin population of the Negev, are the only Arab localities to have been established since 1948, with the aim of relocating the Arab Bedouin.

46% of the country's Arabs (622,400 people) live in predominantly Arab communities in the north. Nazareth is the largest Arab city, with a population of 65,000, roughly 40,000 of whom are Muslim. Shefa-'Amr has a population of approximately 32,000 and the city is mixed with sizable populations of Muslims, Christians and Druze.

Jerusalem, a mixed city, has the largest overall Arab population. Jerusalem housed 209,000 Arabs in 2000 and they make up 33% of the city's residents and together with the local council of Abu Ghosh, some 19% of the country's entire Arab population.

14% of Arab citizens live in the Haifa District predominantly in the Wadi Ara region. Here is the largest Muslim city, Umm al-Fahm, with a population of 43,000. Baqa-Jatt and Carmel City are

the two second-largest Arab population centers in the district. The city of Haifa has an Arab population of 9%, much of it in the Wadi Nisnas neighborhood.

10% of the country's Arab population resides in the Center District of Israel, primarily the cities of Tayibe, Tira, and Qalansawe as well as the mixed cities of Lod and Ramla which have mainly Jewish populations.

Of the remaining 11%, 10% live in Bedouin communities in the Negev. The Bedouin city Rahat is the only Arab city in the South District and the third largest Israeli Arab city.

The remaining 1% of the country's Arab population lives in cities that are almost entirely Jewish such as, Nazaret Illit with an Arab population of 9% and Tel Aviv-Yafo, 4%.

In February 2008, the government announced that the first new Arab city would be constructed in Israel. According to Haaretz, "[s]ince the establishment of the State of Israel, not a single new Arab settlement has been established, with the exception of permanent housing projects for Bedouins in the Negev."

Tuesday, June 23 - Tel Aviv- The city that never sleeps



Photographers of the Day –Lindsay B., Eli A.

7:30 Breakfast

08:00-9:00 Morning interviews/photo shooting on the Tel Aviv Beach

BLOG

Benjamin R., Keeva S., Samantha S., Gabe S.

10:30-12:30 “This Place” at the Tel Aviv Museum

BLOG

Rebecca S.

1:00-2:30 Lunch at Nachalat Binyamin with the Beit Shean friends

3:00-7:30 The Sharon (Hiriya) Recycling Park - workshop and bike riding

BLOG

Barak S., Shane S., Syndi B.

7:30-8:15 Dinner

8:30-10:00 Drum circle – Tel Aviv Promenade – saying goodbye to our Beit shean's Friends

10:45-11:15 Reflection at the hotel

Lunch: Cash lunch in Tel Aviv

Dinner: Dinner at the hotel

Overnight: Sea Net Hotel, Tel Aviv



History Considering its size and importance today, it comes as a surprise that Tel Aviv was nothing but a sand dune 100 years ago. Tel Aviv actually began as a suburb of Jaffa, the adjoining city with which it melded in 1950. Jaffa (meaning “beautiful”) is an ancient venerable town that is mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments. According to Jewish tradition, Noah’s son Japheth, from whom the town took its name, established Jaffa after the Flood. Jonah, it is said, was swallowed by a whale after he left the port of Jaffa, and Peter performed the Miracle of Tabitha here. In Greek mythology, Andromeda was chained to a rock in Jaffa port.

First inhabited 4,000 years ago, Jaffa was once a Philistine town. King Solomon later used the port to bring cedars from Lebanon which were used for the great Temple in Jerusalem. Though King Herod built Caesarea to replace Jaffa as his main port, Jaffa became important again under Moslem and Crusader rule. Jaffa became so crowded, noisy and dirty that a group of Jews decided to create a garden suburb that became Tel Aviv. They bought uninhabited sand dunes north of Jaffa, formed an association called “Achuzat Bayit” and divided property into parcels of land by drawing lots.

The romantic name Tel Aviv (“Hill of Spring”) was chosen for the new community in 1910 partly because of its associations with rebirth and revitalization, and partly because it recalled the vision of Ezekiel. In the biblical Tel Aviv of Babylon, the exiled prophet saw the vision of animated dry bones, which drew him back to Israel. Another association is that Theodor Herzl’s visionary book *Alteneuland* (Tel Aviv).

It is amusing today to think that Tel Aviv’s founders once banned commercial enterprise in the city. That ban, of course, did not last long; after the First World War (during which the settlers of Tel Aviv were dispersed), the town took enormous commercial strides. In 1921 it became a separated township and the first modern Jewish city in the world. By 1924 Tel Aviv had a respectable population of 35,000 grew to over 200,000 by 1948.

Tel Aviv’s most significant moment in modern history came when David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, in the home of Mayor Meir Dizengoff. Since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin in 1995 at Kikar Malchei Yisrael, this central Tel Aviv Square, which has been renamed Rabin Square, has become a pilgrimage site.

This Place

מקום זה

هذا المكان

THIS PLACE is a monumental artistic endeavor initiated by photographer Frederic Brenner, who believes that only through the eyes of great artists can we begin to understand the complexities of Israel—its history, its geography, its inhabitants, its daily life—and the resonance it has for people around the world. Inspired by historical models that gathered artists to ask essential questions about culture, society and individuals, including the Mission Héliographique in 19th-century France and the Farm Security Administration in the United States, Brenner first conceived the idea for the project in 2006. After seeking the advice of a group of international curators, he invited eleven acclaimed photographers to join him in exploring Israel and the West Bank as both place and metaphor. The 12 photographers participating in This Place are **Wendy Ewald, Martin Kollar, Josef Koudelka, Jungjin Lee, Gilles Peress, Fazal Sheikh, Stephen Shore, Rosalind Solomon, Thomas Struth, Jeff Wall, Nick Waplington, and Frederic Brenner** himself. Together, this group represents one of the most original and distinguished collections of artists to ever collaborate on a project, and it is certainly the most acclaimed group of photographers to ever turn their attention to Israel and the West Bank. Each photographer spent approximately six months in residence, pursuing his or her own artistic interests. Through these residencies, which stretched over four years (2009 to 2013), thousands of original art works were created. These images combine to create not a single, monolithic vision, but rather a diverse and fragmented portrait, alive with all the rifts and paradoxes of this important and highly contested place. Now a major traveling exhibition, the show is curated by Charlotte Cotton, an internationally recognized curator and former head of the photography department at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). The first show opened in Prague at the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art in October, 2014. This Place next travels to the Tel Aviv Museum of Art. In the fall of 2015, the exhibition will come to the United States, where it will be on view at the Norton Museum of Art and close at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in February of 2016. Additional venues could be announced in the coming months.



The Sharon (Hiriya) Recycling Park - Hiriya recycling park, the main attraction at the Ariel Sharon Park east of Tel Aviv is more than meets the eye: Not only does it contribute essential, green open space to the Dan region; it has become a symbol of renewal in Israeli society. Hiriya recycling park is one of the largest facilities of its kind in the world. One facility utilizes biological sub-systems to reduce the weight of municipal waste by more than 90% and

produce bio-gas to create electricity, recovering glass and metal in the process. Methane gas recovery from the mound is a means for Hiriya to earn part of its development funding (the rest is through contributions and matching government funds); the gas is sold and piped to a nearby textile factory. The Hiriya mound will feature an "inner oasis" with special vegetation and shade areas, as well as a pond. Environmental sculptures planned for the mound will remind visitors of the ecological revolution this unique site represents as Israel works toward a cleaner, greener future.

Wednesday, June 24 – The Last Day



Photographers of the Day -Ellie L., Rebecca L.

07:00 Breakfast: Mishkenot Ruth Daniel, Tel Aviv

08:30 Travel to Jerusalem

10:00-1:00 Visit to Yad VaShem

BLOG

Hannah C.

1:00-1:30 Lunch

1:30-2:00 First summary (in front of Hertzl grave)

2:00-3:00 Drive to Rishon LeTzion

3:00- 4:00 A visit the Shafdan (Dan metropolitan Sewage Treatment Center)

BLOG

Daniel S.

4:30-6:00 Ecology workshop with Hadar Glick

BLOG

Eli A.

6:00 Final dinner at Café Yafo

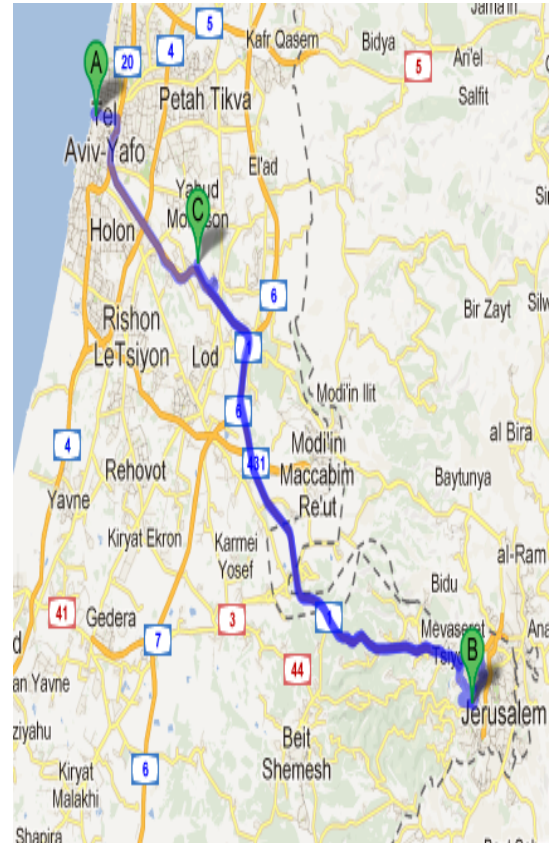
7:30 Depart for airport

Lunch: Packed lunch,

Dinner: Final dinner, Café Yafo

BLOG

Mission Reflection - Emma B., Aidan G.



Thursday, June 26 Return to Cleveland

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Shafdan (Dan metropolitan Sewage Treatment Center)

- “The Dan Region Wastewater Treatment Plant is among 30 projects from around the world chosen by the United Nations, to demonstrate the ability of local authorities to deal with environmental problems. The plant, known to Israelis as Shafdan, was included on the list thanks to its unique method of using the natural filtration qualities of sand in order to improve the quality of sewage. After wastewater is purified in an ordinary facility, it is recharged into the ground, where

it undergoes an additional, natural filtration in the sands of Rishon Letzion and Yavne. This improves the quality of the water such that it can ultimately be used safely for all forms of irrigation. The UN’s recognition of Israeli successes, like Shafdan, is therefore significant both for its environmental know-how and its political potential”. Shafdan Waste Water Treatment utilizes the surrounding environment, the nearby sands of Rishon Letzion and Yavne, as natural filters for part of the water purification process. Serving a population of two million persons in the Dan region, Shafdan treats 130 million cubic meters of wastewater annually. Mekorot, Israel’s national water company operates both the Shafdan facility and its pumping stations. Secondary effluent from the Shafdan plant is used to infiltrate fields in Rishon Letzion and Yavne. From these fields, the effluent is recharged into groundwater reservoirs (aquifers) where it undergoes natural physical, biological and chemical processes that improve its quality and storage ability. The quality of the reclaimed water is very high, making it suitable for all forms of irrigation. Israeli produce grown using reclaimed water includes oranges, carrots, potatoes, lettuce, wheat and flowers.



I am Hadar Glick, an Israeli Industrial Designer. I graduated from the Holon Institute of Technology (H.I.T) at 2012, majoring at the Culture & Creation department.

My work examines culture, rituals and behavior of people, in addition to using different materials.

If This is Our Future

Daniel Gordis

<http://danielgordis.org/2010/05/07/if-this-is-our-future/>

Imagine this, if you can. A prestigious university in the United States, with deep roots in the American Jewish community, invites Israel's ambassador to deliver its annual commencement address. But instead of expressing pride in the choice of speaker and in the country that he represents, the university's students, many of them Jewish, protest. They don't want to hear from the ambassador. (See this Facebook page.) He's a "divisive" figure, the student newspaper argues, and the students deserved better.

Tragically, of course, there's nothing hypothetical about the scenario. Brandeis University recently decided to award honorary degrees to Michael Oren, Dennis Ross and Paul Simon, among others, at its May 23 commencement, and Ambassador Oren, an extraordinary orator among his many other qualities, was invited to deliver the commencement address.

But the days in which Jewish students on an American campus would have been thrilled to have the Israeli ambassador honored by their school are apparently long since gone. Brandeis's student newspaper, *The Justice* (how's that for irony?), deplored the choice, writing that "Mr. Oren is a divisive and inappropriate choice for keynote speaker at commencement, and we disapprove of the university's decision to grant someone of his polarity on this campus that honor."

The ambassador is a polarizing figure? Why is that? Because, the editorial continues, "the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a hotly contested political issue, one that inspires students with serious positions on the topic to fervently defend and promote their views."

This is where we are today. For many young American Jews, the only association they have with Israel is the conflict with the Palestinians. Israel is the country that oppresses Palestinians, and nothing more.

No longer is Israel the country that managed to forge a future for the Jewish people when it was left in tatters after the Holocaust. Israel is not, in their minds, the country that gave refuge to hundreds of thousands of Jews expelled from North Africa when they had nowhere else to go, granting them all citizenship, in a policy dramatically different from the cynical decisions of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan to turn their Palestinian refugees into pawns in what they (correctly) assumed would be a lengthy battle with Israel.

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Israel is not proof that one can create an impressively functioning democracy even when an enormous portion of its citizens hail from countries in which they had no experience with democratic institutions. Israel is not the country in which, despite all its imperfections, Beduin women train to become physicians, and Arab citizens are routinely awarded PhDs from the country's top universities. Israel is not the country in which the classic and long-neglected language of the Jews has been revived, and which produces world class literature and authors routinely nominated for Nobel Prizes.

Nor is Israel the place where Jewish cultural creativity is exploding with newfound energy, as the search for new conceptions of what Jewishness might mean in the 21st century are explored with unparalleled intensity, particularly among some of the country's most thoughtful young people. No longer is Israel understood to be the very country that created the sense of security and belonging that American Jews – and these very students – now take completely for granted.

No, Israel is none of those things. For many young American Jews, it is only the country of roadblocks and genocide, of a relentless war waged against the Palestinians for no apparent reason. For everyone knows that Palestinians are anxious to recognize Israel and to live side-by-side with a Jewish democracy. That, of course, is why Hamas still openly declares its commitment to Israel's annihilation, and that is why Hizbullah has, according to US Defense Secretary Robert Gates, accumulated "more missiles than most governments in the world."

None of this is to suggest that Israel is blameless in the ongoing conflict with the Palestinians, or that the present government has a plan for ending it. Those are entirely different matters. The point is that even if these students hold Israel partially (or even largely) accountable for the intractable conflict with the Palestinians, even if one believes that it should have conducted Operation Cast Lead differently, or even if one disapproves of its policies in the West Bank, for example, it is a devastatingly sad day for world Jewry when those issues are the only ones that one associates with Israel, when mere mention of the Jewish state evokes not the least bit of pride from students graduating from a prestigious institution long associated with the very best of American Jewish life.

WHAT WOULD have happened had Brandeis invited President Barack Obama to deliver the commencement address? Obama is, after all, not exactly a non-divisive figure. He is president of a country at war in Iraq and in Afghanistan, places in which (a small number of) American troops have committed their share of atrocities, a country in which civil rights issues are still far

from resolved, in which the bounty of America is still far beyond the reach of millions of its citizens.

One suspects that the students would have been thrilled to hear Obama, despite the fact that many do not agree with his policies. They would have been honored to host him despite the fact that some must be disappointed that he has not lived up to his campaign promise to call the Turkish treatment of the Armenians a “genocide,” despite the fact that he is intent on pursuing the war in Afghanistan, to which many of the students must certainly be opposed. They would have been delighted by Obama’s presence because even if they disagree with some of his views or some of America’s actions, they understand that the US is more than Obama, and more than this war or that policy. And they are, quite rightly, enormously proud of what America stands for and what it has accomplished.

But that kind of instinctive pride in the Jewish state is, sadly, a vestige of days gone by, even for many American Jews.

Reading some of the reactions to Oren’s invitation, one is struck by an astounding simplicity, and frankly, an utter lack of courage to stand firm against the tidal wave of unbridled hostility toward Israel.

Jeremy Sherer, president of the Brandeis J Street U Chapter, wrote to The Justice, “I am... bothered [by the invitation to Oren] because I disagree with his politics.” That’s what education is now producing – people who want to hear only those with whom they agree? “I’m not exactly thrilled,” Sherer wrote, “that a representative of the current right-wing Israeli government will be delivering the keynote address at my commencement.”

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, of course, is now busy fending off members of his coalition who are far to the right of him, like Moshe Feiglin and Avigdor Lieberman, and whether or not one takes him at his word, he is the first head of the Likud to endorse a two-state solution, no small matter for those who know the history of the Likud. But Sherer makes no mention of that complicating data, for it doesn’t fit his overarching conception of the intrinsic evil of Israel’s “right- wing” government (of which the Labor Party is also – inconveniently for Sherer – a member).

The president of the Brandeis J Street U Chapter, who writes that he’s of “Israeli heritage” (whatever that means), did not see fit to say a single positive word about Israel. Not one. One wonders what the “pro-Israel” part of J-Street’s “pro-Israel, pro-Peace” tag line means to Sherer.

Ironically, though, some of the attempts to defend the invitation to Oren were no less distressing. A student representative to the Board of Trustees writes in a disappointingly anemic piece to the *The Justice* that Oren “is being invited for his academic achievements, not his political ones,” and then launches into a recitation of Oren’s many academic accomplishments.

Here, too, however, not a single positive word about Israel, or of the honor that having not only a world-class historian, but also its representative to the US, might be for the university. That sort of pride appears nowhere in *The Justice*’s editorial, the *J-Street* representative’s piece or the op-ed defending the invitation. For too many American Jewish undergraduates, it’s simply no longer part of their vocabulary.

Imagine that Sherer had written something like this: “I disagree passionately with Israel’s policies regarding the Palestinians, and welcome President Obama’s new pressure on Israel to bring the conflict to a close. But as a Jew who understands that despite my disagreement with Israel’s policies, the Jewish state is key to the Jewish revival of which my entire generation is a beneficiary, I honor Ambassador Oren for his service to a country of which I am deeply proud in many ways, and I look forward to welcoming him to campus.”

Or if the pro-Oren op-ed had said, “There is a radical disconnect between our generation and today’s Israeli government. Many members of my generation believe that Mr. Netanyahu and his government either do not know how to speak to us, or are uninterested in doing so. Ambassador Oren’s appearance on campus is a perfect opportunity for the Israeli government to address us and our concerns; I urge our campus to listen carefully to what may well be a watershed address at this critical period in Israel’s history and in the relationship between Israel and the future leadership of American Jewry.”

Imagine. But nothing of that sort got said.

Indeed, the seeming refusal of any of the student articles to say even one positive thing about the Jewish state was all the more galling given other events that took place across the globe on the very same week that the Oren controversy was unfolding. At the University of Manchester, pro-Palestinian protesters tried to attack Israel’s deputy ambassador to the UK, some holding Palestinian flags up to the windows of her car and others climbing on the hood and trying to smash the windshield. In Berlin, a Danish street art duo known as “Surrend” blanketed several neighborhoods with maps of the Middle East in which the State of Israel had been removed, with the term “Final Solution” at the top. The Scottish Labor Federation reaffirmed its support for a boycott of Israel, and the student government at the University of California, Berkeley fell

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just one single vote short in a bid to override a veto against a divestment bill; a similar bill was also debated at UC San Diego.

None of the writers to The Justice felt that they had to distance themselves from those views, even as they critiqued or supported the invitation to Ambassador Oren.

The student-thugs at UC Irvine, who disrupted Oren's speech on campus in February, have won. They have set the standard for how one treats any mention of Israel on any campus. Israel is nothing but a legitimate whipping post even at institutions of higher learning, and sane discussion of its rights and wrongs need not be defended, even in communities ostensibly committed to civil and intelligent discourse.

Tragically, even these students at Brandeis, one of the great institutions of American Jewish life, had nothing terribly different to say to the world. Theirs are only more tepid versions of the delegitimization now spreading across the international community like wildfire.

One shudders to imagine a future in which they might be our leaders.

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