

# Blessing Israel™

Sermon Notes

**Zechariah 2:8-10** – “...for he who touches you (oh Israel) touches the Apple of His Eye.”

**Psalms 122:6** – “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. May they prosper who love you.”

**Isaiah 62:1** – “For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not keep quiet, until her righteousness goes forth like brightness and her salvation like a torch that is burning.”

There has never been a more urgent time for Christians to stand with Israel. Just as Queen Esther was used by God to save the Jews from destruction, so Israel needs Christian friends in churches who truly understand that they have also been raised ***“for such a time as this!”***

That's why it delights my heart to have the privilege of sharing with you on this day of celebrating the legacy of Israel and The Fellowship.

The definition of 'Legacy' is: a long-lasting impact of particular actions or events that have taken place **on purpose.**



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75 years ago actions were taken that created the nation of Israel. David Ben-Gurion became the first Premier. That same day, President Truman recognized Israel as an independent State ... and, the Legacy lives on!

During the tour, Rabbi Eckstein would, at times, stand on the balcony of their room and pray over Jerusalem.

One night Rabbi Eckstein came back to the room, and when he opened the door, he saw his roommate, the Baptist minister, kneeling by his bed with his arms raised to heaven, crying and saying:

**"Lord, Lord, I am more blessed than Moses! Moses only got to see the Promised Land, but I got to walk in the Promised Land."**

At that moment, Rabbi realized that Christians and Jews had more in common than he had ever realized.

He reasoned, **why couldn't Christians and Jews work together to build bridges of understanding and to work together in areas of common concern?**



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Thus the **International Fellowship of Christians and Jews** was birthed, and today, 40 years later, the work continues because of the prayers and sacrificial gifts of Christians around the world.

40 years ago Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, an ordained, orthodox Jewish Rabbi was working in the Chicago area for the Anti-Defamation League, trying to raise support for Jews in the area who were coming under increasing attack.

As he began contacting churches, he learned that there was strong support for Israel and the Jewish people, based on biblical imperatives.

He then led a tour to Israel. .. a tour of Evangelical Christian ministers. He learned that he would be rooming with a 70-year-old black Southern Baptist preacher.

He thought, "This is going to be a long week!".

Three years ago, Rabbi was called Home, but not before publicly recognizing that God had ordained his daughter, Yael, to continue The Legacy. And, today she is serving the ministry as the President and CEO.



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The Legacy of Rabbi Eckstein has become a foundation for continuing the God-given vision.

**During these 3 years, under the anointed leadership of Yael, The Fellowship has nearly doubled its impact.**

## WHAT IS THE MISSION OF THE FELLOWSHIP

To promote better relations and cooperation between Christians and Jews, building support for Israel, and bringing the two faith communities together to address issues of mutual concern and achieve common goals.

As Christians, our mission is to bless Israel and the Jewish people based on biblical teachings.

The Fellowship has established **3 primary vehicles of ministry** in order to accomplish the vision.

### **The first is Wings of Eagles.**

In the past 40 years we have helped over 700,000 Jews from the former Soviet Union, Ethiopia, and various parts of the world make ALIYAH ... Go Home to Israel! They have returned and resettled in "ERITZ ISRAEL" "THE LAND OF PROMISE" thus fulfilling biblical prophecy:



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## TELL STORY.

Lylyia Hranda is 85 years-old. She has been bedridden for about a year. Her son Serhyi Is 54 years old. He has epilepsy and also needs close medical supervision. They are from Mariupol, Ukraine. They made Aliyah on January 19, 2023 on the Emergency Aliyah Flight which left from Kishinev, Moldova. The flight was funded by IFCJ-Canada.

"I was born in 1937, in Mariupol, Ukraine. I was 4 years old when World War II started. My parents worked at a military factory in Mariupol. In the fall of 1941, my parents, my younger brother and I were evacuated with the factory to the Urals."

"This is the second time I have fled Mariupol because of a war. During World War II, we fought together with the Russians; now the Russians have come to kill us. They bombed us from the first day of the war. I lived with my son in a five-story house In Mariupol. When there were air-raid sirens, I could not run down the stairs from the fifth floor to the shelter, so we stayed in the apartment during the bombing. I sat down on the floor with my son in the corridor and we covered our ears with palm leaves. The sound of exploding shells, the roar of airplanes and the crash of collapsing buildings are still in my ears. On August 5, 2021, a bomb hit our house; half of our house turned into ruins. At that moment I was lying at home with my leg in a cast because of my broken hip. Our apartment remained intact, but all the windows were broken. The blast wave damaged all the doors and the



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walls cracked. Fortunately, we were still alive. Apparently, God saved us; it was a real miracle. However, our sufferings continued. There was no electricity, no gas, no water and absolutely no food. My son is epileptic and an invalid. The right side of the body is paralyzed. I was lying with a broken leg. We only survived thanks to The Fellowship, the Hesed program and my niece. People from The Fellowship and Hesed brought us medicines and groceries. My niece cooked food on a fire outside and brought it to us. For eight months, every other day, she brought us food, water and wet wipes. I hadn't washed my hair for eight months and could only afford to wipe myself with wet wipes. Every day I was losing hope that my son and I would stay alive. My son was running out of medicines, my broken leg did not heal properly and I could not walk without surgery. God has heard my prayers!"

"On May 2, volunteers from Hesed came to me and offered me the opportunity to make Aliyah to Israel. The poor volunteers had a hard time with me, carrying me on a stretcher from the fifth floor. All we could take was a bag with documents and the remaining medicines. Then we took a bus with other people to the city of Berdyansk.

"Every day I have lived since the beginning of the war is a miracle. Every person who met me on the way and helped us is a miracle. I owe The Fellowship both my life and my son's life. I thank The Fellowship's donors send them warm thanks for their help. It's only because of you that so many

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miracles happened to us. In such a difficult time, you did not leave me alone to my fate."

**Isaiah 49:22**, God says: I will beckon to the gentiles. I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.

## **The second vehicle is Isaiah 58.**

This ministry helps feed, clothe, and house needy elderly Jews and orphans in the former Soviet Union, many of them are Holocaust Survivors.

Over 1 million impoverished Jewish men, women, and children have received food, medical attention, warm clothing, and companionship:

## **TELL STORY.**

Dunka Karpetnova (92) has lived a long life. She never imagined that in her old days, she'd relive the horrors of World War II all over again.

Dunka, born in December 1929. "My childhood was full of tragedies," tells Dunka in tears. "My only sister died of disease when she was just four years old, soon after my father passed away, I stayed atone with my mother. She became a widow at the age of 28 and never remarried. World War II began when I turned thirteen. This changed everything for us. For the first



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time in our lives we had to leave our village. What happened in the next years is blurred in my memory. I remember cold, hunger and suffering. My mother did everything she could to provide food to survive. It was hard .... There is no help for my mother, It was hard to live. By the time I was fourteen, I had started to work on the farm to help my mother.

Dunka talks about the war in Ukraine; "I hear the news and cry. Innocent people are dying all over Ukraine. From time to time, there are loud explosion sounds in the area. I am too old to look for shelter, and where would I go anyway? "

Dunka had two heart attacks; "It is a miracle that I am still alive. I walk very slow because my legs and hands are weak. As a result of the war, everything got so expensive, and my pension is not enough to support me. This is why your help is saving my life. The Fellowship never abandoned me, not even during the war when the roads were closed. God bless you for all you do, thank you for the food and your continued support.

God says through Isaiah in the 58th chapter that we are to feed, clothe and shelter those who are suffering.

**The third vehicle is Guardians of Israel.**



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Because of Christians blessing Israel and standing in solidarity with her, The Fellowship has been able to fund Israeli food banks, soup kitchens, orphanages, clothing, and furniture centers.

Over 30% of Israelis living in Israel, live under the poverty line .... ellab.

Working with The Fellowship's Guardians of Israel program, Christians and churches have helped Israel terror victims with great financial needs when there has been the loss of a family breadwinner.

Anti-Semitism is on a record rise world-wide.

Christians have helped provide rehabilitation to those who have suffered the loss of limbs.

Christians have helped provide trauma counseling to help heal inner trauma that is just as devastating as physical wounds.

Christians have provided special protection equipment such as armor-plated school buses, bulletproof windows in kindergartens, schools and apartments, and even bulletproof vests for teachers.



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Most recently Christians have helped place, replace, remodel and rebuild bomb shelters all across Israel... bomb shelters that are needed, unfortunately, because of the daily threat and actual missile attacks from Gaza.

Through these vehicles of ministry over 2 million Jews in 2022 were touched through the outreach of The Fellowship.

Remember the definition of "LEGACY"... a long-lasting impact of particular actions or events that have taken place 'on purpose'.

Today I want to thank your ministry for being a part of the legacy of The International Fellowship of Christians and Jews.

I not only want to thank you for what you have done, but I want you to prayerfully consider enlarging your legacy... to do something... on purpose... that will express your desire to an action that will leave a long-lasting impact in the lives of God's people who desperately need our love and support.

