

Christian Action Ministry Newsletter

Involving the Christian in Community Action

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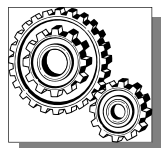
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Are you interested in becoming involved? CAM is looking for interested and active people to act as liaisons to their church, helping to keep the Christian community informed. Contact CAM at 372-6442.

The Gaza Flotilla

By
Dick Trudell

One fact is evident in the actions of Israel regarding the Gaza blockade – if the Palestinians laid down their arms there would be no war; if Israel laid down its arms there would be no Israel. There is a reason for the Gaza blockade, and it is the simple fact that Hamas, a recognized terrorist organization, uses Gaza to launch missiles into Israel. Every country has an obligation to protect its citizens, and Israel is doing so with its blockade of Gaza, preventing military equipment and explosives from entering Gaza, from where they would undoubtedly be used against Israel. Egypt also has a blockade of Gaza, in force since 2007.

This flotilla was no peace mission or humanitarian effort – it was a PR stunt to inflame world opinion against Israel, helped along by a compliant press that fails in its duty to dig into the facts and report them. Even with the blockade in place, ships have routinely been directed to Israeli ports where their humanitarian cargo was inspected under established protocol and transported by land to Gaza. What is hard to understand about that? For

weeks this PR stunt has been in the making, and for weeks the organizers have been told by Israeli authorities that they would not be allowed through. The captains of the ships (there were six ships) were told they would not be allowed in, and the offer was extended, once again, to screen the cargo and transfer any humanitarian aid directly by land to Gaza. The offer was rejected.



Only after this rejection, was the decision made to board the ships and bring them into the port of Ashdod. Five of the ships were boarded without incident, but on the sixth ship, the Marmara, the IDF boarding party, equipped with paintball guns to disperse crowds, were beaten with iron pipes, until lethal force was authorized to protect the soldiers. Only then did the soldiers use their side arms. If this was a humanitarian ship,

why were there a reported 600 passengers on board? It should have been packed with aid cargo, not people with iron pipes ready to provoke an incident.

The intent of the flotilla was to break the blockade so that rockets could be delivered in the future from Syria and Iran, who supply Hamas. Israel has intercepted several munitions ships trying to bring this material into Gaza. Since 2005 when Israel left Gaza, over 10,000 rockets have been fired, aimed at Israeli population centers. Who in their right mind can say Israel should not try to stop this?

There is no shortage of food or medicine in Gaza. Every day Israel facilitates the delivery of more than 100 truckloads of food and medicine into Gaza delivered to non-Hamas facilities. This incident was deliberately provoked to turn world opinion against Israel, was funded by regimes pledged to Israel's destruction, and carried out by people tied to terrorist organizations. Israel is justified in its reaction.

Dick Trudell is a Board member of the Christian Action Ministry and attends Community Bible Church in South Burlington



“If the freedom of speech is taken away, then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter.”

George Washington

Constitution Corner

Article 1 of the Vermont Constitution

By
Kay Trudell

The subject of this issue of CAM's Constitution Corner will be the Vermont Constitution, specifically Article 1. This section is entitled: **All persons born free; their natural rights; slavery prohibited.**

In the current and immediately preceding CAM newsletter, articles discussing human trafficking in Vermont and pending legislation have appeared. We thought it would be instructive to reprint Article 1 of the Vermont Constitution of 1793 for our readers. It should be noted that our State's Constitution is one of the oldest and least revised of the Constitutions of any of the fifty states. It has stood the test of time very well. How many of our current Vermont legislators

have read it? How many truly have agreed to abide by it? How many Vermont citizens of voting age have read it? Before we chide our legislators, we should look to ourselves. Here is the relevant section:

CHAPTER I – A DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE STATE OF VERMONT Article 1st. All persons born free; their natural rights; slavery prohibited

That all persons are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent, and unalienable rights, amongst which are the enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety; therefore no person born in this country, or brought from over sea, ought to be holden by law, to serve any person as a servant, slave

or apprentice, after arriving to the age of twenty-one years, unless bound by the person's own consent, after arriving to such age, or bound by law for the payment of debts, damages, fines, costs, or the like.

It is the opinion of this author that no piece of legislation should be passed in Vermont unless it conforms to both the Vermont and U.S. Constitutions. It is also an observation that since many of our legislators have not read either document recently, laws are passed which simply restate rights already granted in both documents, or that try to expand government power into areas which are clearly prohibited by one or both documents. Fortunately, the good citizens of this state and the forty-nine others are rediscovering and re-reading their respective State and U.S. Constitutions in an effort to discern the intentions

of the original authors. Civics education in Vermont schools should follow suit. This can only accrue beneficial consequences for politics and responsible government. Vermont entered the Union as an anti-slavery State. Article 1st also sets forth numerous other rights which we Vermonters enjoy. These may be the subject of later CAM articles. For now, it is sufficient to say that it has been against the law in Vermont from its beginning to hold people in a condition of involuntary servitude or slavery absent their free consent. The Vermont Constitution needs to be enforced with sensible legislation that addresses the problem of modern-day human trafficking without making the persons so victimized perpetual wards of the state.

Kay Trudell is a Board member of CAM and attends Community Bible Church in South Burlington.

Human Trafficking Follow-up

By
Lauston Stephens

In the last issue, it was pointed out that even though Vermont takes pride in being the first state to outlaw slavery, we may end up being dead last in enacting real modern day legislation against human trafficking. Here is another illustration that Vermont may not be a beacon of virtue as we often see ourselves.

One of the Christian organizations mentioned last time that works against human trafficking is the International Justice Mission (www.ijm.org). My young friend that works with them let me know that they have "Freedom Partners," financial supporters at \$50/month, in every state except one: Vermont.

Yes, ethically, I couldn't mention this if I didn't support them or another similar organization myself, but that level is simply too high for me at this time. Indeed, by factoring in taxes on personal spending, property taxes and income taxes, Forbes.com lists Vermont as the most heavily taxed state in the country. Maybe you can't afford \$50/month for the charitable cause of your choice either. Maybe you can. Is this an endorsement of IJM? Not exactly. As with many organizations that focus on one problem or one kind of problem, it is possible to lose sight of a bigger picture. The IJM website featured the Nobel laureate who was on board one of the ships trying to run Israel's naval blockade. That is like crying, "Police brutality!" if the police arrested a human trafficker who was caught bringing home implements of his trade along with the groceries for his family. "He's just trying to provide for his family." No, he is not and, no, Hamas is not just trying to provide for Gaza. You must decide how you will respond to modern human trafficking. Just don't do nothing.

Lauston Stephens is a Board member of the Christian Action Ministry and attends Roadside Assembly of God in Rutland

Israel's Exile: What the future may be telling us

by Ray Racine

The May 2010 issue of *Israel Today* (a magazine published in Jerusalem) featured an article by Ludwig Schneider entitled "Israel's Exile". The article examined Israel's four periods of exile, which occurred during their four thousand year history. The author takes the position, supported by Scripture (*Amos 9:14-15 - KJV*), that the Jews have been returned to their Biblical Homeland, and will not be uprooted again, despite the apparent gathering of the gentile nations of the world against her. I have secured permission from the publication to discuss this article in our newsletter and to quote from it.

Israel's history records four periods of exile.

I. The exile of Jacob's descendants in Egypt lasted 430 years until the Exodus, which became a prototype for redemption when, under Moses' leadership, God brought the Israelites into the Promised Land.

II. The exile of the Ten Tribes from northern Israel started in 722 BC. These tribes have been known throughout history as the "Ten Lost Tribes," but in our day they are returning to Israel. Examples are Jews from Yemen, Ethiopia and even India, which lies on the far side of the legendary Ten Tribe River, the Sambatyon.

III. The Babylonian Exile began with the destruction of the First Temple in 586 BC, when the "Two-Tribe" Kingdom of Israel was taken captive, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion" (Psalm

137:1). This exile ended when Cyrus the Great issued an edict in 538 BC, allowing the Jews to return home.

IV. The fourth Exile began with the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 AD. The actual dispersion of the Jews throughout the nations, however, only began in 135 AD, under the Roman Emperor Hadrian, who renamed Israel "Palestina".

Babylon and Rome are analogous as the two world powers that destroyed the Temple. That is why many people (correctly or incorrectly) interpret Babylon in the Book of Revelation as referring to Rome. By the end of the Fourth Exile, all of the Jewish people will have returned home to Zion. As of today, over three million Jews have already returned to Israel from 127 countries.

According to Messianic expectations, the building of the Third Temple will take place at the end of the Fourth Exile. Then the Messiah will come, which for Christians will be the Second Coming of Jesus.

Following the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland in 1897, Theodor Herzl spread the hope of a return home to Zion. However, it took the horrors of the Holocaust to finally convince the Jewish people (and much of the gentile world as well) of the importance of the biblical homeland given to the Jewish people by God, where they could have their own state and maintain their own defense. This led to the founding of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948.

In Amos 9:14 & 15 The Lord says, "And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the

waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they will not again be rooted out from their land which I have given them," says the Lord your God."

According to the promise in Amos there will not be a Fifth Exile. Because God is faithful to His promises to Israel, I know He will be faithful to His promises to me, a grafted-in gentile.

Jeremiah (31:35-37) stated, "Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: if those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD."

We see the sun each day and the stars and moon each night. We cannot measure the heavens as they are in constant change; and we cannot search the center of the earth; therefore, the Lord is not obligated to cast off Israel forever.

God promised in Ezekiel that He would gather the children of Israel and bring them back into their own land.

In Zechariah 12:1-3, "Thus says the Lord, who spreads out the heavens, lays the foundations of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:

'See I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burden-some stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it'.

Jerusalem today is the center of ongoing conflict with the nations. The gentile nations deny that Jerusalem is the Capital of Israel, as does the United States. How do we do this? The U.S. always locates our embassies in the capital city of the foreign nation involved. We refused to locate our official embassy in Jerusalem. Instead, it is in Tel Aviv. The message we are sending to Israel and the world by this action is (1) We will act as if Tel Aviv is the capital of Israel and (2) that the U.S. has the right to tell Israel where its capital is, or that we might not be opposed to splitting it in two, thus undermining Israel's claim to Jerusalem as the historical and undisputed capital of modern Israel. The U.S. places lesser consulates in non-capital cities in foreign nations, and our major embassy in said nation's capital city. Yet in the case of Israel, we have one consulate in East Jerusalem, one consulate in West Jerusalem, and our embassy in Tel Aviv. What point are we trying to make?

I believe that the God of Israel will have the last word on this matter. God says what He means. He means what He says. His promises are irrevocable.

Ray Racine is a Director of the Christian Action Ministry and attends Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church in Colchester, VT.

What can I do?



Faith without works is dead
James 2:17

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Looking for your Help

Vermont has 27 public access channels that are willing to air pre-recorded video programs that are sponsored by individuals in their communities. The Christian Action Ministry has access to many good educational programs that could be aired. We are looking for individuals who would be willing to sponsor a video on their local public access TV station. We would provide you with the video and you would take it to your local public access station as a sponsor and after airing the video, return it to CAM.

If you are able to help us, please give us a call at 802-372-6442.

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Next Meetings

July 13, 7:00 pm
St. Marks Catholic Church
Burlington, Vt.
August 24, 7:00 pm
Parkinson home
Hinesburg, Vt.

**Making A Difference
in
Vermont!**



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