



HAGEFEN PUBLISHING

Newsletter, April-June 2019

An Increased Number of Books Published

As Jews, we are often called "the people of the book." This description was given in light of the fact that the book of the law was given to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai. However, there is also another reason for this title, and that is the fact that we like to read books. And we have evidence of that here.

On the 12th of June, days before National Bookweek in Israel, an interesting article was published by one of the popular news' agencies. The title of the article was "Even in this Cellular Era, the Number of Books Published Increases." The report was based on the National Library that is situated in Jerusalem and has a list and a copy of every book that gets published in Israel – including all our HaGefen books! The article went on to say that 8,571 books were published in 2018, an increase of 2,000 compared to 2008 (the article in Hebrew:

https://www.mako.co.il/news-israel/education-q2_2019/Article-3d5372409494b61027.htm).

This is an increase of 35% in 10 years. This increase is very impressive, especially as we are in the electronic and eBook era and some question the place of publishing in these pixel times. What was reported in this article is something we are experiencing in our own small, non-profit publishing house as we have seen an increase of more than 250% of our sales and publishing services between those same years of 2008 to 2018. This is not only a great sign of the increased maturity of the body as they recognize more and more the place and importance of books and literature, but it also points to an increase in the number of Hebrew speaking believers. This gives us great motivation in continuing to produce books that are helping build a foundation for the body of Christ to stand upon.



History also teaches us the significant impact books have had over the centuries on society and the church at large. Books that were written and published in the early centuries of Christianity are still being read and used. The current generation is still benefiting from the

church father's classic writings after some twenty centuries. Even before that, Paul in his last epistle writes these words in II Timothy 4:13 in anticipation of his final visit to Timothy, his spiritual son. *When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments.* (ESV) Paul knew the importance of books even when aware that his time in this temporary binding of flesh was near its end. How much more should books be essential for us?

HaEdut on Mobile Devices

In our previous newsletter, we updated you about our eBook project. We continue our efforts to convert more of our published books into electronic format. And we are encouraged by the fact that our books are being exposed to a broader group of Israelis, who in general may not be browsing our HaGefen website.

In addition, we are creating an App for our HaEdut (Modern Hebrew Old Testament) for both iPhone and Android mobile devices. Its development is in the advanced stages, and we hope to launch the App in a few weeks. The App will enable a user to open the HaEdut version on



its own or in parallel with another version – the Masoretic text, the ESV, the KJV text, or the Russian text. It will also have an advanced search capability. The use of the App is free, and we hope that in this way we will be able to expand our reach even further and in particular to the younger and internet connected world. Please pray that the Lord will use the App for His glory and that it would reach many in Israel and beyond.

HaGefen as Knowledge Based

You probably have been hearing that the church in Israel is growing. It is certainly true. According to some statistics, the number of Jewish Christians may be up to 30,000 or more. This is exciting, especially when in the beginning years of the state of Israel the number may have been closer to a dozen. So indeed, the church is growing. In recent years, most of those who have come to faith are the millennials and post-millennials. Many of them have a great zeal for the gospel and in communicating it with their friends and colleagues. They are also open to the pursuit of theological studies both in Israel and even abroad. (Currently there are more than ten young people who are studying abroad in various seminaries and advanced degree programs.) All of this news is exciting as it gives the church in Israel and beyond great hope for a wonderful future.

However, growth comes with its own challenges. Many of these young people who are coming to faith are not part of local congregations. Since many of them have been exposed to the gospel through social media or even come to faith through it, they don't necessarily see place of the church or their need for being part of one. According to one statistic, about 70% of these millennials are not part of any congregation, and this is alarming. And because there is no lack of false teaching on the World Wide Web, there is a great danger that many will fall into heresies and teachings that are not based on the Sacred Scriptures. Also, some 70% of the pastors in Israel don't have any kind of formal training, though many have been pastoring for some time.



These and other challenges have led us into a new opportunity to turn HaGefen into a knowledge based ministry. The plan is to provide good solid teaching in Hebrew for those who need to be trained in the basics of the faith. We are in the process of locating a wide range of teaching material that is available through various ministries to which we will add Hebrew subtitles and make them available free of charge to anyone who can benefit from them. We have already started negotiations with some of the ministries, including Ligonier ministries. (David will have two days of meetings at their headquarters in Sanford, FL the beginning of July.) We are also contacting 9Marks, Navigators, and Grace to You ministries. The plan is to launch the project the first quarter of 2020.

Needless to say, we will continue to publish books, and we hope these projects will enhance the ministry and our outreach to even more people using more platforms.

Please pray for this and other projects that we are involved in, that we will be able to bring them to completion and see fruit in the lives of this and the coming generations. Also, please consider supporting us as we are facing some challenges in financing these projects.

2019 – 2020 Calendar



As it has become a must-do and part of our HaGefen tradition, we have published our 2019-2020 calendar. The theme for this year is "A Land Flowing with Milk and Honey." It beautifully portrays the fruit of the land and how the land has been blessed by so many varieties of colorful and tasty foods. The calendar is yet another way of showing the goodness of God to us in the land of our fathers. You can order your copy from our website at www.ha-gefen.org.il

Our Recent Publications

In the last few months we have published four new books. The first one is *What is the Gospel?* by Greg Gilbert, from 9Marks. We published the book in the memory of the beloved evangelist and pastor of the “Voice in the Wilderness” congregation, Antony Simon, who was killed in a car accident in Iraq while serving the Kurdish community there. Paul Washer from the HeartCry Missionary Society wrote a preface in the Hebrew edition of the book. We hope and pray the book will be used widely to help our people see what the gospel really is.

Two books are by Dr. Joel Beeke. The first is *How Do We Plant Godly Convictions in Our Children?* And the second one is *How Should Men Lead Their Families?* Both books are meant for young families, who are plentiful in our churches.

While these three books are for adults to be used both as evangelistic tools as well as for young families, the fourth book that we published is for children. *Who Is My Neighbor?* is based on the good Samaritan parable and is written for younger children. This is part of a book series, written in rhyme. The other four books in the series are, *Noah*, *Esther*, *The Prodigal Son* and *Ruth*. The books come with a coloring book, which contain the illustrations. The series has been used by some congregations for their Sabbath School classes. We hope this book helps parents and children alike to hear the seeds of the love God has for them, especially through the newest Good Samaritan story.



The Pentecost Event



This year, as in the past during the Pentecost Festival, there was a celebration for the Jewish Christians in Yad Hashmona (the Messianic Moshava near Jerusalem). We, like other organizations had a table for our books, as there are some fifteen hundred believers who attend the event. Sean Reece from HeartCry Missionary Society was with us this time at our table. This year our sales were the highest that we have had in ten years. Again, this is an indication, as we wrote above, that Israelis still read books, and the need for them is on the rise.



Praise God:

- That Israelis are reading books and that more books are being published, including at our own HaGefen Publishing.
- That despite the financial challenges we are moving ahead with two important projects.
- That we are able to reach a wider section of society.

Pray:


- The HaEdut mobile version, that it will be a blessing in Israel and beyond.
- Wisdom as we are planning the steps for turning HaGefen into a knowledge based ministry.
- Our recently published books, that they will be a blessing to many in this generation and in generations to come.

To give through PayPal, visit our website:
ha-gefen.org.il/donate



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