

UPF Israel and Jerusalem Interfaith Forum study & celebrate three major religions

Nurit Hirschfeld
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Jerusalem, Israel -- UPF and the Jerusalem Interfaith Forum held an interfaith study to celebrate the holidays of three major religions.

Rabbi Yaakov Luft, a senior member of the Jerusalem Interfaith Forum, invited our forum members for an interfaith study on the topic "The Relevance of Holy Scriptures in These Days."

"When we study together, we can learn from each other, and we can also admit the fewer struggles we have and search for solutions through the study," Rabbi Luft said.

The meeting, which was held on May 27, 2020, at Rabbi Luft's home in a suburb of Jerusalem, celebrated the Jewish holiday Shavuot, the Islamic holiday Eid al-Fitr, and the Christian holiday Pentecost.



The meeting was organized by UPF-Israel Secretary General Luke Weiler-Hill and Vice President Adi Sassaki,

In addition to Rabbi Luft, the more than 20 participants included Bishop Dr. Munib Younan; Sheik Samir Aasi and his wife, Mrs. Mirwat Aasi; Father Pyotr Zalzko; Rabbi Alex Minz; Rabbi Michael Finkel; and Professor Hanoch Ben Pazi, head of Jewish Philosophy at Bar Ilan University.

The opening remarks were given by UPF-Israel's president, Dr. Nurit Hirschfeld, who read a passage from UPF's founders (see below) about the search for truth.

Sheik Samir Aasi emphasized the courage that religious leaders need when reading the scriptures, being open to seeing a need for renewal of our understanding.

Bishop Younan (in a recorded message) talked about the values of forgiveness and love in the Holy Scriptures. He said that the role of religious leaders is to talk to political leaders and insist they follow the Holy Scriptures' values, as the prophet Nathan advised King David.



Professor Hanoch Ben Pazi (in a recorded message) mentioned the Jewish tradition of reading the Holy Scripture at Shavuot, a tradition that goes back to the Mount Sinai event. We can hear the echo of God's words from that ancient time until today: "I am your God"; "You shall not murder"; "You should honor your father and mother."

A lively discussion followed, and the meeting was prolonged due to the participants' desire to stay together, talk, and discuss.

Words from the UPF founders that were read by UPF-Israel President Dr. Nurit Hirschfeld

If you want to find the truth, do not pay attention to just anyone's words. You have to listen only to that which is true. Then what are the words of truth? Words of truth are those that stir a feeling of repentance in your heart, that move you so deeply that you become completely immersed in them, and that remain in your mind no matter how much you try to forget them. (Cheon Seong Gyeong, Book 1, p. 43)

