

IN MEMORY OF MICHAEL SPIVAK

I would like to honor a very special man, Michael Spivak. Some of you may have met him at a Ner Yaakov event. It is with sadness that I need to tell you, that Michael passed away in January. I am thankful to God, that we have known him, - it was a real blessing for myself and the volunteers. Michael also had a very moving, difficult story. His family has allowed us to share some with you and give you a glimpse into his life. Glen, his son-in-law wrote:



Michael was born in 1929 in Zhmerinka, Ukraine, and survived the Holocaust in a ghetto in the Ukraine. As he witnessed the terrible suffering and persecution of the Jews, he realized that the only way Jews could be saved was, if they had a state of their own. At the age of 16 he founded the "Einigkeit" youth organization which urged Jews to immigrate to Palestine, before Israel became a nation.

In 1949, because of his "Zionist-activity", he was arrested by Stalin and sentenced to 25 years hard labor. And this was not long after coming out of all the sufferings of the Holocaust!

Fortunately, due to Stalin's death, he 'only' spent seven years in jail, and one year in exile, before being released in 1956.

Michael married Paulina, a fellow schoolmate, in 1958 and two children were born, Alex and Bella. Bella made Aliyah to Israel in 1994. Two years later her parents also came to Israel, finally fulfilling Michael's life long dream and vision. He loved Israel and flourished here, and for the first time was able to speak of his past sufferings. Michael wrote a biography, entitled "Through Ghetto, Gulag and Galut!" (Through Ghetto, Stalin's Hard-labour Camps and Jewish Exile).

Michael was a very strong character and a true fighter. This is what kept him alive, we believe, through his imprisonment and difficult life. He had very strong principles, but his heart was loving and gentle.

For his story, together with other "Prisoners of Zion" go to the website and scroll down to Michael Spivak: http://www.angelfire.com/sc3/soviet_jews_exodus/English/POZ_s/POZ-49-2.shtml

„As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem!“ Isaiah 66:13

WANNSEE 1942

January 20, 1942 at Wannsee-Berlin the „Final Solution“ was declared. For me truly, this was a „Declaration of war against the God of Israel Himself and his entire redemptive plan for mankind“.

In the ‚Holocaust Chronicles‘, it is written about the Conference at Wannsee: „Nearly all (participants) knew of the deportations and killings already in progress. Nevertheless, Heydrich expected objections to his agenda, which required eliminating European Jewry by murdering or „extermination through work.“ His worry was unnecessary. The participants stated their views about details, where the ‚Final Solution‘ should have priority...! „A Conference to declare the ‚Final Solution‘!“

How did these men dare to make a decision to wipe out and touch the apple of **God's own eye?** (Zech. 2:8)

Usually I am not a person who likes to go to conferences, however, I was even thinking of flying to Germany and taking part in the „70 Years after Wannsee-Conference.“ I felt how important it is, spiritually, especially as a German Christian living in Israel, to make also a declaration, -now 70 years later- and stand, stand with our lives and confession for the truth of God's everlasting word, which says:

„This is what the Lord says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—the Lord Almighty is his name: „Only if these decrees vanish from our sight,“ declares the Lord, „will the descendents of Israel ever cease to be a nation before me.“ Jeremiah 31:35-36

It was good to take part in a gathering here in Jerusalem organized by the ICEJ in memory of Wannsee. One German brother spoke and I felt the seriousness in his words about the future, mentioning Dietrich Bonhöffer, who of course paid the highest price by giving his life to resist this evil. And even if we feel we are not many, like in his time, it is an encouraging fact, that a „minority can truly be effective!“

Let me say to you:

Let us look back and make a stand today, in an awareness of the present state of Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism in the world—And declare with one clear voice: **‘Am Israel Chai!’** „The people of Israel is live!“