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Someone Lives Here

The Ridge Towns of Judea and Samaria

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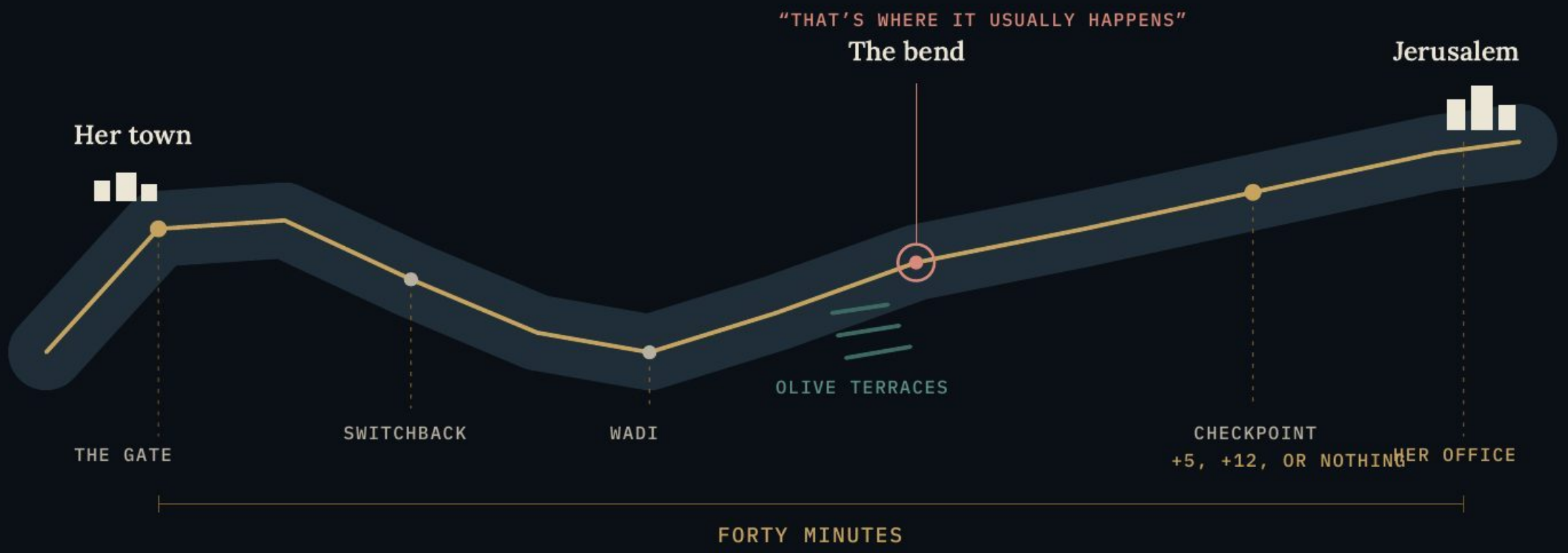
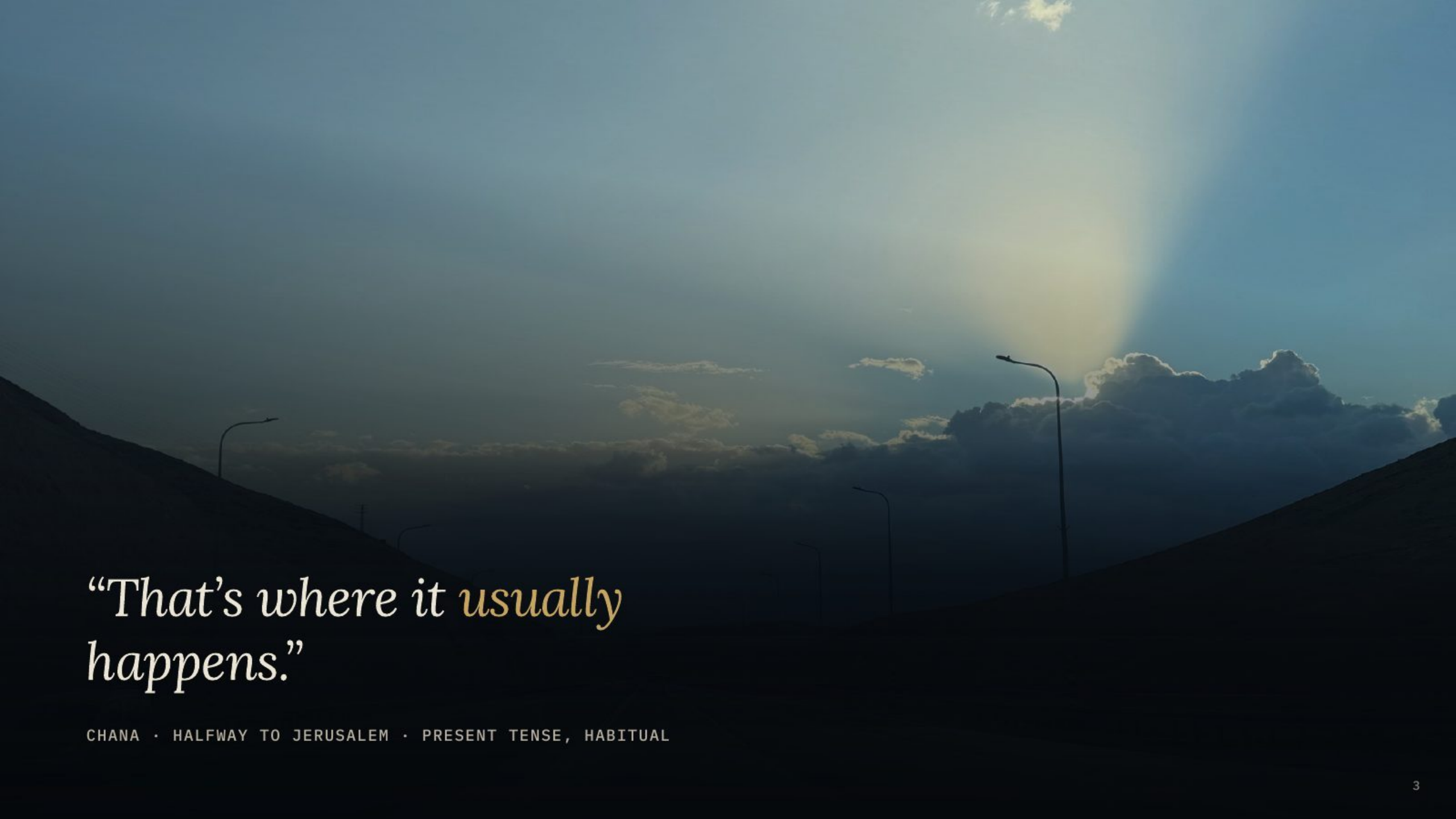


One road in and out — and it is the same road. Several hundred families. A shul, a makolet, two playgrounds, a kindergarten with a safe room.



“That’s where it usually happens.”

CHANA · HALFWAY TO JERUSALEM · PRESENT TENSE, HABITUAL

WHERE YOUR PROGRAMMES ARE · WHERE SHE LIVES

The dig you volunteer on sits about forty minutes' drive from her kitchen. Most of you have never been up there.

1950

The phrase did not exist before it.

Not in the Mandate census of 1922. Not in 1931. Not in the *Palestine Post*, 1932 to 1950.

24 APRIL 1950

Jordan's House of Deputies and House of Notables annex the territory.

al-Diffa al-Gharbiyya

The western bank. Of Jordan's river.

It is a direction from Amman. A bank is a strip of mud at the edge of the water. This is a mountain range.

23 APRIL 1950

The *Palestine Post* renames itself the *Jerusalem Post*.

The paper kept the city.

24 APRIL 1950

Jordan's parliament renames the land the western bank.

The parliament took the land.

31 JULY 1988

King Hussein goes on television and drops the claim.

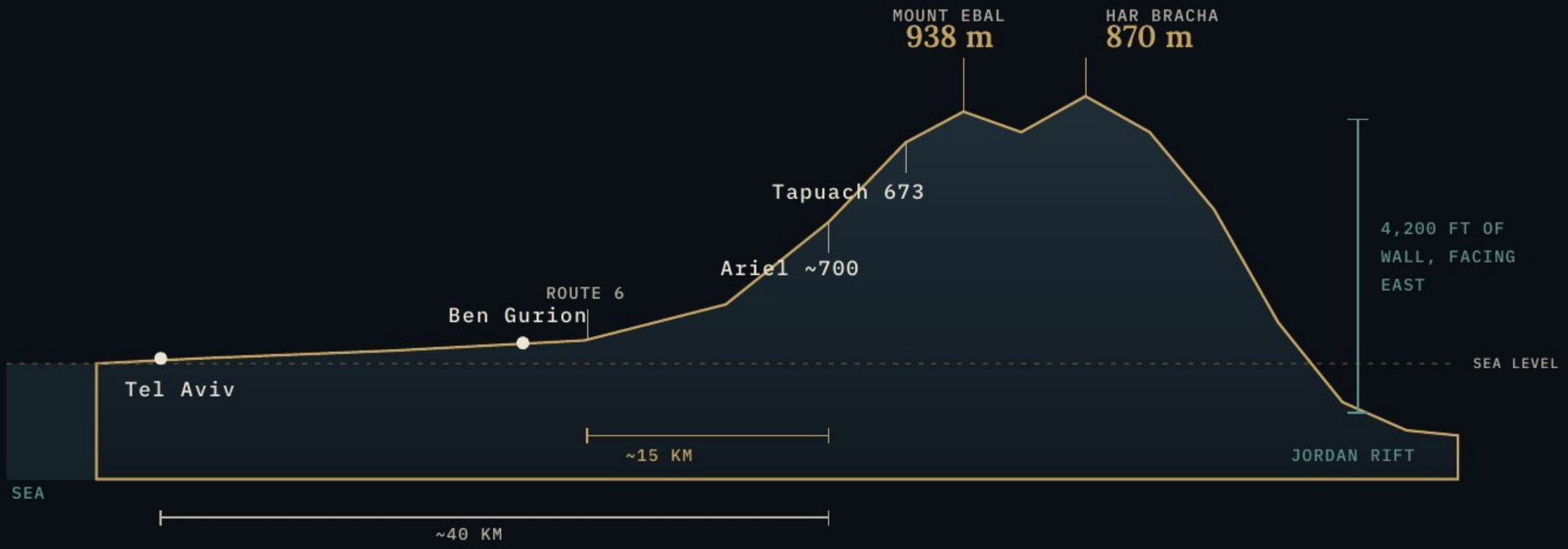
The name did not drop with the claim.

Nineteen years, 1948–1967: no Jew at the Kotel. The Jewish Quarter leveled. Fifty-eight synagogues destroyed or desecrated. Headstones off the Mount of Olives used to pave roads.

If Michal is a settler, the word has no meaning.

SHE LIGHTS THE CANDLES IN A BRITISH ACCENT · SEVEN YEARS HOME · LEARNED TO DRIVE AT FORTY

THE RIDGE, IN CROSS-SECTION — LOOKING NORTH



Seventy to eighty per cent of Israel's population and its industrial base sits on the plain to the west. Gush Dan on its own is about four and a half million people.

SAMARIA, FROM THE HIGH GROUND

That is what the elevation buys.

Ridge after ridge, and on a clear afternoon the coastal plain at the end of them.

FOR NINETEEN YEARS
THE ENTIRE COASTAL PLAIN
SAT INSIDE JORDANIAN
ARTILLERY RANGE

The terrain has not moved since.

YITZHAK RABIN · THE KNESSET · 5 OCTOBER 1995 · THREE DAYS BEFORE THE OSLO II VOTE

“The borders of the State of Israel, during the permanent solution, will be beyond the lines which existed before the Six Day War. We will not return to the 4 June 1967 lines.”

ONE MONTH LATER HE WAS MURDERED AT A RALLY IN TEL AVIV

In the same speech: the security border in the Jordan Valley, in the broadest meaning of that term. A united Jerusalem including Ma’ale Adumim and Givat Ze’ev. Gush Etzion, Efrat, and Beitar retained. “Judea and Samaria,” on the floor. — Yigal Allon drew the same line in July 1967 and argued it in *Foreign Affairs* in 1976.

WE RAN THE EXPERIMENT — THE GAZA PERIMETER

$1.1bn

COMPLETED 7 DECEMBER 2021

65km

OF BARRIER · THREE AND A HALF YEARS TO BUILD

140,000

TONNES OF IRON AND STEEL

RADAR · THERMAL · SEISMIC · RADIO-FREQUENCY · BURIED GROUND SENSORS · REMOTE-OPERATED MACHINE GUNS · OBSERVATION BALLOONS

20 minutes

About thirty primary breach points. Twelve hundred people murdered. Two hundred and fifty-one taken.

It held the wire. It did not hold the ground.

A RIDGE IN BINYAMIN

Eight hundred metres. One wadi.

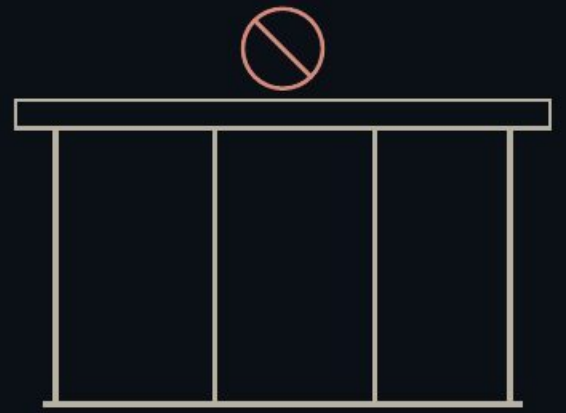
Two kinds of object sit on ground like this, and from across a valley they look alike. They are not alike. The roof tells you which is which.

Israeli home

WHITE DUD SHEMESH
REQUIRED SINCE 1980

Palestinian home

BLACK TANK
SUPPLY RUNS 60–70 L / DAY



The cluster

NO TANK OF ANY COLOUR
NO DOORS, NO WIRING

Eight hundred metres apart, across one wadi. The hostile maps treat them as comparable claims on the same ground.

WHO CARRIES IT — JUDEA AND SAMARIA, 2024

5.32%
OF ISRAEL'S POPULATION · 541,085 PEOPLE

56%
OF ALL ISRAELI TERROR FATALITIES

69%
OF ALL TERROR-ATTACK INJURIES

Per capita, roughly ten times the national rate.

6,343 attacks registered in 2024 — 3,668 rock-throwings · 843 Molotov cocktails · 671 laser-pointer attacks against drivers · 526 explosive · 364 arsons · 179 shootings · 37 stabbings · 19 rammings. Twenty-seven murdered. The Shin Bet stopped 1,040 more at the planning stage.

ROUTE 446, BETWEEN BRUCHIN AND PEDU’EL · 14 MAY 2025

Tzeela Gez was driving to the hospital to give birth to her fourth child.

She was thirty, a mental-health therapist, a resident of Bruchin in Samaria. She died the following morning. Her husband named the baby Ravid Haim. Ravid Haim died fifteen days later.

Afterwards the IDF fenced Sinji and closed the entrance at Al-Lubban ash-Sharqiya. That is a state classifying her road as a strategic asset.

700+
IDF SOLDIERS THROUGH THE FARM

375+
AT-RISK TEEN VOLUNTEERS

12
LONE SOLDIERS HOUSED A YEAR

275+
FRUIT TREES PLANTED

40+
RESCUED ANIMALS

The work is ordinary and it is good.

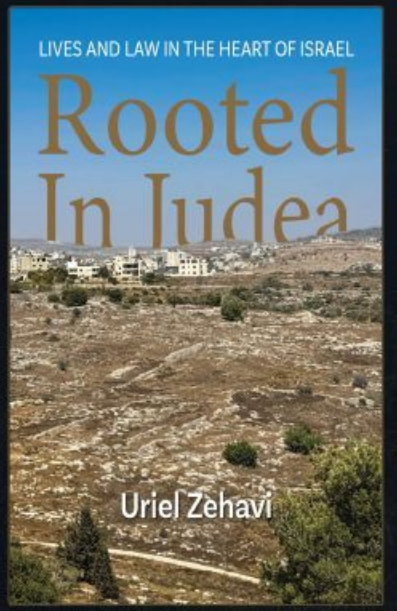
What is uncommon about it is its address.

unitywarriors.org — they take volunteers

AIC at the farm, December 2025.

The road has not changed. The reader has.

THE LAST LINE OF *ROOTED IN JUDEA*

You do not have to win the argument. You have to be the person in the room who knows what the words mean.

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