

Levitt



Letter

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved."—ROMANS 10:1



More than once, this ministry has published responsible, moderate Arab perspectives. This cover story is one; you'll find others inside. — Jeff

Arabs say: "No one is above the law" in Israel.

By Khaled Abu Toameh, *The Jerusalem Post*



The present corruption case against Prime Minister **Ehud Olmert** has earned Israel tremendous respect throughout the Arab world, where many have called on their leaders to benefit from Israel's democratic system and independent judicial system.

Words of praise for Israel are a rare phenomenon in the Arab media. But judging from the reactions of many Arabs to the corruption case, the trend appears to have changed.

Even some Arabs who describe themselves as "sworn enemies of the Zionist entity" have begun singing praise for Israel.

The corruption case against Olmert received wide coverage in the mainstream Arab media, prompting an outcry about the need for transparency and accountability in the Arab world.

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Buffett Bets on Israel

By Thomas L. Friedman,
www.NYTimes.com



Question: What do America's premier investor, Warren Buffett, and Iran's toxic president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, have in common? Answer: They've both made a bet about Israel's future.

Ahmadinejad declared recently that Israel "has reached its final phase and will soon be wiped out from the geographic scene."

By coincidence, I heard the Iranian leader's statement on Israel Radio just as I was leaving the headquarters of Iscar, Israel's famous precision tool company, headquartered in the Western Galilee, near the Lebanon border. Iscar is known for many things, most of all for being the first enterprise that Buffett bought overseas for his holding company, Berkshire Hathaway.

Continued page 2

"Show me one Arab or Islamic country where a prime minister or a senior government official was ever questioned for financial corruption or bribery," said a reader who identified himself only as Majed.

Majed, like many others, was responding to a news story on an Arab website about the testimony in court of American philanthropist Morris Talansky, who told police he had given Olmert more than \$150,000 in cash over the course of some 14 years.

A Saudi national named Abdel Karim urged his Arab brethren to stop criticizing Israel and learn something about its democracy. "Before we curse Israel, we must learn from the democratic and judicial system in Israel, where no one is above the law," he wrote.

Khaled, another Saudi national, chimed in: **"Although we are talking about Israel, which I have always hated very much, there is still no one above the law there."**

Mahmoud al-Bakili of Yemen posted the following response on one of the websites: "We want this kind of accountability and transparency in the Arab and Islamic world."

Some Arabs went as far as condemning the Arab people for failing to rise against their corrupt dictators.

"There is corruption in Israel and the Arab world," wrote Abu Hadi from Iraq. "But the difference is that the Israelis hold their leaders accountable, while we the Arabs remain silent about corruption."

Jamal, who described himself as the Madman, wrote that "the reason why Israel has lasted for so long is because of its independent and fair judicial system. I challenge the Arabs to have such an independent judicial system."

[View this complete article with its many more comments by Arabs at www.levitt.com/news.](http://www.levitt.com/news)



Buffett paid \$4 billion for 80 percent of Iscar and the deal just happened to close a few days before Hezbollah, a key part of Iran's holding company, attacked Israel in July 2006, triggering a monthlong war. I asked Iscar's chairman, Eitan Wertheimer, what was Buffett's reaction when he found out that he had just paid \$4 billion for an Israeli company and a few days later Hezbollah rockets were landing outside its parking lot.



Buffett

Buffett just brushed it off with a wave, recalled Wertheimer: "He said,

'I'm not interested in the next quarter. I'm interested in the next 20 years.'"

So who would you put your money on? Buffett or Ahmadinejad? I'd short Ahmadinejad and go long Warren Buffett.

Why? Israel is a country that is hardwired to compete in a flat world. It has a population drawn from 100 different countries, speaking 100 different languages, with a business culture that strongly encourages individual imagination and adaptation and where being a nonconformist is the norm.

While you were sleeping, Israel has gone from oranges to software, or as they say around here, from Jaffa to Java.

Iran has invented nothing of importance since the Islamic Revolution. Of course, oil wealth can buy all the software and nuclear technology you want, or can't develop yourself. This is not an argument that we shouldn't worry about Iran. Ahmadinejad should, though.

Iran's economic and military clout today is largely dependent on extracting oil from the ground. Israel's economic and military power today is entirely dependent on extracting intelligence from its people. Israel's economic power is endlessly renewable. Iran's is a dwindling resource based on fossil fuels.

So who will be here in 20 years? I'm with Buffett: I'll bet on the people who bet on their people.



"Palestine" At The Time Of Christ??

Dear Zola,
We have a new minister at our church who often refers to Jesus and some interaction with a Palestinian. Can that be true if there was no Palestine in Jesus' time? I'm so ignorant that it's hard to challenge those statements without knowledge of Palestine and its history. Can you direct me?

I've enclosed a photocopy of a page out of our son's Bible, given to him as he entered the 4th grade Sunday School class in the '60s. It has a map of Palestine at the time of Christ.

We are about to start a new session of Bible study and I don't want to be confrontational with the new minister,

but don't want to have misinformation or statements in class either. I'm counting on you.
Sincerely, J.W.

Dear J.W.—
Why not be confrontational? Your minister is dead wrong. No one in the world called Israel "Palestine" in Jesus' time. Ask your minister to prove the point or start referring to the country by the name Jesus used: Israel.

The example of our Lord, Peter, Paul, and the Church through the ages has been to be confrontational when the issues merited it. Think of our Lord with the moneychangers, Paul speaking at Mars Hill, or Peter confronting the church in Jerusalem in Acts 11 (which finally acquiesced to gentile salvation—see Acts 11:18). Martin Luther certainly confronted the Church with his call to get back to the Bible.
—Zola ★

CORRECTIONS:

In Sandra's birthday wish to Israel (June *Levitt Letter* p. 3), her statement "In 1948 the population was about 80,000. It is now 7.2 million" should have listed Israel's 1948 population as 800,000. —Editor

Page 22 of the July *Levitt Letter* showed a supposedly diamond-encrusted Mercedes that was said to be worth \$4.8 million and owned by an Arab sheik. In fact, the car is merely encrusted with Swarovski crystals, valued at "only" \$1 million and was part of *DUB* magazine's Custom Auto Show. www.snopes.com/photos/automobiles/diamondmercedes.asp



The Devil and Sharon Stone

By Patrick Cox,
Contributing Editor



Something clicked recently when actress **Sharon Stone** quipped that the catastrophic earthquakes that hit China on May 12 might be “karma.” Asked by a Hong Kong entertainment reporter for reaction to the tragedy, she answered, “I’m not happy about the way the Chinese are treating the Tibetans because I don’t think anyone should be unkind to anyone else. And I had been... concerned about... how should we deal with the Olympics because they are not being nice to the Dalai Lama, who is a good friend of mine. And then this earthquake and all this stuff happened, and then I thought, is that karma? When you’re not nice... bad things happen to you.”

Her attitude is typical of many, even in America. Similar suggestions were made after the 9/11 attacks by many who asked what America had done to deserve the Trade Tower terrorism. This belief in karma has been growing in the West since the 60s when Eastern religions first acquired their modern

allure. Today, it is mainstreamed by such figures as **Oprah Winfrey**.

If something happens to you or your country, it must be payback. In the case of the China earthquakes, the notion is particularly stupid since the epicenter of the earthquake was in Wenchuan County, where ethnic Tibetans make up over half the population. Moreover, a huge percentage of the 70,000 who died were students in substandard school buildings.



One might think that karma, if it had any validity, would have punished the perpetrators of oppression rather than its victims. One might also ask what the Tibetans and the Dalai Lama did to deserve being conquered by China. Such details do not, however, bother those who want to believe that life is a harmonious balance of incomprehensible “yin yang” forces, a karmic wheel that moves us all toward spiritual perfection through multiple incarnations.

This is not simply poppycock; it is ethical paralysis that refuses to recognize the difference between good guys and bad guys. Oprah, for example, initially expressed some support for the liberation of the Iraqi people from the unspeakable barbarism of the Hussein



family tyranny. Now, she opposes military action that would interfere with the karmic destiny of those who suffer from Islamic terrorism and tyranny. Furthermore, she supports proposals to weaken America's military—even as China, Russia, and Iran are bolstering theirs at an accelerating pace. In this, she is typical of her mystic cultural allies.

This doesn't mean that she and others in the karma camp won't take action. Stone, for example, visited Israel in 2006 to "urge peace." Because of "security concerns," she didn't urge any Palestinians, but she did speak out for youth sports leagues in which Israeli and Palestinian children could play together. She also asserted her willingness to "kiss anybody" for peace. To Israelis, she said, "We can't go on killing in the name of our children's future."

In other words, "we" are the problem. "We" are getting what we deserve. Israel and America suffer from violence because we engage in violence. There's no difference between aggression and defense. There's just karma, and karma can be transcended by being "nice," multicultural play dates, and "kissing for peace."

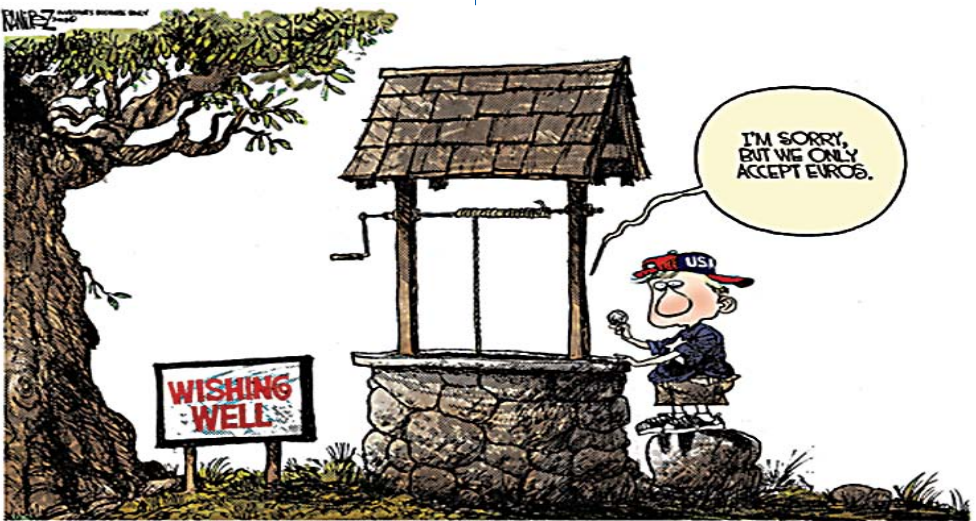
Oprah is onboard too. She fights tyranny and violence by leading mass trances and signing millions up to her spiritual Internet coffee klatch. Her karmic navel-gazing consists largely

of urging viewers to ask themselves why they deserve what's happened to them. Given her net worth of \$2.5 billion, I guess that means she is just more deserving than the rest of us.

It's funny, in fact, how karma, taken to its logical end, justifies inequality and injustice. If you have bodyguards and billions of dollars, you deserve it. If you are denied basic human rights by an Islamic dictatorship, you deserve that too. Ommmmmmmmmm.

Western civilization springs from a very different worldview. I believe it is put forth best in the Book of Job; the story of a man who suffers innocently due to the utterly malevolent actions of the devil. Job epitomizes the liberation from the ancient and soul-numbing consequences of the philosophy of karma. In Job, the whole notion of "deserving" anything, good or evil, is systematically debunked.

The failure of our "new age" elite to support the right of the West (and Israel in particular) to defend itself from evil cannot be explained entirely by faith in karma. Clearly, however, it plays a major role. Islam, on the other hand, suffers no such paralysis. Satan, Islamic clerics across the globe repeat, must be destroyed even if Muslims die in the process. Unfortunately, they are adamant that America and Israel are Satan. Kissing and meditating will not, I suspect, dissuade them. ★



"But, the counselor, the *Ruach HaKodesh*, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, that is, he will remind you of everything I have said to you."

— John 14:26

Shalom From Sandra



What would it have been like to live during the first century, to be one of the first Believers during Yeshua's ministry?

Here in Jerusalem I recently celebrated the feast of *Shavuot* (Hebrew for *weeks*) also known as Pentecost (Greek for *fifty*). *Shavuot* is one of three holidays that the Bible specifies is to be celebrated in the city of Jerusalem. The two other holidays are Passover and Tabernacles. Can you imagine being in Jerusalem and experiencing the *original* coming of the Holy Spirit? Israelites would have gathered in Jerusalem for the annual Passover—the celebration of the freedom from bondage in Egypt—and then fifty days (seven weeks) later, they would have gathered for the annual *Shavuot*, the celebration of the first harvest. But what a harvest it was for Believers that year! Acts 2:41 says, "3,000 were added to the group that day."

While I stood at the Western Wall and in the plaza on the eve of *Shavuot*, it really hit me: I was in Jerusalem, the same city where the Holy Spirit came to us to be a comforter. I tried to imagine what kind of night it had been: was it hot or cold? Rainy? How many people saw the Holy Spirit? Did the Believers, who had traveled from afar, understand how significant this was in their lives? Did they have *any* idea how it would change the world forever? These disciples took this Word and witnessed in their home countries, the plan of Salvation for everyone. The Word went forth.

Many traditions are associated with *Shavuot*. The wearing of white, to symbolize the purity of the Torah, eating of dairy

to recall the sweetness of the Torah, decorating with greenery, to remind us that *Shavuot* is a harvest festival, going to the Western Wall, reading the book of Ruth (who converted to Judaism). The tradition also commemorates the giving of the Law on this day. I love the Jewish traditions because they make being a Believer deep and meaningful. The Bible is one book, and by knowing about these traditions, we know our Jewish roots.

Because *Shavuot* is a dairy holiday, I have posted a recipe for yogurt cheese in my blog at www.levitt.com. This is delicious on tuna or tomatoes, or served with pita. Add dill, parsley, black pepper, or mint to the cheese. It's one of my favorites, from *The Essential Book of Jewish Festival Cooking*, by Phyllis Glazer with Miriyam Glazer.

Join Jeff and me in Israel this October 14 or 19 and experience the Middle Eastern cuisine. We would love to show you not only the food of Israel, but also your spiritual home.

And, please, pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Sandra



Hybrid Hysteria

By Mark Levitt



How long does it take to recover the \$12,000 extra paid for a hybrid engine on a Chevy Tahoe? Let's do the math.

The conventional Tahoe gets 14 mpg in the city and 19 on the highway. The hybrid gets 20 mpg either way—a savings of 3.5 mpg if you assume half city and half highway driving. At \$4.50 per gallon, the conventional Tahoe costs \$.27 per mile to drive (\$4.50 divided by 16.5), and the hybrid costs \$.22 (\$4.50 divided by 20)—a savings of **five cents per mile**. Dividing \$12,000 dollars by five cents saved per mile equals 240,000 miles!

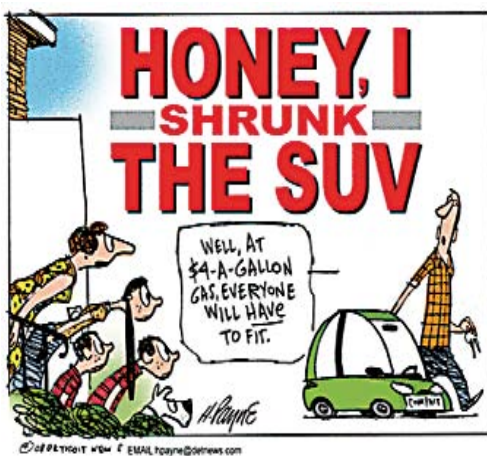
The fuel savings will equal \$12,000 only if/when the Tahoe hybrid's odometer reaches 240,000 miles. At 12,000 miles per year, the 240,000-mile mark is 20 years away. And who wants to bet that the Lord will tarry for two decades?!

The complex hybrid technology will likely generate exotic and expensive repair bills. For example, www.cartalk.com verified that the owner of a 2003 Toyota Prius with only 70,000 miles has to spend \$2,000 to repair her fuel-saving, electric power steering (most cars use hydraulic power-steering pumps). Spending that same \$2,000 on 444 gallons of gas would give me 7,500 miles in my '98 Infiniti (17 mpg) or 9,800 miles in my '95 Volvo (22 mpg). On depreciation, however, I save about **30¢ per mile** compared with owning a new \$26,000 car!¹

In his book *Gusher of Lies: The Dangerous Delusions of "Energy Independence,"* Robert Bryce reports that British motorists presently pay \$8.38 per gallon. Norway—\$8.73, France—nearly \$10, Turkey—\$11.29. His point: fuel in America remains a bargain.

More helpfully, Bryce observes that, "Gasoline is a fairly minor expense when you consider the overall cost of car ownership." In 1975, gasoline

made up 33.4 percent of the total cost of owning and operating a car. By 2006, according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, gasoline costs had declined to just 17.1 percent. Even though fuel has increased by about a dollar per gallon since 2006, it remains a small part of the cost of ownership. "By contrast, the fixed costs of ownership—insurance, licensing, taxes and financing [and maintenance]—have increased nearly fivefold since 1975."



For the big picture on economical car ownership, please see the "Wise As a Serpent" installment on page 9 of the April 2007 Levitt Letter, posted at www.levitt.com. And visit the "Drive Free, Retire Rich" presentation at www.daveramsey.com/etc/lms/drive_free/player.cfm

Here's a thought: Suppose your car gets 17 mpg and a new vehicle with a hybrid motor would yield 20 mpg. At \$4.50 per gallon and driving 12,000 miles per year, the annual savings would be 106 gallons, about \$477.² Homeowners can easily save that much (and reduce pollution) by installing \$49 programmable thermostats on their climate control systems! ★

¹\$26,000 x 20% = \$5,200 first-year depreciation. \$5,200 divided by 12,000 miles = \$.43 cents depreciation per mile, compared to about \$.13 cents per mile on my 10-year-old car!

²12,000 miles per year divided by 17 mpg = 706 gallons per year. 12,000 miles per year divided by 20 mpg = 600 gallons per year. And 706 – 600 = 106 gallons saved or \$477 savings per year.

Warning about their “end-times fever” and describing their interest in eschatology as “unfortunate,” “dangerous,” and “destructive,” Dr. Kai

Kjaer-Hansen offered an assessment of the next generation of Messianic Jewish Believers in Israel.

DeSeifering Our World

By Dr. Jeffrey Seif



Speaking at a coordinating committee for the Lausanne Conference on Jewish Evangelism, Dr. Kjaer-Hansen proffered that “Jewish Believers in Israel would do themselves and the rest of us an enormous favor if they dissociated themselves from speculative prophecy teachers” and opined that “eschatological pressure may very well be the greatest danger to the movement.”

The Lausanne Conference gathers together the world’s most significant missions organizations, professors of missions, and practitioners in the fields of outreach. Academic papers are presented there, mission executives network there, and mission strategies are cultivated there. And it was there where one of our movement’s greatest minds opined that there isn’t much of a future in looking at the future.

Given both the significance of the conference and the brilliance of Dr. Kjaer-Hansen, I think that his taking prophecy teaching to task warrants a response. Because I am asked to give an accounting of prophecy in local churches, conferences, articles, books, and through nationally syndicated television productions, I figured I might as well do so here.

First of all, let me say that—at one level—I *deeply agree* with Dr. Kjaer-Hansen, as with others whom he employs in offering his critique. I sincerely respect Kai and, with him, note that there are lots of eccentric crazies in the end-of-the-world teaching industry.

My response to Dr. Kjaer-Hansen’s

censure comes in the form of a question: If responsible Messianic theologians shy away from addressing eschatology, don’t we give exclusive teaching rights to the crazies by default?

I think we do—and it’s for this reason that I disagree with him.

With Dr. Kjaer-Hansen, I am mindful that many creative individuals let their imaginations loose onto biblical literature and come up with all sorts of wild “inspirations.” Intoxicated by how their biblical assessments allegedly correlate in modern history, they present their idiosyncratic work product. Not knowing better, people not only buy their books but also buy into their assumptions and expose themselves

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to ridicule. While conceding that there is a problem, I say that shutting down prophecy teaching hardly seems the solution.

I remember sitting down with a mentor and former doctoral advisor, Professor William “Billy” Abraham, and discussing this. Billy took his doctorate from Oxford University and, with Dr. Kjaer-Hansen, has an abiding preference for responsible scholarship. Once, when I was complaining about the prophecy field and giving voice to my aversion to engaging it, Billy challenged me saying, in effect: “If you don’t like it as it is, why don’t you get in there and do a better job—as a more responsible theologian?”

Billy’s challenge resonated with me then, as now.

I realize that responsible people want to learn prophecy and that I have a responsibility to “weigh in” on the heavy issues and not run away from burdens that result.

The legitimate interest in prophecy is precipitated by the corpse of Israel having risen from the grave, after centuries of dismemberment and decay. Providence seems not only to have guided the nation to and through its re-emergence, but also to have given the State assistance in its

recurrent national emergencies. With the material nation’s rise has come the providential spiritual rise of the Messianic Jewish movement—comprising multiple hundreds of thousands of Jews who are, in fact, for Jesus. Their nearly simultaneous creations produced a starburst of enthusiasm and a legitimate interest in connecting the ancient Bible with the modern newspaper.

What a marvel to behold! Why ignore it?

Refusing biblical commentary on the modern miracle not only denies what is happening in the world but the retreating theologians also surrender prerogatives to offer responsible tellings to others.

I am not lumping Kjaer-Hansen, an expert on the past and present, with the following lot. But, his presentation motivates me to say that erudite Bible teachers have no right to complain about the state of the teaching field if they walk away from it. Why is that? It’s because the disarray in the prophecy field stems, in part, from their having surrendered their mandates to be responsible Bible teachers and to offer timely accountings of what God is doing in the world. Yes, there is a future in considering the future. I say: Let’s seize the day while it is day, and give voice to the dawning tomorrow as we decipher our world!

JDZ



Egyptian Spin On Six-Day War Winding Down



Will King

By Will King, www.imagesofisrael.com

As Israeli forces were routing Egyptian tank and infantry divisions in the Sinai in the early days of June 1967, official Egyptian radio was broadcasting reports of victory after victory. It reported that the Egyptian military was nearing the gates of Tel Aviv and proclaimed the near end of the Jewish state.

The truth was that Egyptian President Gamal Nasser had made a serious miscalculation in taking his nation to war against Israel. But despite this, there was never any talk about “losing” to the Jews; in fact for years afterwards, June 5th—the day the Six-Day War began—was celebrated in Egypt as marking their historic victory over Israel. However, 41 years, another war, and a peace treaty later, Nasser’s spin on the Six-Day War is winding down.

The change in Egyptian attitudes over the course of only 41 years is quite significant, given a general Arab reluctance towards change. Dr. Mohammad Na’man Jalal published an opinion piece in *Al-Arab al-Yawm*, an independent newspaper based in

Jordan, the only other Arab nation with a peace treaty with Israel and also a combatant in the Six-Day War.

Jalal praised the principles, values, and ethics of Islam, but said that modern Muslims’ mindset is characterized by three traits: “Their concern about the surface and superficial things, rather than focusing on principles and values; Clinging to the past and yearning for it, rather than looking to the future; and irrational thinking, instead of rational.”

Jalal was primarily looking at the current Muslim mindset as it applies to the religion today; however it can also explain how Muslims perceive other issues, such as politics (the influence of the Big Satan, America), and the “Zionist regime” (the Little Satan, Israel).

Nevertheless, the fact that these two opinion pieces could be printed in the Arab press, and that their authors haven’t turned up missing or in prison, is a step forward. Many Westerners perceive Arabs in general as reluctant to move out of the Middle Ages, but those perceptions have now been eroded by Arab self-criticism, which should not be underestimated or diminished. The times, they are a-changin’—perhaps not at the pace we would like them to, but progress *is* evident. ★



Egypt Cracks Down on the Press

By Dan Murphy, *Christian Science Monitor*

Ibrahim Eissa, an Egyptian editor and columnist of the newspaper *Al Dustour* is facing a year in prison.

"If you make the decision to be an opposition journalist here, you have to have the demeanor to carry yourself through all sorts of situations," he says.

The jail terms for Mr. Eissa and three other antigovernment journalists are the latest in a cascade of repressive measures by the Egyptian security state in the past year seemingly designed to tighten the government's control as speculation grows over who will succeed President Mubarak.

First, the regime went after a movement that was dedicated to replacing President Mubarak, by beating and jailing dozens of its leaders. Then it moved on to the strongest opposition political group putting hundreds of its activists in jail. Labor organizers and even an anti-torture nongovernmental organization have been targeted. And now it appears to be the media's turn.

"For some time the government has been hardening its position on opposition movements," says Mustapha Kamel al-Said, a professor of political science at Cairo University. "This kind of nervous reaction on the part of the government reflects its anxiety about what comes next."

The mid-career editor has been an irritant to the Egyptian state for most of his adult life, having worked with 10 different publications that have been shut down by the government.

His *Al Dustour* was the most directly confrontational of a new batch of opposition papers that emerged a few years ago, at a time when the U.S., which provides over \$2 billion a year to

Egypt in military and economic aid, was pressing the regime to democratize.

He seized the opportunity with both hands. But while other new dailies, like *Egypt Today*, focused on sober discussions of national issues and emerging political parties, his publication made no bones about its distaste for Mubarak and the country's ruling clique.

Eissa's front-page commentaries on Mubarak often come with a cartoon illustration of a king and he refers to the president as "The Pharaoh." He has also directly attacked Mubarak's son and heir-apparent Gamal and Mubarak's wife, Suzanne—a political force in her own right who was considered off limits in the press until Eissa's publication got up and running.

Egyptian and foreign human rights activists say the crackdown on the press is unprecedented in recent Egyptian history. While state harassment comes with the territory for independent journalists, never before have four editors been tried and convicted at the same time.

"Press freedom does not exist in a country where the state can put you in prison simply for criticizing the president," said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch, in a statement on the convictions. "This is incompatible with Egypt's constitution and its commitments under international human rights law, not to mention Egypt's current membership on the UN Human Rights Council." ★



Israel's new state bird, the Hoopoe.

Egyptian Bread Riot

By Salah Nasrawi, Associated Press

Thousands of demonstrators fought with police after a protest over flour rations in a town on Egypt's Mediterranean coast, a security official said. The state-owned daily *Al-Ahram* said some 8,000 protesters sealed off a main highway for seven hours and burned tires to stop traffic. Police fired tear gas and arrested dozens to disperse the crowd.

Like much of the rest of the world, Egypt has been wracked by rising food prices and stagnant wages, resulting in protests and demonstrations. There has also been a shortage of the subsidized bread relied on by vast segments of this impoverished country of 76.5 million. Some 10 people have been killed in breadline scuffles since the beginning of the year.

Who Threatens Islamic Peace?

By Abdul Rahman Al-Rashed,
Asharq Alawsat

The serious situation in Islamic groups and sects within the Islamic body, and

the looming clashes between some of the followers of Islam and the followers of other religions do not require a lot of explaining.

Al-Qaeda's release of several video recordings that showed horrifying details of beheadings of non-Muslims and in which al-Qaeda called for fighting the followers of other religions has caused popular tension, thus putting the blame on all one billion Muslims.

Regardless of how hard non-Muslims try to insult Islam, it is Muslim extremists who are threatening Islam today and not the followers of other religions.

Among Muslims ourselves, we see how the relationship between Shiites and Sunnis has never been worse in contemporary history and portends collective wars. The exchange of verbal attacks between Islam and Christianity has not stopped since the emergence of al-Qaeda, despite the fact that al-Qaeda's primary enmity is against Arab regimes, such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Unless each of our Islamic parties curbs extremism from its own position and within its own circle of influence, the crisis will continue to grow and will be difficult to contain. It is the extremists who jeopardize the Islamic peace.



Arab States Ignore Iraq Debt Appeal

www.aljazeera.net

At the end of a special United Nations conference in Sweden to discuss Iraqi debts, Nouri al-Maliki, Iraq's prime minister, said that he has received no firm commitments from Arab states to help ease his country's debt burden.

Baghdad owes at least \$67 billion to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar.

Al-Maliki, who pointed out that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait had sent only low-level officials to the one-day conference outside Stockholm, said: "So far we have not heard from the other countries that have not undertaken... to reduce the debt."

Iraqi officials had asked Arab states to cancel billions of dollars it owes in debt and war compensation, in a plea aimed at countries which are reluctant to forgive Iraq's belligerence during Saddam Hussein's rule.

In addition to the \$67 billion in foreign debt, most of it incurred during the rule of Saddam Hussein, Iraq's executed president, the Geneva-based UN Compensation Commission says

\$28 billion remains to be paid in compensation for Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Iraq currently gives five per cent of its oil revenue to meet the compensation claims.

The Iraqi government maintains it should not be obligated to repay debts incurred by Saddam's government, which denied basic rights to its citizens, including say over government policy. Barham Saleh, Iraq's deputy prime minister, said: "It is time to liberate the people of Iraq from this burden."

Many Western nations have dropped Iraqi debt, but neighboring Arab states have been reluctant to follow suit. Opening the one-day conference, Ban Ki-moon, the UN secretary-general, said: "Iraq is stepping back from the abyss that we feared most."

The Stockholm conference was called to assess Iraq's progress a year after the International Compact with Iraq (ICI), a five-year plan adopted to bring peace, prosperity and political reconciliation to the war-torn country, was signed in Egypt.

At that meeting, officials from 50 countries promised to cancel \$32 billion of Iraq's foreign debt. Western nations, Japan and commercial creditors have cancelled \$66 billion worth of debt over the past three years. ★

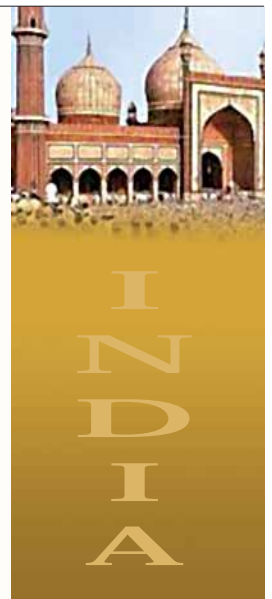
Muslim School Issues "Fatwa" Against Terrorism

Reuters

A radical Muslim seminary in India, said to have inspired the Taliban, has issued a *fatwa*, or edict, against terrorism in a meeting attended by thousands of clerics and students.

The Darool-Uloom Deoband, a 150-year-old institute controlling thousands of smaller Islamic seminaries in India vowed to wipe out terrorism in New Delhi, an aging rector said.

How rare and refreshing to see Islamic clerics publicly denouncing terrorism! If only this could become a trend.
— Editor



How the Arabs Failed in Bethlehem

By Abdul Rahman Al-Rashed,
www.aawsat.com

The Palestinian Authority failed at a recent conference to attract the interest of Arab governments and major economic establishments to help it develop its economy. No one appears to be willing to consider Palestine more than just an issue of political conflict with Israel. The conference's failure proved that the Palestinians would not get Arab support unless an Israeli shell fell on the hotel where they were meeting. No aid without disasters: This is the only emotional engine. Helping the human being in his daily life is totally beyond Arab thinking.

It is not something new when we say that backing the Palestinian right is not just speeches, orations, and conferences but support for the land itself and those sitting on it. At a recent Arab conference, Arabs failed to support the Palestinians in the easiest of the issues and continued to shed tears over them. All that the government planners asked for was support for industries, services, and economic projects that would employ around 50,000 Palestinians, even if

these projects were loans if the Arabs were too miserly and did not give them as free grants.

I believe there are many industries which the Arab establishments can support and which can stand on their feet later on, employ thousands of Palestinians, help them to stand fast in their land, and make them do without asking for aid.

I know that the Palestinian prime minister challenged the doubters and held the conference in Bethlehem and not in Amman, Jeddah, or Dubai. Had the masses of Arabs paid the cost of tickets for watching the Palestinian tragedy during the past years in the way they pay for watching horror and comedy movies or renting videos, President Mahmoud Abbas would not probably have been in need for a conference to support investments.

*Taken from **Asharq Alawsat**, the leading Arabic international daily news source, this article attributes the unfortunate plight of Palestinian Arabs to their abandonment by their own more than to any Jewish disregard. One would think that at least some of the increased prices we Americans and Europeans pay for gasoline would trickle down to some less fortunate Arab Muslims.*

— Jeff



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Sandra



Tom



Todd



Jeff

Two Arab Worlds

By Rami G. Khouri,
www.Middle-East-Online.com

The Arab world is fast becoming two worlds.

As oil prices and income to some Arab producers continue to rise, we can witness sharper polarization between the wealthy energy-producing, small population states of the Gulf, and the more populous, energy-importing Arab countries all around it in the region,

A set of polarizations defining the Arab world today lies along fault lines largely drawn by way of income levels, but also comprising other criteria. The Arab world is steadily disaggregating into two very different sub-worlds, characterized by the following briefly described polarizations:

1. Wealth vs. Poverty: The continued rise in oil and gas prices has seen the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) amass enormous sums of cash income. Per capita real incomes and real purchasing power in the rest of the Arab world remain flat and, in some cases, are even in decline.

2. Growth vs. Stagnation: Wealth in the hands of the public and private sectors in the GCC has translated into increasingly ambitious projects. Most of the rest of the Arab world finds itself in a situation where the fruits of this growth rarely filter down beyond a small elite segment of the population.

3. National Cohesion vs. Fragmentation: Security and material development are fostering a growing sense of national identity and social cohesion in the GCC states, while the rest of the Arab world suffers varying degrees of social fragmentation and national fraying.

4. Pluralism vs. Insularity: One of the striking aspects of the GCC states is the very rich variety of nationalities that live and work there. The trend in

many parts of the rest of the Arab world is in the opposite direction, towards slow separation of diverse populations that traditionally lived together peacefully. In the most extreme cases, ethnic cleansing is practiced.

5. Order vs. Disorder: Gulf countries place a high premium on order and security, with only occasional acts of violence. In many other parts of the Arab world, violence is an increasingly common norm, intermittently expressing itself in recurring warfare.

6. The Rule of Law vs. Lawlessness: One level below Order vs. Disorder is the deeper fact that some Arab societies are governed by the rule of law, while others are sliding into greater lawlessness.

7. Religiosity vs. Secularism: Some quarters of the Arab world that enjoy material wellbeing and basic security tend to become more secular; other large segments of the Arab population increasingly turn to religion for the sense of hope and dignity that they do not receive in their status as citizens of a state.

To see these polarizations more fully described, visit www.levitt.com/news.



ZLM Bulletin Board

"Bless Israel" Tour

Join Sandra on a tour of Israel that focuses on serving God's Chosen. You will volunteer in soup kitchens, food and clothing banks, and at other charitable projects in Israel. Since this differs from our customary study tour, we recommend the Bless Israel Tour for Believers who already have been to Israel. The dates are November 15 - 25, and the cost is \$3,650, departing from Dallas. For more information, please contact Abel at (214) 696-9760 or travel@levitt.com. Also see page 36 for an announcement about our traditional Holy Land tours.



Mezuzahs in Space

Two *mezuzot* (doorpost boxes) designed by Tel Aviv Judaica jeweler Laura Cowan blasted off into space, carried aboard the space shuttle

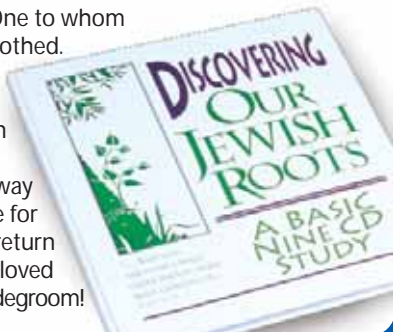
Discovery by Jewish-American Astronaut Greg Chamitoff.

Cowan, who was born in England, has been fascinated by space travel since the first moon landing in 1969, which has inspired her artwork ever since. Her two space shuttle-shaped *mezuzot* adorn and protect the International Space Station during Chamitoff's six-month sojourn.

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Please see page 19 to learn about an anointed way to prepare for the soon return of your beloved Jewish Bridegroom!



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20 of our June *Levitt Letter*, which you can see at

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first 50 orders for these discount packages, we will either substitute DVDs and CDs or give full refunds. Satisfaction guaranteed until the Rapture. Please order from page 19.

"Come Home!"

Zola's Tours to Israel:



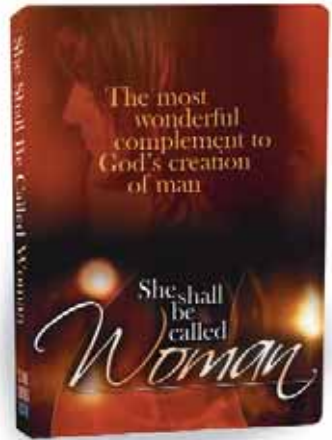
See page 36 for details



She Shall Be Called Woman DVDs

In this teaching series, Dr. Jeffrey Seif opens up the Hebrew Scriptures and focuses on God's wonderful creation of Man's human complement: Woman. Sandra Levitt contributes interviews with women who are passionate in their areas of expertise.

#DSHE, \$49 (2 DVDs) – Please order from page 18.



Wives/Eve The series opens like Adam's eyes: taking a quick peek at Eve. It was an age of discovery, and here we discover God's Divine design for this marvelous creature. Rebecca Brimmer, from Bridges For Peace, talks with Sandra about the power of prayer.

Mothers/Hannah That lovers become mothers is the natural course. We consider base maternal instincts by regarding one of the Old Testament's greatest mothers: Hannah. Sandra and Sharon Sanders, of Christian Friends of Israel, discuss caring for others, giving love just like a mother.

Counselors/Abigail A study of Abigail demonstrates that women are designed to be more than lovers and mothers to bear and care for children. Women have significant intuitive capabilities that contribute beyond the bedroom and nursery toward mankind's success. Sandra and Jeff's wife, Patricia, examine ways to help others.

Manager/"The Virtuous Wife" of Proverbs 31 The Hebrew Bible illustrates the idealized woman as an entrepreneur, an enterprising businesswoman who ably manages household affairs for herself and her family. Sandra helps an Israeli Jew cook up soup in her kitchen.

Deviants/Delilah As demonstrated by Delilah's story, using womanly charms to entice males and then betray them is categorically condemned in the Hebrew Bible. Ruth Matar, of Women in Green, talks with Sandra about the nature of evil.

Educators/Lois & Eunice Women's positive imprints upon their male (and female) children are noted in this segment. It is often said, "Behind every good man is a good mother!" Beth Furst, an art teacher at a Messianic school in Jerusalem, tells Sandra how teaching helps us grow in the Lord.

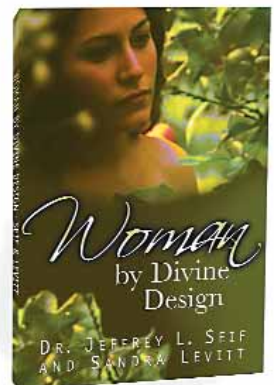
Widows The biblical imperative to take care of widows, when life runs its course, is noted in the story of Elijah and the widow. She kept on giving, even into old age, and, as a result, God showed Himself ever-faithful to her. Freda Lindsay shares with Sandra the secret of being happy in the Lord.

Queens/Esther Though some women fall upon hard times, others fall upon good times. As seen in this brief treatment of the life of Esther, the biblical mandate to help the weak is accompanied by a mandate for the strong to use their influence for noble purposes.

Woman by Divine Design book

By Dr. Jeffrey Seif and Mrs. Sandra Levitt

An original and fresh look at what Jesus and Paul said to, for, and about women. Jeff and Sandra survey the writings of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John and go through Paul's letters in assessing God's purpose for womankind. Understanding how Jesus and Paul harked back to OT mandates will cause readers to more deeply appreciate Jesus and to reassess Paul. This is the *real* Paul! Please see page 18 to order.



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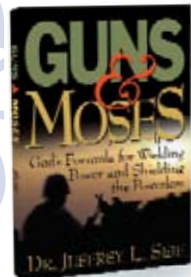
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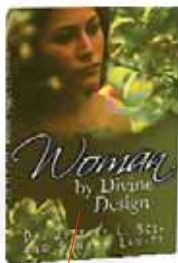
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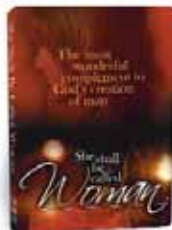
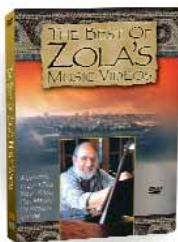


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FEATURE Item! SEE P. 17

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PG. 36**



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Feature Item (see pg 16)
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כִּי אֵין מִלָּה בְּלִשׁוֹנִי הֵן יְהוָה יִדְעָהּ כָּלָה

*For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD,
thou knowest it altogether. (Psalm 139:4)*

| | | | | | | | |
|----------|----------|--------|--------------|--------------|-------------|----------|--------|
| כִּי | אֵין | מִלָּה | בְּלִשׁוֹנִי | הֵן | יְהוָה | יִדְעָהּ | כָּלָה |
| (1) | (1) | (2) | (1) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (1) |
| khul-lah | ya-da-ta | Adonai | hcn | bil-sho-ni | mil-lah | cin | ki |
| it all | You knew | LORD | behold! | on my tongue | a word (is) | not | For |

Does the idea that God knows all things comfort or threaten you?

When we pray to the LORD, it's clear that we are not imparting to Him any information, since, as David points out, there isn't a word on our tongue that God hasn't already known in its entirety. This implies, of course, that God knows the future, since even before we collect our thoughts, He knows what we will say (see Prov. 16:1). As Jesus said, our Heavenly Father knows our needs *before* we even ask Him (Matt. 6:8).

This is paradoxical to human reason, since if God already knows the future, how could it be otherwise? And yet we are nonetheless commanded to pray, to seek, and to walk by faith.

The term *hashgacha* is sometimes used to refer to God's providential decrees. A *midrash* (Old Testament commentary) says, "God appoints an angel and tells it to cause a blade of grass to grow. Only then does that tiny blade flourish." There are no coincidences in God's universe; no "butterfly effect" apart from His hand. Often seemingly senseless or difficult circumstances disguise a hidden good. Therefore the person of faith affirms *gam zu letova* — "this, too, is for the best."

There is elaborate discussion about how God's decrees do not violate man's free will. In general, the sages decided that *hashgacha* refers to events we can't control, whereas it's our responsibility to make godly choices. This compatibilism became enshrined in the maxim: "Though everything is foreseen by God, yet free will is granted to man" (Pike Avot 3:19).

Henri Nouwen wrote, "I am beginning to see that much of praying is grieving," that is, realizing the fracture between the "is" and "ought" of our lives. Kierkegaard said that the purpose of prayer is not to influence God but rather to change the nature of the one who prays. When we get past our many words—the insecurities that rise from our hearts, the cares of the day, even our hopes and dreams—then we are sufficiently quieted to encounter God. It is then that we can truly listen and grieve over our lives in naked dependence upon God.

Psalm 139 begins with "O Lord, you have searched me and known me" (v.1) and paradoxically ends with "Search me, O God, and know my heart" (v.23-24). But why would David pray this way when he already understood that God knew his every thought?

There is a saying that we are "only as sick as the secrets we keep." As our Creator, God knows everything about us. David's desire is to live transparently before the LORD without self-deception. When we welcome His examination of our hearts (Psalm 7:9; 11:5; 26:2, Prov. 17:3) we can trust that He will indeed lead us in the way everlasting. ★



Coming to Israel

By Revs. Ralph and Debbie Conn—
Land O' Lakes, Florida

How can you describe it: The Land of the Bible? God's Land? God's Chosen? The people, the beauty, the sights, the smells, the sounds, and everything else—it is emotional overload. WOW! This is wonderful, fulfilling, and spiritually amazing.

But this isn't our first visit. This is Ralph's sixth; and Deborah has been here three times.



So, why all these thoughts and emotions? Simple — this is God's Land, these are God's People, and we are called here to bless in the name above all names, Yeshua Ha Mashiach.

We began by walking in Tiberias, in the Galilee region. The Lord led us to many with whom we shared our love for Israel and the Jewish people. The soldiers we met were overcome with emotion as we told them that we love them and are praying for them; we received a hug sometimes and always a handshake. They love us Americans, don't you know? We shared our message there a couple of days, then went to the Jordan River where we helped three other pastors baptize 20+ saints. The anointing is visible on

the faces of all as they rise from the water. What a great blessing to be used by the Lord there! I will always remember this.

When we went up to Jerusalem, the City of God, we found more favor while walking the streets and going to places like the Mount of Olives, the Western Wall and the Old City, the shops on Ben Yehuda Street, and anywhere the Lord directed. We visited the desert, Masada, and the Dead Sea where we were blessed to minister to a couple of lifeguards—one Armenian and the other, Jewish. We hugged them after we had prayed for them. Deborah met and ministered to a woman in her 80s from Austria who ended up inviting us to her home. Israel presents many wonderful feelings, and the people are friendly and warm.

Thinking about all the hatred that surrounds this country grieves me, but we are never concerned for our safety because we know we are filling a calling of God to love the Land and its People. Come to Israel. Experience some of the delights we have and you will remember it for the rest of your life. You may decide, as we did, that one visit just isn't enough.

Don't forget to pray for the peace of Jerusalem—and maybe you could pray for us too, as we plan on returning as many times as our Lord directs.

God bless you and thank you, Zola Levitt Ministries, for making this trip of a lifetime available to us. ★

NON SEQUITUR By Wiley





Letters to ZLM

Comments from www.levitt.com

From C.A.—

I am currently “stuck” in Dubai and the only light in my life is watching Zola’s video messages on your website. Getting the DVD version is not an option for me because Christian things are banned here, as I’m sure you know! Many thanks. God bless you and all at Zola Levitt Ministries!

Readers—

Some of Zola’s and Jeff’s messages can also be viewed at video.google.com and godtube.com. — ZLM’s WebMaster

Celebrating Isn’t What Saves Us

Mr. Seif,

Christians should celebrate Christmas and Easter. To those who don’t, I ask the following: Are you Christ’s followers or are you just Jews?

Anonymous

Dear Anonymous—

We live in a world where there indeed are Jews who follow Jesus but who, as a matter of preference, don’t feel obligated to decorate trees in December and run after Easter bunnies in the spring as proof that they believe in Israel’s Messiah. I hope this helps. — Jeff

Easter is named for Ishtar, the ancient pagan goddess of fertility. Instead of Easter, Jesus celebrated Passover. Instead of Christmas, Jesus celebrated Hanukkah. Would you characterize Him as “just a Jew”? Rather than obsessing about splinters such as whether to celebrate Christ’s birth and resurrection, let’s focus on planks like the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:16-20). — Mark



Church sign speaks of Jesus’ ability to generate excitement for those who would follow Him.

A product of Church Sign Generators

Takeover of Britain Continues

Dear Staff,

Greetings. I receive the monthly *Levitt Letter* in England, where it used to but no longer arrives in an envelope. Just the other day, two American-born Christians giving out literature were arrested by Muslim police. As you know, ours is daily becoming more and more like a police state. On two accounts, I have found my *Levitt Letter* ripped open and tampered with, I assume by my Muslim mailman. In the last edition, you had two cartoons that could get me in trouble. In the future, can I ask you to please send it in an envelope that cannot be tampered with? Please understand that this is not the U.S.A. and that the police are scared of Muslims here. Thanks. M. B.

Dear M.B.—

Sorry to hear of your waning civil liberties there. Perhaps it would be safer for you to read our newsletters at www.levitt.com. You'll see them sooner that way, and you can copy and paste articles for emailing to friends. —Mark

The Lord in Any Language!

Dear Jeff,

Why don't you use the Hebrew Name of our Heavenly Father "Yahweh" and "Yeshua" the Messiah? Where does the Greek stuff come in? G.L.

Hi, G. L.—

You wrote me in English, not in Hebrew. Why? Probably because you speak English and not Hebrew. Because most people are like you, I prefer going back and forth between the Hebrew and English. I don't believe that more or better blessings accrue to individuals who use the Hebrew names exclusively. —Jeff



Homicide Bombers

Dear Editor,

I have been reading the *Levitt Letter* for quite some time and enjoy it immensely. I must respond to one article which addressed "suicide bombers." I believe it would be much more accurate to label such people as "homicide bombers," for by their acts they are murderers of others and not just bent on committing suicide.

T. D.

Great point, T.D. I agree—and will try to adjust my vocabulary. At 52, however, I must beg your patience, as it seems to get harder to teach the aging dog new tricks.

—Jeff



Equal Access to Vice and Virtue

Dear Jeff,

I recently read your newsletter where you ask whether or not Islam is compatible with democracy. [June 08, p. 6] You are suggesting that we Muslims should abandon our religion and create our own useless laws. This is what you mean when you say: "They must reject sharia law!" I suppose you also want us to legalize drugs, alcohol, prostitution, gambling, homosexuality, allow people to denigrate women, and create music that fills youth with sin and immorality. Is that your idea of democracy? Thanks to Allah, I know what my purpose is in life. Unsigned

Dear Unsigned—

Democracy is defined as "government by the people." It stands in marked contrast to the totalitarian regimes that rule Islamic lands with "iron fists." The vices you listed are "debauchery" and not "democracy." Granted, free people sometimes have problems regulating themselves in the West. However, the same freedom that allows individuals to self-destruct also enables others to rise. It's for this reason that citizens of democracies earn more Nobel Prizes and enjoy higher standards of living, learning, and human betterment than in Allah's oppressive societies. —Jeff

Comment from E.I. on www.levitt.com

I could not stop my tears when I read your stories about the Islamic takeover of Egypt. (LLX 5-5-08, *A Non-Muslim Visits Egypt*) Everything you saw is totally true and happens on a regular basis every day.

However, the situation is much worse than you saw.

Let me share one of my stories as an Egyptian, loved in this country for my whole life. I attended a public elementary school for six years and I was the only Christian child in a class of 45 kids for the whole six years. The school did not like to afford hiring a teacher to teach Christian religion (it is required in all schools to teach religion—Islam for Muslims or Christianity for Christians). As a result, the school forced me to attend the Islamic religion classes and memorize the Koran. My teacher punished me physically if I came without memorizing the Koran.



Moreover, I remember that I had no friends in the school and always was seen alone. Do not think I am introvert; I am very extrovert and social. But the reason all kids decided not to play with Christian is that they are infidels (eat pork and drink alcohol and their parents touch them). I was very familiar with being rejected from sharing a game or talking with others or even being called names.

You cannot imagine how much damage that caused my life and personality.

The mosques are not only next to churches, they are also inside Christian homes. The Imam of the mosque located near my building where I live in Egypt, demanded my dad hang the horn for the "Ead" prayer in our balcony; just for three days, he said. They left it for 9 years. Every time my father asked them to have mercy, they promised to take it off but it never happened. Eventually, they decided to take it off to hang it in the light tower just in front of us, and added another horn. ★

Hezbollah High School

By Niraj Warikoo, *Detroit Free Press*

A high school principal in Dearborn, Mich., has dismissed a longtime wrestling coach after complaints from Muslim parents that the coach's former assistant—an evangelical Christian pastor—was trying to convert Muslim students into Christians.

But the pastor, Trey Hancock, said that he never mixed his religion with sports. And the coach, Jerry Marszalek, said that Hancock “never did that... he knew the difference between church and state.”

Imad Fadlallah, head of Fordson High School, decided not to renew the contract of Marszalek, who has coached wrestling at Fordson for 35 years. Marszalek is an at-will employee and so the principal has the right not to extend his contract, said a spokesman for Dearborn Public Schools.

Fadlallah, the first Muslim principal at Fordson, heads a high school where more than 80% of the students are of Arab descent, a majority of them Muslim. In recent years, parents and students have complained that Hancock was using his position on the wrestling team to convert Muslims—a claim Hancock strongly denies.

At a recent schoolboard meeting, speakers praised Fadlallah and said he was being unfairly attacked because of his Arab ethnicity and Muslim religion. But Hancock and Marszalek said they are the ones who are being unfairly attacked. ★

The Great Evangelical Decline

By Christine Wicker, www.DallasNews.com

What Baptist leaders have known for years is finally public: Evangelical faith has been dropping since 1900, when 42 percent of the U.S. claimed that distinction. Every year, Religious Right Evangelicals, such as those who lead the Southern Baptists, are a smaller proportion of the country. Every year, their core values are violated more flagrantly by the media, scientific discovery, and mainstream behavior. Every election, politicians promise to serve them and then don't because Evangelicals lack the power to make them.

And unless God provides a miracle, the trends will continue. They are longstanding and deeply rooted. Evangelical faith is being attacked inside and outside its churches by forces that won't be stopped by new biblical rigor or an image makeover.



Read this article in full at www.levitt.com/news and go to the video news section and hear Jeff's response.



New Green Biofuel

By Karin Kloosterman, www.Israel21c.net

Thanks to a little green vision in the form of algae, Isaac Berzin, the founder of GreenFuel Technologies in Cambridge MA, has returned to Israel to help turn Israeli ingenuity into action. Berzin looks to collect the best-fit alternative energy solutions from across academia and the industry in Israel—about 10 different technology platforms—to build a center of excellence “10 times bigger and stronger than GreenFuel,” Berzin says.



Isaac Berzin, founder of GreenFuel Tech.

Recently voted as a *TIME* magazine most influential person for 2008, the father of three, who now lives in Jerusalem, sees the importance of creating a real solution to end the world's dependence on oil within the next few years. If it's not found, in 10 years he says, the planet will have “reached the point of no return.”

Taking advantage of Israeli technology and research, Berzin is planning to have a serious biofuel solution ready within five years. While there is no one silver bullet solution, he admits, Israel has all the tools to start making a renewable fuel alternative.

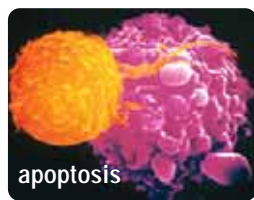
Israel's toolbox includes decades-long research into water technologies and gray-water irrigation, and the know-how for taking advantage of low-quality land and growing crops on brackish water. “Algae can grow in salt water, with sewage, and on any type of land quality,” says Berzin. “The world is moving to a ‘grow your own solution’ for energy crops, and there is no reason why Israel shouldn't be a leading country in this field,” he says.

According to Berzin, investing in the clean fuel solutions of oil-rich algae is a “zero-risk exercise. The solution is attractive because I am not punishing the industry. The world is moving to producing its own energy crops. Algae for biofuel is (finally) an economically viable solution. It is also a moral solution—not competing with food crops on valuable resources such as fertile land and potable water.” ★

Synthetic Fat Fights Cancer

By Judy Siegel-Itzkovich, www.JPost.com

Manmade fat molecules injected into mice have reduced the size of pancreatic, prostate and breast tumors with little or no effect on normal cells. If they work as well in humans, researchers at the Hebrew University's biochemistry department and the HU-Hadassah Medical School foresee the development of a new generation of anti-cancer drugs able to selectively induce apoptosis (programmed cell death) only in tumorous cells with fewer side effects than current drugs.



apoptosis

Several of the most active artificial molecules developed by Dr. Arie Dagan and Prof. Shimon Gatt are derivatives of ceramide, which induces programmed cell death in a variety of cancer cells. The natural levels of ceramide in such cells are generally too low to have a therapeutic effect. In preclinical studies so far, various treatments with the synthetic molecules resulted in an elevation of ceramide levels in cancer cells, leading to their death by apoptosis.

Dagan and Gatt received the 2008 Kaye Award for Innovation. This award has been given annually since 1994. Isaac Kaye of England, a prominent pharmaceutical industrialist, established the awards to encourage Hebrew University faculty, staff, and students to develop methods and inventions which benefit society. ★

Israel's More Efficient Engine

By Karin Kloosterman, www.Israel21c.net

Since the industrial revolution, humanity has struggled to find ways to make the machine more efficient and productive. Engines drive our cars, wash our clothes, and help build almost every manufactured product we enjoy today.

The rising cost of fuel—coupled with an awareness to reduce polluting greenhouse gases—makes it imperative that we find solutions to traditional engines. Some people are looking for the answer in new technology and alternative fuel, but Israel's Newton Propulsion Technology thinks it has found a way to make the traditional engine better.

Based on research from Ben Gurion University and fueled by concerns for the environment, the company has built a hybrid engine from the two traditional types of engines in use today—the internal combustion engine found in cars and the gas turbine used to power jets.

With a prototype called the RotoRom in hand, Newton is exploring ways to collaborate with major industry players in the U.S., such as General Motors and Caterpillar.

Company CEO Guy Rom says that the RotoRom engine can be fitted into vehicles over the 170 horsepower range, making them more efficient and less polluting. Other applications are in small power plants, trucks, work tools, and yachts.

Hybrid generally means a combination engine for gasoline and alternative fuel. The RotoRom is a hybrid of existing technology, which can easily be fitted into applications, such as factories, without replacing existing infrastructure.

In the RotoRom engine, fuel burns inside a sealed chamber that has the ability to expand. Rather than pushing on a piston, the chamber expands while rotating, and this movement creates power. Remaining pressure can be released via a turbine, which then powers a compressor.

Fuel combustion is continuous, and the engine can run on any fuel type, even green fuels such as biodiesel.

One local newspaper called the RotoRom a “Ferrari in a shoebox,” but the company says it has even bigger plans in mind. ★



Newton's clean hybrid engine uses parts from two traditional engines on the market today.



Afghan Journalist Appeals Death Sentence

By Alisa Tang and Rahim Faiez,
Associated Press

An Afghan journalism student sentenced to death for insulting Islam denied the charges before an appeals court, saying he only confessed to questioning the religion's treatment of women because he was tortured.

During an hour-long hearing, a judge read aloud a transcript of the January 2008 proceedings against 24-year-old Sayed Parwez Kambakhsh.

It was the first time the public and the media heard full details from the closed-door trial, which highlights the influence of conservative religious attitudes in post-Taliban Afghanistan's still-nascent justice system.

Kambakhsh said he had no defense lawyer, and only three minutes to defend himself. His case was moved to Kabul, where human rights groups believed he would have a fair trial. Kambakhsh spoke in the court in Kabul, again without a defense lawyer.

Prosecutor Ahmad Khan Ayar told the appeals court that the primary court sentence was "the right decision" according to Islamic law and the Afghan Constitution.

"Kambakhsh has insulted Islam by writing these paragraphs, and he has insulted the Prophet Muhammad," Ayar said. "I ask the appeals court today to sentence him to death."

Jordan, France Sign Nuclear Energy Deal

Associated Press

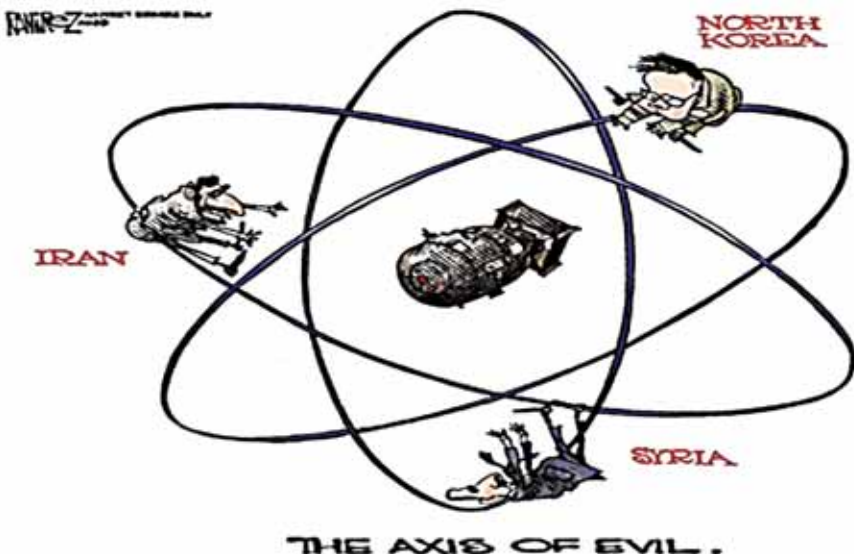
Jordan and France signed an agreement recently to help the Arab kingdom develop its nuclear energy program.

The agreement calls on France to help create nuclear reactors to be used for electricity production and desalination of seawater.

France will also train Jordanian nuclear scientists and help in uranium extraction, according to the agreement. Uranium is abundant in the desert country.

Iran's controversial nuclear program has prompted a slew of Mideast countries, including Egypt, Turkey, and several Gulf Arab countries, to announce plans of their own—in part simply to blunt Tehran's rising regional influence.

Despite the declarations of peaceful intentions, there are worries the countries could be taking the first steps toward a dangerous proliferation in the volatile Mideast. ★



Experts Optimistic About Israel's Future

By Solomon Israel, www.JPost.com

In 2018, Israel will be a world-renowned hi-tech economy moving toward peace and coexistence with its neighbors, according to former U.S. diplomat and Middle East policy-maker Dennis Ross.

Ross's predictions were made at the 2008 Presidential Conference "Facing Tomorrow." "I think in 10 years the radical Islamists will have passed their high point, and they'll be on the decline," Ross also said. "There will be a gradual adjustment to greater coexistence."

Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz predicted Israel's security situation a decade from now would be better

than now. Although Israel could use its allies' help in the future, it would have to be prepared to defend itself unilaterally, Dershowitz said.

Both Dershowitz and Ross said Israel's developing hi-tech economy would increase its international standing and economic strength over the coming decade.

World Jewish Congress president Ronald Lauder, a former U.S. ambassador to Austria, said Israel's ability to enjoy regional peace in the next decade would be tied into its ability to cooperate with its regional neighbors.

"I believe Israel in 10 years will be a major country in the Middle East," he said. "It all depends on Israel's ability to convince its neighbors that they gain more *with* Israel than *without* Israel." ★



By Sara Yoheved Rigler, www.aish.com

Jews in Israel live in the midst of their mishpacha—their family. We are an unruly, bickering, sometimes dysfunctional family, but we are one family nonetheless. That family in action shines in this true story:

On the minor holiday of Lag B'Omer, almost 10% of the population of Israel flocks to the tomb of the Talmudic sage Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai on Mt. Meron in the north. A few years ago, my friend Uriela joined the pilgrimage. Around 9:30 p.m. she caught a public bus for the 3-4 hour trip home to Jerusalem. Confident that the last stop would be Jerusalem's Central Bus Station, from where she would catch a cab to her home, Uriela fell soundly asleep.

Hours later, she was awoken by a voice, "This is the last stop." She looked up. It was not the Central Bus Station, but rather a totally unfamiliar Jerusalem neighborhood.

"Where is the Central Bus Station?" she asked in bewilderment. "Oh, that was three stops ago," the driver of the now empty bus answered. "The bus is on its way to the yard—this is the last stop."

As the area seemed to be residential, Uriela asked the bus driver if he could leave her off on a main street where she could catch a cab. "You can't catch a cab anywhere around here, lady, not at this time of night."

"What will I do?" she asked in rising dismay. "Where do you live?" "The Old City."

"Okay, I'll take you home."

And the bus driver turned the empty bus around and drove his single passenger another 20 minutes to the Old City.



Scarflless Female Officials Cause Walkout

Dr. Mohdi Al-Homoud, newly appointed Minister of State for Housing Affairs and Minister of State for Administrative Development Affairs, takes the oath of office during the first session of Kuwait's 12th legislative term. Nine Islamic Members of Parliament walked out protesting that the two female members of the government cabinet were not dressed according to strict Islamic codes. Looking on at right is Minister of Finances Mustafa Al-Samali. ★

(AP Photo/Gustavo Ferrari)



Zola Levitt Presents TV Airing Schedule

IONNetwork (PAX) Airing Day & Time by Zone

| Zone | Pacific | Mountain | Central | Eastern |
|------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Day | 9:30 am Thurs | 8:30 am Thurs | 8:30 am Thurs | 9:30 am Thurs |

DirectTV—Channel 255

Dish—Channel 181

ABC-FAM Airing Day & Time by Zone

| Zone | Pacific | Mountain | Central | Eastern |
|------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Day | 10:00 pm Sun or 1:00 am Mon | 11 pm Sun or 2 am Mon | 12:00 am Mon | 1:00 am Mon |

DirectTV—Channel 311

Dish—Channel 180

INSP Airing Day & Time by Zone

| Zone | Pacific | Mountain | Central | Eastern |
|------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Day | 3:30 am Wed 5:30 pm | 4:30 am Wed 6:30 pm | 5:30 am Wed 7:30 pm | 6:30 am Wed 8:30 pm |

Daystar Airing Day & Time by Zone

| Zone | Pacific | Mountain | Central | Eastern |
|------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Day | 3:00 pm Fri | 4:00 pm Fri | 5:00 pm Fri | 6:00 pm Fri |

DirectTV—Channel 369

Dish—Channel 263

TCT on DirecTV

TCT is Channel 377 on DirecTV:
Visit www.tct.tv for your area's schedule.

NOTE: If you are unable to view *Zola Levitt Presents*, please contact your local cable company or refer to your satellite directory.

Our entire TV Airing Schedule is posted at
www.levitt.com.



Al-Qaeda's Women Spark Extremist Debate

By Lauren Frayer, Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt - Muslim extremist women are challenging al-Qaeda's refusal to include—or at least acknowledge—women in its ranks, in an emotional debate that gives rare insight into the gender conflicts lurking beneath one of the strictest strains of Islam.

In response to a female questioner, al-Qaeda No. 2 leader Ayman al-Zawahri said in April that the terrorist group does not have women. A woman's role, he said on the Internet audio recording, is limited to caring for the homes and children of al-Qaeda fighters.

His remarks have since prompted an outcry from fundamentalist women, who are fighting or pleading for the right to be terrorists. The statements have also created some confusion, because in fact suicide bombings by women seem to be on the rise, at least within the Iraq branch of al-Qaeda.

"How many times have I wished I were a man... When Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahri said there are no women in al-Qaeda, he saddened and hurt me.... I felt that my heart was about to explode in my chest.... I am powerless," wrote one woman. Not everyone agrees with her assessment, however.

FAILED ATTEMPT

In this file image made from television on Nov. 13, 2005, Iraqi **Sajida al-Rishawi** opens her jacket and shows an explosive belt as she confesses on Jordanian state-run television to her failed bid to set off an explosives belt inside one of the three Amman hotels targeted by al-Qaeda. Women Muslim extremists have posted Internet messages in recent weeks expressing frustration with the al-Qaeda No. 2 leader's refusal to give them a larger role in terror attacks—an extraordinary, emotional debate that offers rare insight into the tense gender politics lurking below the surface of al-Qaeda's severe strain of Islam.
(AP Photo/Jordanian TV, File)

"Women were very disappointed because what al-Zawahri said is not what's happening today in the Middle East, especially in Iraq or in Palestinian groups," said Rita Katz, director of the SITE Intelligence Group, an organization that monitors militant websites. "Suicide operations are being carried out by women, who play an important role in jihad."

In the Iraq branch, women have carried out or attempted at least 20 suicide bombings since 2003. Al-Qaeda members suspected of training women to use suicide belts were captured in Iraq at least three times last year, the U.S. military has said.

Hamas, another militant group, is open about using women fighters and disagrees with al-Qaeda's stated stance. At least 11 Palestinian women have launched suicide attacks in recent years.

"A lot of the girls I speak to... want to carry weapons. They live with this great frustration and oppression," said Huda Naim, a prominent women's leader, Hamas member, and Palestinian lawmaker in Gaza. "We don't have a special militant wing for women... but that doesn't mean that we strip women of the right to go to jihad." ★





Messianic Campaign Spreads The News To The Jews

By Batsheva Sobelman,
latimesblogs.latimes.com

“5.4 million Jews live in Israel today—more than in any period throughout history, but only 0.3% of them believe” in Jesus, says an internal memo of Israel’s Messianic communities announcing a campaign to spread the Gospel throughout the country’s Jewish residents. Anti-missionary circles say their “intelligence people” intercepted the “shocking memo” that also expressed concern over legislators’ support for a bill seeking to tighten restrictions on missionary activity, already outlawed in Israel.

Reportedly, a campaign equating Jesus with salvation came to an abrupt end after people complained of billboards on buses throughout the country reading “Jesus = Yeshua = Salvation” (the words are very similar in Hebrew, perhaps too close for some). An urgent appeal by Yad L’Achim to the national bus company bore quick results and the billboards were removed within hours, the company’s advertising department stating it did not want to offend the Jewish public’s feelings.

There are 15,000 Messianic Jews living in Israel today in dozens of congregations throughout the country. They view themselves as a legitimate stream of Judaism; most are committed Israelis, many of them serving in elite army units. They stress that Jesus was a Jew and are careful to use His Hebrew name, Yeshua. Many in the communities say they feel threatened by individuals, organizations, and state bureaucracy. Religious Jews regard them as an abomination and a concrete danger.

Prayer By Proxy At The Western Wall

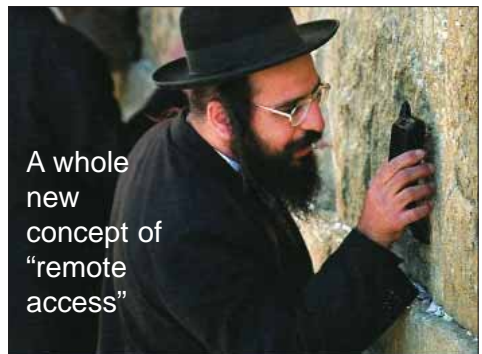
By Martine Behrens, www.haaretz.com

There was a time appealing to God at the holiest place on Earth for Jews—the Western Wall—was only for those physically in Jerusalem. Now anyone can say a prayer at the Wall while in the comfort of one’s own home, office, or anywhere in between, thanks to a new website.

Set up by Batya Burd in 2003, www.westernwallprayers.org, aims to give people a chance to have their prayers answered at the Western Wall, bringing religion right into the home.

People email Batya with their problems, hopes, and fears regarding marriage, health, or business success, and make a donation toward families and select Torah institutions in Jerusalem. In return, Batya hires an Orthodox man (there’s no choice of a woman) who acts as a proxy and prays for the donor at the Western Wall, for 40 consecutive days. Parallel to this, the donor is expected to recite a short psalm and to undertake a *mitzvah* (good deed) to further strengthen the power of the prayer.

What seems like a most unlikely collaboration; ancient prayer and modern technology, has also proved to be a successful one. To date, Batya says, there have been over 130 success stories, the majority of which are written up as a form of testimony on the Western Wall website.



A whole new concept of “remote access”

Bardot: Muslims Are Destroying France

Associated Press



Brigitte Bardot was convicted recently of provoking discrimination and racial hatred for writing that Muslims are destroying France.

A leading French anti-racism group known as MRAP filed a lawsuit last year over a letter she sent to then-Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy. The remarks were published in her foundation's quarterly journal.

In the December 2006 letter to Sarkozy, now the president, Bardot said France is "tired of being led by the nose by this population that is destroying us, destroying our country by imposing its acts."

Bardot, 73, was referring to the Muslim feast of *Aid el-Kebir*, celebrated by slaughtering sheep.

French anti-racism laws prevent inciting hatred and discrimination on racial or religious grounds. Bardot had been convicted four times previously for inciting racial hatred.

"She is tired of this type of proceedings," her lawyer said. "She has the impression that people want to silence her. She will not be silenced."

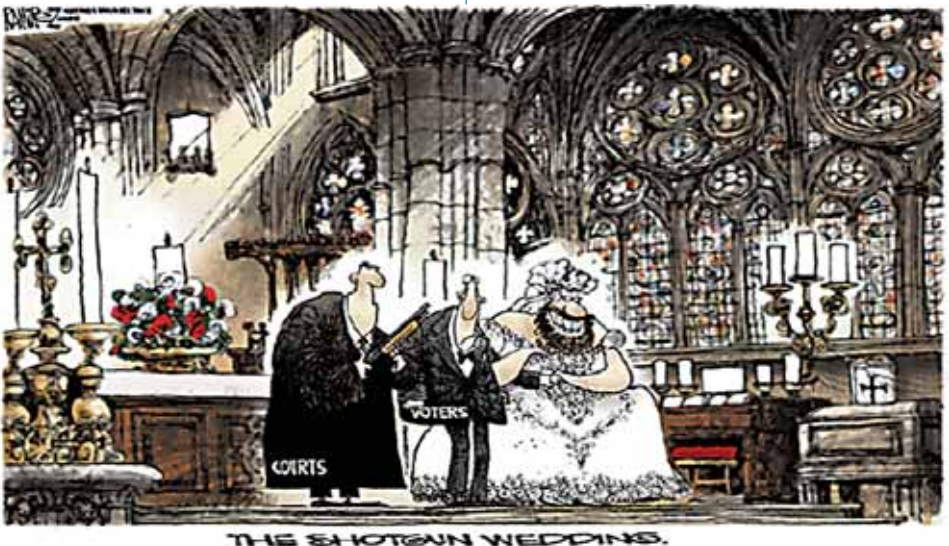
Islamic Unity?

By Gary Bauer, *End of Day Report*



King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia has summoned hundreds of Islamic leaders to Mecca, hoping to get Shiites and Sunnis all singing off the same page in advance of interfaith dialogue with Christians and Jews. According to a BBC Arab affairs analyst, "the meeting is supposed to be the Saudi answer to the controversial 'clash of civilizations' thesis of U.S. academic Samuel Huntington. Muslim writers often cite Professor Huntington's ideas as evidence of Western hostility to Islam in particular." I'm not optimistic that much will come of this gathering, especially if the Islamic world is seeking to address "Western hostility to Islam."

In Israel, Arab Muslims have the right to vote and even serve in the Israeli parliament. Muslims worship freely throughout the Western world, as freedom of religion is one of the West's most cherished universal principles. In contrast, as the BBC report noted, "Saudi Arabia has no diplomatic ties with Israel, and non-Muslim religious services and symbols are banned in the kingdom. King Abdullah has said Saudi Arabia's top clerics, who like the ruling family are from the hardline Wahhabi trend of Sunni Islam, have authorized his interfaith approach." If the Saudis are serious about improving ties with the West and with other faiths, the kingdom could demonstrate its good faith by stopping the flow of money to extremist Wahhabi groups around the world, by recognizing Israel's right to exist and the right of every man and woman to worship God freely without fear of violence or reprisal.



New Testaments Burned

www.jta.org

Israeli Jews burned copies of the New Testament after a deputy mayor called for a purge of missionary texts.

Israel's daily *Ma'ariv* carried a front-page story about a bonfire of the New Testament and other Christian texts held in Ohr Yehuda at the prompting of Deputy Mayor Uzi Aharon.

Asked about the incident, Aharon acknowledged calling on community members to throw out missionary literature delivered to their homes but denied involvement in the book-burning or knowing that Christian Bibles were included. He said he acted alone and not on behalf of the municipality.

A lawyer representing Israel's Messianic Jewish community demanded that police investigate the incident, arguing that it could incite violence.

Aharon noted that Israeli law also places curbs on proselytizing Jews and said those who had distributed the Christian pamphlets in Ohr Yehuda should be prosecuted.

Police to Seal Off D.C. Neighborhoods

By Michael Neibauer and Bill Myers,
www.examiner.com

Washington D.C. police will seal off entire neighborhoods, set up checkpoints, and kick out strangers under a new program that D.C. officials hope will help them rescue the city from its out-of-control violence.

Under an executive order, police Chief Cathy L. Lanier will have the authority to designate "Neighborhood Safety Zones." At least six officers will man cordons around those zones and demand identification from people coming in and out of them. Anyone who doesn't live there, work there, or have "legitimate reason" to be there

will be sent away or face arrest.

Lanier has been struggling to reverse D.C.'s spiraling crime rate.

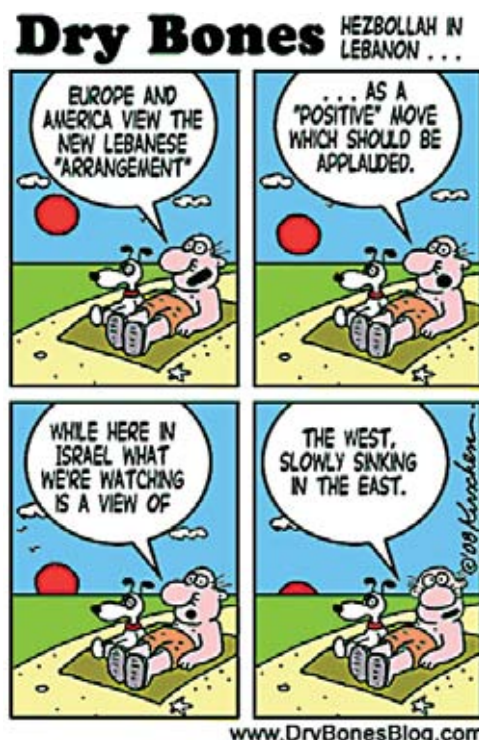
Zola considered it hypocritical of the U.S. State Department to issue travel advisories for Israel and not for Washington D.C.—or any of the other American cities that are markedly more dangerous than the Holy Land. Should Americans who condemn Israel's vital border checkpoints protest against them here in the States, where homicide bombings are comparatively rare? — Mark

Anti-Jewish Attacks in LA, England, and NYC

By Ezra HaLevi, www.IsraelNN.com

Violent attacks against Jews in recent weeks have taken place in Los Angeles, England, and New York City. In Ireland, a Jewish man had graffiti daubed on his home reading: "Go Home, Jew."

See the particulars of these incidents at www.levitt.com/news. ★



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Strikes Against Iran May Be Unavoidable

By W. Thomas Smith Jr.,
www.METimes.com, *Middle East Times*

Iran—designated by the U.S. State Department as “the most active state sponsor of terrorism”—has long been a perpetrator and financier of some of the most glaring acts of international terrorism.

The Persian state frequently threatens other countries and generally defies international convention and the rule of law. But Iran's covert operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; its recent military and political victories through its proxy army, Hezbollah (in Lebanon) and its beneficiary, Hamas (in the Palestinian territories); a newly signed defense pact with its terrorist-supporting ally, Syria; and its unstated nuclear ambitions, may be forcing the West's hand.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad recently told Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda that “influential nations should get ready for a world minus the U.S.”

Not surprising. Ahmadinejad has threatened to “wipe Israel off the map.” And his surrogate deputy commanders, like Hezbollah's secretary general Hassan Nasrallah, frequently call for the “deaths” of both America and Israel.

Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Shaul Mofaz said in a recent interview: “If Iran continues with its program for developing nuclear weapons, we will attack it. The sanctions are ineffective. Attacking Iran in order to stop its nuclear plans will be unavoidable.”

Mofaz, a tough, former Israeli Defense Force chief and Defense Minister, also said Ahmadinejad “would disappear before Israel does.”

The U.S. responded quickly: the White House reiterated the U.S. commitment

to multilateral diplomacy as a means of addressing the Iran nuclear problem, but added that all options (including military action) would remain on the table.

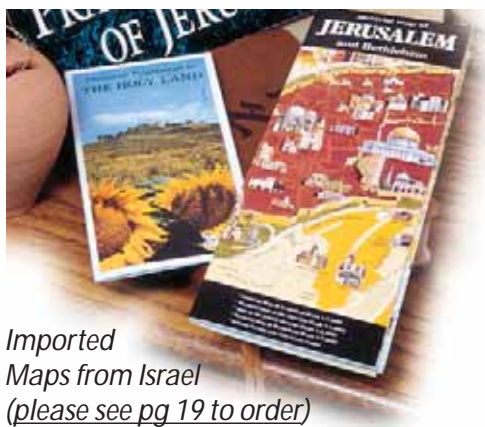
Asked if President George W. Bush might commit to launching some sort of pre-emptive strike against Iranian facilities before leaving office in 2009, a source inside the U.S. intelligence community says, “I don't think he has the guts anymore. The Israelis on the other hand? ...[hesitation] But I can't talk about it.”

Sources also are telling me that “exchanges” and ongoing dialogue over the previous year between a senior Israeli strategist (currently in the United States) and U.S. military officials “have intensified in recent weeks.”



Meanwhile, Iran continues its blustering, its threats, and its attempts to subvert efforts by the International Atomic Energy Agency (the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog) to determine how close Iran is to developing a nuclear weapon. Iran claims its nuclear development is only for peaceful, energy-producing aims. But Iran's president still contends his nation will wipe Israel and America off the face of the Earth. And Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps continues to devise more creative methods of killing and maiming American soldiers in Iraq and, we now know, Afghanistan.

W. Thomas Smith Jr. is a military analyst, columnist, and a former U.S. Marine infantryman and counter-terrorism instructor. He has covered conflict in the Balkans, on the West Bank, in Iraq, and Lebanon.



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