

Levitt

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



Letter

Assad Strategy Working p.28

Why This Jew Loves Christmas

By Irwin N. Graulich / TakeAPen.org



I am a religious Jew who simply loves Christmas. Any non-Christian who gets offended because the majority religion in America makes a big public splash about one of their biggest holidays is a fool. A crèche on a public or private lawn is a beautiful sight. It means that people have gone to the trouble of sharing lovely visuals with all of America, expressing the beauty of their heritage and its spiritual message to humanity.

Attention all Christians! I would like to publicly thank you for the gorgeous Christmas decorations on lawns, the powerful Christmas music and spirit, the beautiful Christmas trees in our White House, and those incredible Christmas windows along Fifth Avenue. If not for your brilliant, religious-marketing skills, Hanukkah would probably have gone the way of *Shavuot*, a more significant Jewish holiday which few Jews outside Israel celebrate because there is no popular Christian holiday surrounding it.

(continued p.2)

History of the Menorah

By Binyamin Kagedan
JNS.org

There are few more ubiquitous symbols of Jewish presence than the menorah. From its first mention in the Book of Exodus, the menorah has pervaded the literary and visual culture of the Jewish people, predating the Star of David as a uniquely Jewish insignia by at least a millennium. In fact, one rabbinic tradition suggests that the emblem on David's shield was not a Star at all, but a menorah!

While the Star is the centerpiece of Israel's flag, the menorah was chosen as the nation's coat of arms, and large, ornate menorahs grace both the Knesset and Ben Gurion Airport. Countless Jewish organizations, schools, and synagogues weave the menorah image into their logos, and many have taken the word as their names.

(continued p.3)



Why This Jew Loves Christmas *continued from cover*

In all probability, it is the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree (*shown below*) that has made the large Hanukkah menorah near Central Park even possible. American Christians have taught Jews the valuable lesson that it is okay to be public with your religion as long as it is not coercive or obnoxious. The secret is making it into a beautiful event that can be shared by all Americans, where you are truly “lighting up” the lives of many individuals.

Of course, the government should not favor any one specific religion. The Founders wanted a secular government, as per the Constitution, but longed for a religious society.

Walk down any Main Street or shopping mall during this holiday season and you will see more smiles on children and adult faces than at any other time. However, we can certainly go overboard when a “Holy Day” becomes exclusively a “shopping holiday.” That is the danger in removing Christ from Christmas.

There are Christians all over America who spend a tremendous amount of time and money putting up decorations for the public to enjoy. Wouldn't it be a great idea for Jews and other fellow Americans to knock on their doors and thank them! That is the spirit of an America where we truly share our multiculturalism.

Jews should be saying a daily blessing for American Christians. The Judeo-Christian partnership upon which America is founded is a critical bond for both groups.

So on Christmas Eve, this Jew will think of that wonderful song, “I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas”—written by Irving Berlin, a Jew. This traditional tune should conjure up pleasures in the hearts and minds of most thinking people. Therefore, I say thank you to every American Christian for sharing your passions, and may I wish each of you a Merry Christmas! ☆



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*Rockefeller Center
Christmas Tree*

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History of the Menorah *(continued from cover sidebar)*

Replica of the Jewish Temple's menorah, made by The Temple Institute in Israel.



What is the story of this potent symbol, and why has it captured the hearts and imaginations of the Jewish people for so long?

Most people come across the menorah primarily on Hanukkah. The technical name for the eight-branched candelabra lit each night of Hanukkah is *Hanukiyah*, a modern-Hebrew word. The word *menorah* is used colloquially for these ritual objects, but technically refers only to the seven-branched golden oil lamp meticulously described in God's instructions to Moses regarding the building of the Tabernacle (Exodus 25:31-40).

References to the menorah appear throughout the Bible, though it is not clear that it always looked the same, or that there was always just one in the Temple; I Kings tells that Solomon had ten golden menorahs made for his Temple. Nevertheless, there is ample indication that a menorah existed in one form or another throughout the First and Second Temple periods. The iconic image found on the Arch of Titus in Rome, depicting the menorah and other Temple objects being carried away as the spoils of Roman victory over Judea, confirms that a seven-branched menorah was a part of Temple worship. Yet the whereabouts of the final menorah of the Second Temple remains a great mystery.

Jewish thinkers through the centuries have been drawn to the power and beauty of the menorah image—form with light—an enduring symbol of eternal hope. ★

One Jew's View of Christmas

Nina Badzin
TCJewfolk.com
(Twin Cities)



Every December, Jews across America complain about their neighbors' Christmas decorations, Christmas music, Christmas anything. And every December, I hear fellow Jews boast about answering a salesperson's "Merry Christmas" with "Not everybody celebrates Christmas." Or, "I'm Jewish." Or, "I celebrate Hanukkah." Our disdain is embarrassing. It's wrong.

Because We Sound Ungrateful

A significant majority of Americans celebrate Christmas. And I'm glad they do. We're indebted to the religious Christians who sought a place to worship as they saw fit. Did they do it for the Jews? No. Did we benefit? You bet! Jews have thrived more in America than in any other place in history.

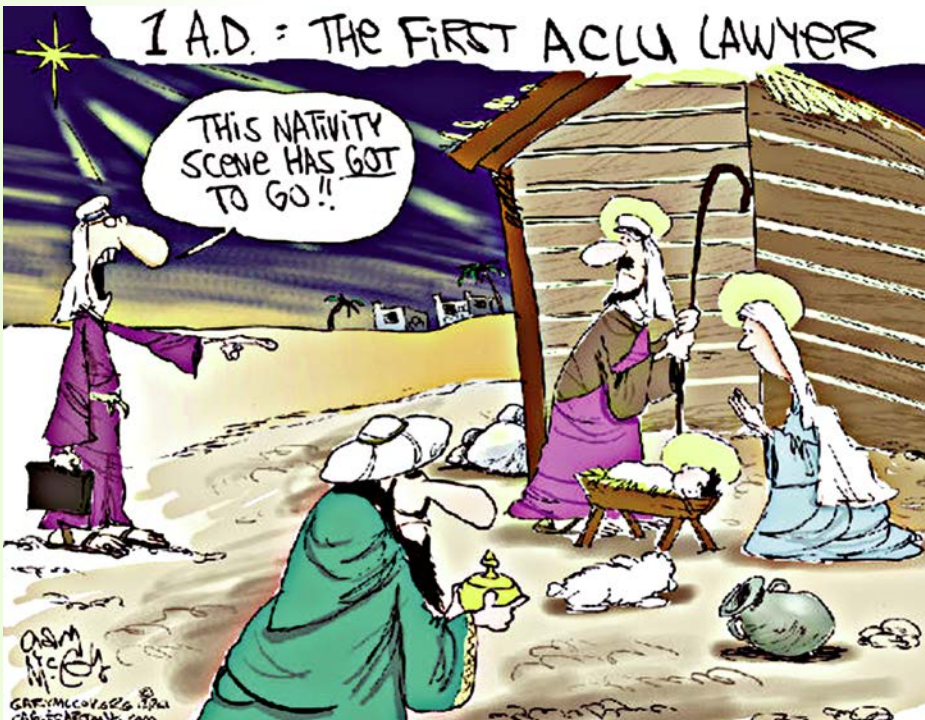
We Sound Hostile

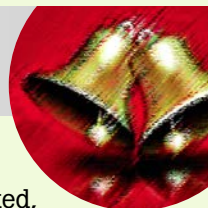
I suppose Jews who trash Christmas think they're defending Jewish rights, or freedom of religion, or separation of church and state. Well, I'd rather be a Jew living under "In God we trust" America than in the secular, communist, former Soviet Union, Godless Nazi Germany, or even in staunchly secular Europe. So what if you can't stop humming *Jingle Bell Rock*. Yes, it's terribly annoying; but I bet you're not worried about the KGB sending you to the Gulag for whispering "Israel" or wearing a Jewish Star of David.

We Sound Confused About Freedom

Speaking of religious freedom, this little nugget of American goodness extends to Christians too. If we can put an eyesore of a *Sukkah* on our driveways, then certainly our neighbors have the right to a blinking Nativity scene or musical elves. Our Jewish identities should be defined by pride and knowledge in our Judaism, not by the fact that we're not Christian.

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And guess what? In good old America, we're also free to ignore our Jewishness if that's how we choose to roll. Last time I checked, I didn't see the word "Jew" on my birth certificate or passport. We're free to engage in Jewish life as much or as little as we please. But those of us who aren't interested in religion shouldn't begrudge people who are.

We Sound Jealous

I've heard Jews worry about their children feeling left out of the Christmas hoopla. Here's the unfortunate truth: If you don't celebrate any FUN Jewish holidays, then yes, the month of December will always feel like that day in junior high when you looked longingly at the cool kids' table at lunch. I don't care how many giant dreidels we insist they put up in the malls: **Hanukkah will never compare to Christmas.**

We Sound Narcissistic

We all benefit from Christmas in America. A day off to eat Chinese food and see a movie is about as merry an experience as I can imagine. I see nothing wrong with being gracious and saying, "Thank you" when someone wishes me a Merry Christmas. There's just no point in walking around feeling offended all the time.

The "I'm offended by Merry Christmas so you better say Happy Holidays" routine feels like we're making everything about us. Not very neighborly, is it?



Rabbis light the giant Hanukkah menorah in Union Square, San Francisco



Myles To Go
By Myles Weiss
ZLP Co-host



My heart races as my rental car slowly turns into the expansive driveway. The wiper blades swoop back and forth: “swoosh, joosh, Jewish, Jewish...”

“Great, I’m hallucinating,” I think. Wiper blades are not anti-Semitic.

The “Christmas mansion” appears through the trees. The culture clash is underway. “What’s a nice Jewish boy doing in a palace like this?,” I can almost hear my grandma saying as I ring the bell and reminisce.

The difference between mainstream American Christian culture and my Jewish family circle has always been most apparent at Christmas time. At best we are the silent outsiders; at worst, “Christ-killers.” When I was a teenager, many spirited religious discussions were resolved by the obligatory punch in the nose — emphasizing the superiority of Catholic doctrine over Jewish protests. My peers were verifying my grandma’s message. More than two thousand years of persecution, expulsion, and execution. Christians were brutal zealots. Be wary of them. Now I am in love with one.

The door opens and Katharine stands there smiling. In the candlelit room, she radiates seasonal goodwill with a subtle undertone of private warmth. Our chemistry could have dazzled the decoration-drenched house.

Katharine has recently parted ways with a millionaire male model (the catch of the century) to spend time with me — a short, older Jewish guy who is crazy for her. Good news for me, but not for her parents. I am in their house. It is Christmas. It is Hanukkah back in New York.

We embrace and hold each other close. I don’t want to let go. She is safe and warm.

“I’m so glad you came,” she whispers.

“Wouldn’t miss it,” I assure her. Actually, at the airport I considered getting back on the plane and skipping town.

Her mom glides down the grand, gilded staircase — all smiles and looking like Hollywood royalty. The entrance hall is bigger than my apartment! I stumble through an air kiss from Mom, which leaves me off balance.

“We are thrilled to have you here, Morris,” she says.

“It’s Myles,” Katharine corrects.

“Of course it is, dear. Well, I’ll leave you two and attend to the appetizers. I hope you’re hungry, Mor... uh, Myles.”

The glow from the next room is unearthly as we enter to behold the biggest Christmas tree in domestic captivity. It fills the room and touches the ceiling. I must have gasped.

“A bit much, eh?” Katharine whispers in my ear.

We hover at the edge of the room because the floor is filled with brightly wrapped silver and red packages. I sigh.

“Are you OK?” Katharine asks.

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Myles & Katharine — the early years



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Christmas: Myles continues

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“Sure, great, never better.” Can she detect my clenched jaw and shallow breathing?

I take her hand and the electricity between us travels up our arms to our hearts. We smile. I relax, reaching into my pocket for her gift. My hand halts mid-purpose and I leap to my feet as the Major appears across the room. Major Burke commandeers any room he enters. Ever the quintessential leader, graying temples, tanned face ... he loves his daughter.

“I’ll meet you in the library,” he says. Apparently, the family is used to circumnavigating the gift room.

“Yes sir!” I croak.

“Hello, son. Merry Christmas.” Our hands meet.

“Happy Hanukkah to you, sir.”

The Major clears his throat. “How’s my favorite middle girl?” He lifts Katharine off the ground, hugging her tightly.

“Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah, Daddy,” replies Katharine, with perfect inflection. She must have practiced. I am impressed ... again.

A tinkling bell announces dinner; we assemble in the grand dining room. A banquet table covered in white linen holds silver for every culinary task. It sparkles with enough candles to light a cathedral. The family eyes me warily. They can see how I feel about Katharine. Our loving manner with each other has touched them. I relax. “They really want her to be happy,” I realize. I begin to like them.

Dinner is followed by an opulent gift-opening ritual. I begin to sweat. The room soon looks like a retail war zone. Three-foot-deep red and silver paper explosions are piled everywhere. Katharine and I peer at each other across the holiday shreds. It is our moment. We eagerly exchange gifts. Our cards affirm our love and gratitude to Jesus for bringing us together.

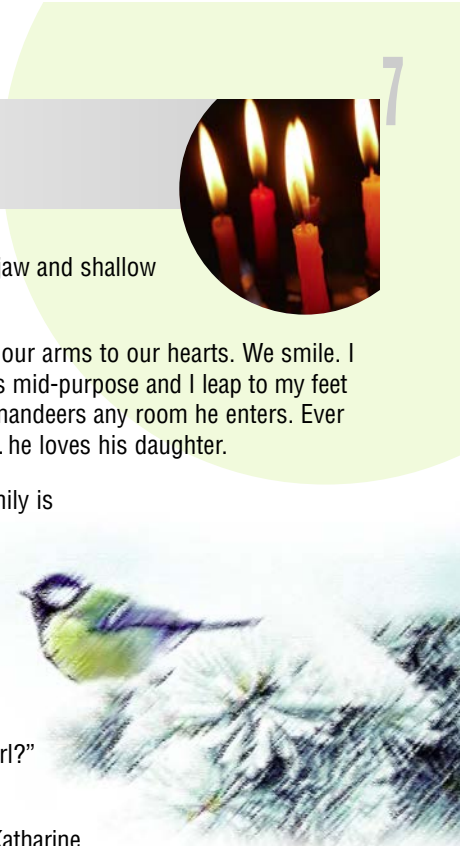
He has become the center of our hearts, teaching us with the grace of His salvation. We are enjoying the fruit of unity in the Spirit, believing the testimony of the Apostle Paul, who wrote to the Ephesians that Jesus abolished the wall of separation between Jew and gentile. By dying for our sins, Jesus made us into “one new man,” a unified body of Believers. I am free to celebrate the feasts of the Lord as a Jew who follows Messiah. Katharine has been “grafted” into the olive tree that symbolizes the family of Israel. We read our cards aloud and explain to her family that without Hanukkah, there would be no Christmas. Hanukkah celebrates God preserving the Jewish people by miraculously defeating their oppressors 160 years before Jesus’ birth. A day’s supply of sacred oil for the Temple supernaturally lasted for eight.

I open my present from Katharine—a handcrafted silver and gold menorah. I breathe deeply and thank her. Her eyes well up. She opens her gift. The pendant reads, “Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.” The words from the Book of Ruth come alive. Ruth, a gentile who married into the family of Israel, became an ancestor of Jesus.

Peace settles on us all. We sit in silence. Centuries of conflict seem to melt away. The Major smiles, dabbing at his eye with a napkin.

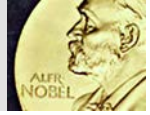
“Happy Hanukkah, son” he says clearly.

“Merry Christmas, Major.”



Are Nobel Prizes Biased Against Muslims?

By Bruce Bawer
FrontPageMag.com
Nobel Medal (right)



Even as the distaste for Jews intensifies in the West and the international community steps up the pressure on Israel to stop being the cause of trouble in the otherwise idyllic Middle East, Israeli and Jewish scientists continue to clean up at the Nobel Prizes. Jews (who represent less than 0.2% of the world population) have managed to accumulate a staggeringly disproportionate number of Nobel Prizes over the decades—making up about 21% of the laureates in chemistry, 26% in physics, 27% in physiology or medicine, and 37% in economics.

Meanwhile, Muslims (at 1.5 billion, a good 25% of the planet’s population) have racked up only two Nobel Prizes in the sciences: Egyptian chemist Ahmed Zewail, got his Ph.D. and did most of his research in the U.S.; the late physicist Abdus Salam, who studied in Britain and spent much of his career outside his native Pakistan, wouldn’t even count as a Muslim in the eyes of most Muslims, since he belonged to the relatively peaceable and civilized Ahmadiyya sect, whose members (in Pakistan and many other Islamic countries) are officially considered infidels and suffer brutal persecution.

In a recent *Times of Israel* article, Irish writer Derek Hopper noted that when two Israelis were announced as the winners of this year’s chemistry prize, it was “the fourth time Israelis have won it since 2004.” (Arieh Warshel is a U.S. citizen; Michael Levitt holds U.S., UK, and Israeli passports; their co-winner, Martin Karplus, a citizen of both the U.S. and Austria, is also Jewish.) Hopper commented on the widespread boycotting of Israeli products by Western consumers: Sincere haters of Israel should elect not to avail themselves of the medical, scientific, and technological advances that have come out of the Jewish State in the last few years. (Hopper could have mentioned Stephen Hawking, who announced last May his support for an academic boycott of Israel: the very system he employs to communicate such pronouncements runs on an Israeli-designed computer chip.)

To Hopper’s spot-on call for ideological consistency on the part of Israel-haters I would add that it’s not entirely fair to measure Israeli or Jewish success against Muslim success in a handful of categories like chemistry and physics, which may seem *culturally biased* in favor of countries like Israel and against, say, Yemen.

Such a narrow view of civilizational accomplishment seems founded on a callous indifference to the distinctive strengths and values of Islamic civilization. And this prejudice perpetrated in the name of Alfred Nobel is particularly egregious given that Nobel, after all, invented dynamite.

the Americans
make cars...
and airplanes...
they do complicated
medical operations
to cure people...
I too want something
to be proud of...
what are we Muslims
good at?

car bombs...
hijacking...
we do complicated
terrorist operations
and suicide attacks
to kill people...



See Ghadry article on next page



(continued next page)



If there's one area of expertise in which Islamic culture has distinguished itself in recent decades, it's the field of explosives.

So why not a Nobel Prize for, say, the most innovative use of explosives? Granted, such an accolade wasn't provided for in Nobel's will, but then neither was the award for economics, which didn't come into being until 1969. Imagine the harvest that Muslims would have reaped in Stockholm in past decades if there'd been an Explosives Prize! It's enough to blow your mind (no pun intended).

NOTE: *The award ceremony takes place each year on Dec. 10, the anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death.*

We Muslims Are Hopeless

BY FARID GHADRY (top right) TimesOfIsrael.com

Here is a Twitter exchange that tells a story.

Wow: Of the eight individuals who have won #Nobel Prizes so far this year, six are Jewish, two are Israeli, and one is a Holocaust survivor.

—Avi Mayer (@AviMayer)



To which I responded:

@AviMayer And the Muslim world wants to destroy Israel and the Jews. We are stupid indeed. —Farid Ghadry (@FaridGhadry)



An article that I wrote in October of 2004 describing how "Israelis build with Nobel Prizes and Arabs build with suicide bombers" I might have regurgitated in October 2013 because nothing has changed. Israelis and Jewish scientists still manage to advance their societies and Arabs still manage to destroy theirs with violence, ignorance, and zealotry.

No Arab or Muslim scientists will shine as long as Islam does not face its shortcomings in a world too modern for our societies to produce any meaningful progress.

We marry helpless 9-year olds as if we lived in the 7th century, we sexually deform baby girls to suck the pleasure of life out of them, and we embrace a sword to show our commitment to Islam, while Christianity embraces books and Judaism embraces laboratories. What a surprise it is to watch Christianity and Judaism contribute to humanity while Islam contributes the blood of others.

The day that a Syrian-Arab-Muslim like myself can watch his civilization excel in the service of mankind instead of watching our leaders gas helpless children and women is long overdue. Our salvation remains in the hands of others we are happy to chop just because they chose a Prophet who died for their sins or another Prophet who connected them with God while we remain loyal to the Prophet who raised his sword.

Benjamin Franklin said, "Admiration is the daughter of ignorance." Maybe we should stop admiring ourselves and begin concentrating on dropping that sword. ☆

The Galilee—Yeshua’s Home Turf

BY EITAN SHISHKOFF Our Man In Haifa



Next to Jerusalem, the most popular visitor destination in Israel is the Galilee. The reason is simple: It’s where Yeshua spent most of His life. Every year, millions of international tourists come to Tiberias, a city founded in the first century, next to the Kinneret (Sea of Galilee). It now boasts 30 hotels and numerous historical and biblical sites. Here, Yeshua first called fishermen to follow Him, calmed the storm, and walked on water. The vast majority of the Gospel narrative takes place next to this inland lake, the only body of fresh water amid a vast section of dry earth.



The Sea of Galilee

The Galilee is known for its fertile farms, award-winning wines, and undulating landscape. The region is Israel’s most varied, both geographically and demographically. There are many Arab-Israeli villages, served by Nazareth as their civil government capital. Some one million Israeli citizens in the Galilee are Arabic speakers. They are full citizens, with voting rights and open access to public institutions. Northern Israel has also become home to a large number of immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia, and from French- and English-speaking nations.

Celebrating the Galilee’s natural beauty, I am repeatedly refreshed and inspired

by hiking some of its many marked trails. At summer’s end, I walked through pomegranate orchards, olive groves, and vineyards—tracing the path of a spring-fed stream. You don’t have to be an Israeli resident to enjoy such experiences. Galilee boasts a 40-mile hiking trail called the “Jesus Trail.” It comprises footpaths and bike trails that reveal sites connected to Jesus and His Disciples.*

Impressive historic sites abound. The Talmudic village of Katzrin reflects Jewish survival from the first to the eighth centuries A.D. After the Roman destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, the Galilee became a refuge. Ruins of the famous fortress of Gamla—sometimes called the Masada of the North because of a desperate 66 A.D. stand against the Romans—are located on a high bluff overlooking the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

These sites provide moving opportunities to identify with life in the early centuries of this era. It’s important to step out of our convenience-saturated existence to imagine what life was like for the rugged, previous generations who lived in Israel. Our lives are a breeze in comparison!

Many believe that, just as Jesus’ ministry first became visible in this area, a dramatic national spiritual harvest will begin in the Galilee, signaling His return. I’m one of them. Whether you agree or not, please pray with us that these coming years will open Israeli hearts as never before to the Messiah of Israel, *Yeshua HaMashiach*. ★

*http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_of_Galilee



False Prophets

CLASSIC ZOLA: 1990—23 years ago



American teachers of prophecy usually teach Scriptures such as, “And many false prophets shall rise ...” (Matt. 24:11) as referring to horoscope makers, palm readers, and the like.

Really, those profit-making amateurs have little effect on the world, and the New Age movement, in general, is overrated as bringing on the End Times, I feel. The real false prophets are those of the huge unbiblical religions, from Muslim extremists in the Middle East to liberal Protestants and sacramental worshippers in our own country. We have a world full of religious people who intend to serve God and somehow end up serving the other side.

Can Israel Survive Without America?

BY RYAN JONES / *Israel Today*

Can the Jewish State survive without the active involvement of its super-power ally America?

Former Israeli Consul General in the United States Yoram Ettinger: “U.S.-Israel relations ... and the peace process would actually benefit from the U.S. distancing itself from the

Arab-Israeli conflict. Recent U.S. disagreements with Israel over issues relating to the peace process have demonstrated the secondary role played by the Palestinian issue in determining the quality of U.S.-Israel relations, which have substantially expanded notwithstanding unbridgeable gaps over the peace process.

“As for the peace process, U.S. involvement has actually radicalized the position of the Arabs, since they must outflank the U.S. from the hawkish side, lest they be accused of treachery. Therefore, unintentionally, U.S. involvement has distanced us from a peace agreement.

“But this is nothing new. America’s track record in achieving peace has been consistently poor since 1948. The only two Arab-Israeli peace accords—with Egypt and Jordan—were initiated by Israel. In fact, the U.S. initially opposed [then Prime Minister Menachem] Begin’s 1977 peace initiative toward Egypt. Following a week of attempts to derail the Begin Initiative, [then U.S. President Jimmy] Carter finally jumped on the bandwagon. The 1994 peace accord with Jordan was initiated by the late Yitzhak Rabin, with Bill Clinton only being invited to participate in the signing ceremony.” ★



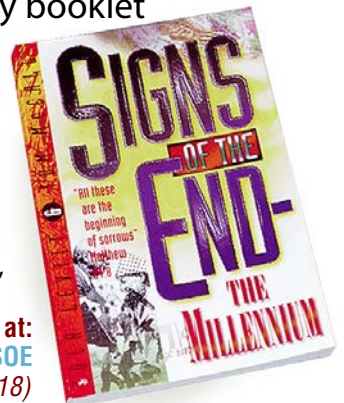
Three Books in One!

Signs of the End—The Millennium study booklet

Three books in one. First, the Messiah’s own Words warn about the conditions that will prevail in the world at the end of God’s plan. Are we now approaching the Great Tribulation and the return of our King?

Second, Zola and Dr. Thomas S. McCall offer a biblical perspective of world events. Third, their update titled *The Millennium* makes this a prophecy book of the past, present, and future.

Order book online at:
<http://store.levitt.com/RSOE>
 (or see page 18)



Ask The Chaplain

Dr. Todd D. Baker
Zola Levitt Ministries
Staff Theologian



Q. Does the Holy Bible forbid us from playing the lottery?

Some believe that it does and that playing the lottery is sinful, but cannot back up their opinion with biblical references. Can you please send me verses from the Bible that warn us about engaging in such action?

A. Many verses condemn the principle behind gambling, which is greed. Moreover, to indulge in such a vice is to put faith in the power of chance, that the numbers will hit right for you.

1 Timothy 6:9–10 ⁹But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Luke 12:15 And He said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

Here is a website list of Scriptures that prohibit gambling out of greed:

www.openbible.info/topics/gambling



WHY WE CELEBRATE Though we do not know the exact date of our Lord's earthly birth, we celebrate the historical fact that He had an earthly birth, and we call that celebration Christmas. I recommend that you see *Jesus of Nazareth*. From 1977 and starring Robert Powell, it beautifully portrays our Lord's birth, life, and sacrifice. God Almighty came in the flesh, allowed Himself to be confined in the small space of a womb, came forth to live with us, suffer for us, die for us, and then rise again so that He could bring us back to our loving Heavenly Father above. He came not in overpowering glory but in the humility of incarnation. It just boggles the mind! —Todd

Preview many of the movie scenes:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ufq7srkz1sc&list=RD02VfhzNtD0nuQ



The Messiah Brings Peace Between God and Men

BY TODD D. BAKER

In Haifa, I visited the Grand Canyon Mall. After an hour, I grew frustrated that no door had opened for witnessing the Gospel. I asked the Lord to either let me know I was in the wrong place or open a door. Within ten minutes I was witnessing to **Itay and Maggie**.



Itay is Jewish and Maggie is Catholic Arab. They both agreed that the key to peace in the Middle East is found only in the Prince of Peace. Of course, Itay is still looking for the Messiah's first visit, while Maggie anticipates His Second Coming. I pointed out to Itay and Maggie that God made them cousins, and loves Jews and Arabs equally; Messiah died to save all people from every nation. I told them that in order to know God, the Messiah, and His plan of salvation for us, we must read His Word in both the Jewish *Tanakh* (Old Testament) and *B'rit Hadashah* (New Testament). Itay and Maggie enthusiastically accepted Hebrew Bibles and Gospel tracts. There can be no true peace until Jews, Arabs, and all gentiles accept Yeshua's gift of salvation.

Later, while I was browsing in a men's store, **Evan**, a sales rep, commented that he liked my "Star of David and Cross" necklace. Wearing this simple adornment has led me to many discussions about the identity



of the Messiah.

Evan quickly dismissed the Bible as a collection of myths and ancient stories. Nevertheless, he listened to an argument that refutes that popular, secularist notion: The history of Israel (past, present, and future), including the end-of-days regathering of Jews back to the Land, was foretold thousands of years ago in the Scriptures, and is happening in our time!

Moreover, an observant student of Scripture cannot overlook the Messianic prophecies that were issued hundreds of years before Jesus appeared exactly as the prophets predicted. I went through a few of the Messianic prophecies with Evan.



The fulfilled prophecies of both Israel's history and the Messiah's first coming indicate a divine mind that knows events far in advance. These further verify that the Bible is the Word of God, true in every way. I offered Evan a copy of the complete Bible (Old and New Testaments) in Hebrew, and gently challenged him to read these amazing prophecies for himself. Once he makes the connection, he will see that the God of Israel—and His Son, Yeshua the Messiah—are real and want to bring him salvation. Evan accepted my gift of the Scriptures—a gift that God first gave through the inspired Jewish writers of His Word. ☆

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shaliach \
shah-LEE-ack'n,
pl shelichim \
shell-LEE-kim \:
one who is sent,
an emissary.

And how shall they preach, except they be sent? Rm. 10:15. Please visit:

www.levitt.com/announcements#messiah
for "The Promised Messiah"
printable tract.

Rm. 1:16



Shaliach Report

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45 Top Israeli Inventions (1–5)

BY ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN (r) / Israel21c.org



One of Israel's sources of pride is the enormous number of inventions and innovations that have taken root on its soil over 65 years—despite challenges of geography, size, and diplomacy. The ever-churning Israeli mind has brought us drip irrigation, the cherry tomato, the electric car grid, the Disk-on-Key, and much more.

The Bloomfield Science Museum in Jerusalem exhibited and demonstrated 45 indispensable Israeli inventions. Curator Varda Gur Ben-Sheetrit said that hundreds of ingenious inventions were considered for Inventions, Inc. She emphasized that many other Israeli inventions were deserving of being included. “We were, of course, constrained by space limitations, and also not every company we invited to exhibit responded,” she said.

We begin a series of the top 45 inventions highlighted at the exhibition, in no particular order.

1. **Given Imaging**, a world leader in developing and marketing patient-friendly solutions for visualizing and detecting disorders of the GI tract, is best known for its PillCam (aka capsule endoscopy), now the gold standard for intestinal visualization.

Visitors watch how the PillCam shows doctors what's going on in the gut.



2. **Netafim** is a worldwide pioneer in smart drip and micro-irrigation, starting from the idea of Israeli engineer Simcha Blass for releasing water in controlled, slow drips to provide precise crop irrigation. The kibbutz-owned company operates in 112 countries with 13 factories throughout the world.

3. **Ormat Technologies** designs, develops, builds, owns, manufactures, and operates geothermal power plants worldwide, supplying clean geothermal power in more than 20 countries.

4. **Pythagoras Solar** makes the world's first solar window that combines energy efficiency, power generation, and transparency. This transparent photovoltaic glass unit can be easily integrated into conventional building design and construction processes.



Pythagoras Solar makes the world's first solar window (above).

5. **Hazera Genetics**, a project of two professors at the Hebrew University Faculty of Agriculture, yielded the cherry tomato—a tasty salad fixing that ripens slowly and doesn't rot in shipment. ★

Photos courtesy of Bloomfield Science Museum



ZLM Bulletin Board

The Two-Way U.S.-Israel Street

According to the late **General Alexander Haig**, who was supreme commander of NATO and the U.S. secretary of state: "Israel is the largest American aircraft carrier which does not require a single U.S. aircraft or boot on board, cannot be sunk, and is deployed in a vital area for critical U.S. commercial and military interests. If there were not a Jewish state in the eastern flank of the Mediterranean, then the U.S. would have to deploy additional aircraft carriers and tens of thousands of U.S. soldiers to the Mediterranean. It would have cost the American taxpayers some \$15 billion annually, which is spared by a viable Jewish state." <http://bit.ly/19twWpM>



Free Item

Rewriting History

U.S. textbooks have recently contained egregious errors including the following Islam-centered views: **1)** Christianity was founded by a "Young Palestinian named Jesus," **2)** Ancient Jews contributed very little to arts and sciences, **3)** Muslims beat Columbus to the Americas, and **4)** Native American chiefs had Muslim names. With federal funding, the Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies hosted a seminar for K-12 teachers that suggested having students make prayer rugs, memorize the Five Pillars of Islam, and learn passages from the Koran. <http://bit.ly/16vVZED>

Downloadable Book for iTunes and iBooks

Women of Faith by Marion Gambino begins with Noah's wife and ends with the Book of Esther. Twenty-eight women tell their personal stories and conclude with God's divine plan for their lives. Its teaching flows with personal narratives and stunning visuals that enhance scriptural text. You'll savor beautiful pieces of artwork, video segments from *Zola Levitt Presents*, Messianic music, and maps of authentic Holy Land sites. A fine teaching tool that provides biblical knowledge dating from 2,000 B.C. up to 30 A.D. Downloadable for \$2.99 at

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/women-of-faith/id690438025>

Pamphlet of the Month

This month's pamphlet, **"Questions & Answers about Estate Planning,"** discusses embracing the future by taking time to prepare for it. After explaining what estate planning is and what occurs without an estate plan, the pamphlet suggests how to begin creating one. It also touches on ways to complement a will, such as trusts, joint ownership arrangements, powers of attorney, and beneficiary designations. Finally, it suggests ways to make charitable gifts within estate plans and enjoy immediate tax savings plus other benefits. To receive this free pamphlet, email us at staff@levitt.com or write to our P.O. Box.

"Come Home!"

Zola
Tours to
Israel



See page
36 for details



Hebrew Lesson

The Thirst for Life

By John J. Parsons



הוּי כָּל-צִמָּא לְכוּ לַמַּיִם

“All who are thirsty, come to the waters” – Isa. 55:1

הוּי	כָּל-	צִמָּא	לְ	כוּ	לַ	מַיִם
(1)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)
hoy	kol-	tza-mei	le-	khu	ma-	yim
Oh!	all who are thirsty	come	to the waters			

“For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water” (Jer. 2:13). Spiritually speaking, there are two basic sorts of breaking. One is to be broken by the inevitable sin and ruin of this world, and the other is to have “*lev-nishbar*,” a broken heart, before the LORD (2 Cor. 7:10). The former comes from the vain attempt to find life in the broken vessels of this world, whereas the latter comes from the realization of an incurable inner emptiness (Matt. 5:4). The soul finds eternal satisfaction desiring God’s righteousness, since God alone provides the vessel of “living water” we need to live (John 4:14; 7:38). We all must drink from God’s fountain of life, lest we suffer spiritual dehydration and death. All who are thirsty, come to the waters.

Are you haunted by an inner ache for love, joy, peace, and life? “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (Matt. 5:6). Such inner-poverty is a *disguised grace*, and the desire for healing reveals the Spirit’s invitation. Faith begins with the recognition of what we really want, since only then will we come to Yeshua for the “bread of life” and “living water.” All we need is found in Him, though we must reach out in faith to receive: “For without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists, and that He rewards those who seek Him” (Heb. 11:6). God *rewards* those who seek Him out; He *answers* the heart’s cry; He *responds* to all who hope in His love and salvation. Therefore, “ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened” (Matt. 7:7-8). We are not saved by faith in our own faith, but in the Reality and Power of the LORD Who does the miracle of raising the dead to new life.

Do you have the “gift of holy desperation”? That’s the very special blessing of needing God so viscerally that you otherwise will fall apart or even self-destruct apart from His ongoing intervention in your life. You pray because your very life depends on it; you believe because without God, you would be swallowed up in darkness. The fire on the altar was to be kept burning at all times (Lev. 6:12-13), which symbolizes the inner fire of the heart. How blessed it is to be full of the fire of this inner need, this relentless groaning, this constant hunger and thirst for God! **How fortunate we are to receive daily bread from the hand of our Heavenly Father.**



The Dark Prince: When the Devil Has His Day

Ten 30-minute TV programs on three DVDs

In this made-for-TV miniseries, Dr. Jeffrey Seif takes readers through Bible texts that speak about the devil. *The Dark Prince* gives individuals a behind-the-scenes look at Evil's workings, and its ultimate uprooting when Christ returns.

Satan's Rise and Demise in Genesis Genesis focuses on how Creation strayed and who is responsible. We discuss Satan's emergence and God's plan to crush him when Satan rises to rule the world at the dusk of human history.

Satan in Biblical History Biblical history's bookends—the paradise lost story in Genesis and the paradise restored story in Revelation—illustrate Satan's rise and demise. These lessons should encourage people to position themselves on the right side of the battle line.

The Ruler of This World Isaiah describes the "ruler of this world"—Satan—through an actual ruler of the ancient world; Matthew relates how Satan once offered Jesus the kingdoms of this world. The temptations that the Lord avoided are ones that we should avoid as well.

To Steal, Kill, and Destroy Daniel and Revelation describe unimaginable beasts that would wreak havoc upon a decaying world. We examine their application to end-time Bible prophecy.

Deceit, Betrayal, and Coming Miseries The devil's tools—deceit and betrayal—were first noted in the Garden of Eden. We look at Jesus' agony and betrayal—also in a garden—and the flurry of miseries that will be unleashed on this planet before the garden paradise is restored.

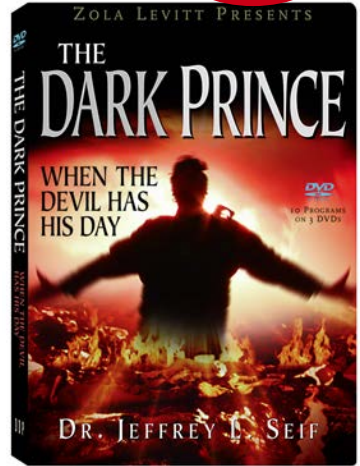
Armageddon and the Final Conflict We look at Job as evidence that Satan attacks individuals. In Revelation, Satan's assaults culminate in the Battle of Armageddon.

The Collapse of an Intoxicated World Revelation vividly relates how the world will lament the evil prince of this world, whose demise is brought about by the Lord's return.

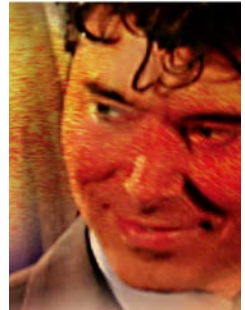
The Second Coming!

We look at the return of Jesus and the consequent restoration of paradise.

Plus two programs of prophecy conference highlights.



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(or see page 18)

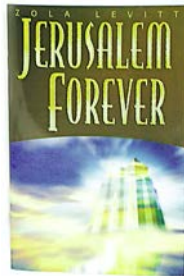


ZLM PRODUCT ORDER FORM

ORDER FORM

Zola's Classic Study Booklet Library

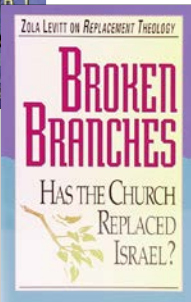
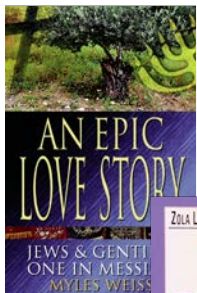
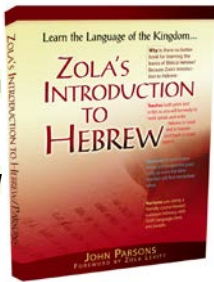
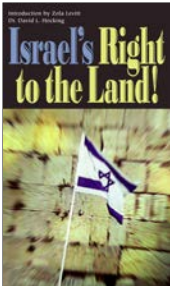
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▶	Zola's Introduction to Hebrew	\$39	___



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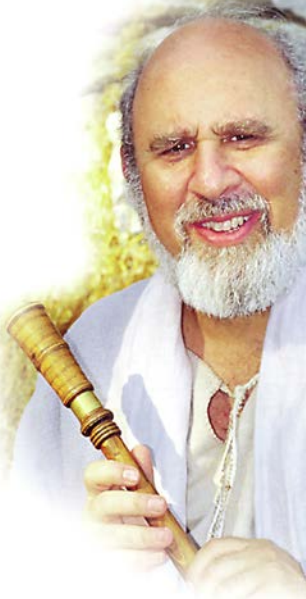
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▶	Mine Eyes Have Seen (Musical, 1-DVD)	\$19	___
___	The Miracle of Passover (2 programs, 1-DVD)	\$19	___
___	Revelation (6 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$39	___
___	Ruth (8 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$49	___
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___	New! Sons of Promise (8 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$49	___



NEW Item

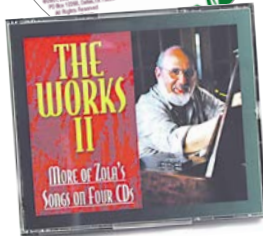
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Any amount that exceeds the listed price is considered a tax-deductible gift to our ministry.

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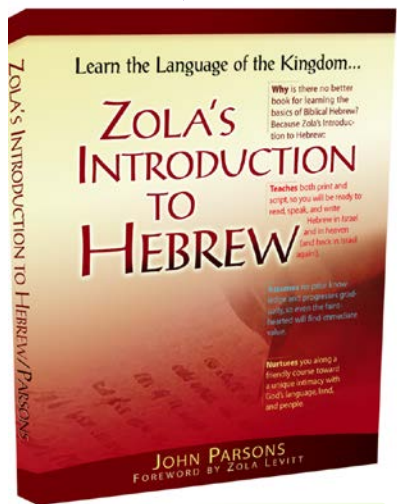
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Zola's Introduction to Hebrew study book

Why is there no better book for learning the basics of biblical Hebrew? Because Zola's ultimate Hebrew primer:

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Order study book online at:
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 (or see page 18)

Unlike most academic books on biblical Hebrew, this course provides a step-by-step approach that will enable you to understand the Hebraic mindset while learning the alphabet and vowel signs. Studying at your own pace, you will master the Hebrew alphabet, sound out actual Hebrew words, and begin connecting your studies with your heart by reading Hebrew prayers, blessings, and even passages from Scripture!

Have you ever:

- Wanted to study the Scriptures in the original Hebrew, but gave up the idea because it might require too much time?
- Desired to recite the ancient Hebrew prayers and blessings, but thought it would be too difficult?
- Wished you could decipher the Hebrew Text while doing Bible study or research?
- Thought to enjoy the blessing of a home *Shabbat* ceremony, but didn't know where to begin?
- Wondered what it means to have a "circumcised heart" and to be made a partaker of the Covenants?

If any of this describes you, then Zola's Introduction to Hebrew is for you!



To
Index



Maximizing Social Security

WISE AS A SERPENT / By Mark Levitt

The Wall Street Journal tested five online programs that determine the best time to claim Social Security. They sought a strategy for yielding the most benefits over a fictional couple's projected life spans. Several paragraphs below are excerpted from the full article that is posted at <http://wp.me/pieUD-1PB>.

To begin with, an individual who first claims Social Security at his full retirement age might have a choice of benefits: one based on his own earnings record, or a spousal benefit. If he selects the spousal benefit, he can switch at some future date to his own benefit, which will have grown larger thanks to his delay in collecting it. Steps like these can help maximize a claimant's lifetime payout.

While aarp.org/socialsecuritybenefits and troweprice.com/socialsecurity are free, fee-charging SocialSecuritySolutions.com and MaximizeMySocialSecurity.com allow for greater customization. SocialSecuritySolutions.com was the most user-friendly. Consequently, after assessing their free report, I bought their \$20 level of service and, with my wife and me in our mid-50s, found it both enlightening and sufficient. Readers closer to retirement might consider upgrading to the \$50 or \$125 level in order to add diagnostics and consultation with an expert.

SocialSecuritySolutions.com identifies the strategies that perform best over the greatest number of projected life expectancies. Their site also allows you to enter your salary data or an estimate of your Social Security benefits and override the program's defaults for such items as tax rates and inflation. With the \$20 service, users can rerun the numbers using different mortality assumptions. With the more expensive versions, you can also compare different claiming strategies.

As you may know, most retirees can choose early benefits at 62, full benefits at approximately 66 (depending on your year of birth), with benefits increasing each year until age 70.

To the question "Is deferring Social Security wise?," business columnist Scott Burns responds, "Your Social Security benefits increase by 8 percent a year for each year of deferral after your full retirement age. ... this is a good deal for single men, [and] it is an incredible deal for most married couples due to the joint life expectancy of couples and the fact that the survivor will also receive the higher benefits."

In a different article, Scott Burns explains that "Delaying Social Security benefits also works as a form of life insurance—providing a lifetime benefit to a spouse at death." Furthermore, "even if future benefits are reduced, deferral is a good deal compared with private alternatives."

P.S. Please see my Wise As A Serpent installment "Securing Social Security Benefits" at www.levitt.com/essays/wise-2010-02



INTERNET:

Managing your nest egg by computer





Letters to ZIM

Comments from www.levitt.com

From J.H. (YouTube): on *Holy Days Of Our Lord*—Zola is like the grandpop we all wish we had!

From J.M. (YouTube): on *Ruth: Your People Shall Be My People* teaching—Some of the BEST I've heard and seen on TV.

From C. (YouTube): commenting on *Acts: Then and Now*—I look forward to meeting Zola one day. He was very instrumental in helping me understand the Hebrew roots of Messiah Yeshua in my earlier days of salvation. Thanks for the teaching, Myles!

From Z.&Z.M. (YouTube): I love watching the videos! Thank you! Can you please put the *Daniel and the Last Days' Battle for Planet Earth* series on here? I would love to watch it! :) We will post it when it becomes HD. In the meantime, www.levitt.tv offers a comprehensive alternative to our ministry's YouTube postings. For example, you can see the complete *Daniel* TV series at www.levitt.tv/media/series/DDAN —Mark

From M.M.M. (YouTube): Whoever maintains this—FANTASTIC job! Terrific blend of older "classic" and newer shows... Zola, Jeff, and the new crew! Wonderful job on organizing the playlists. Thanks. It takes a lot of work to organize all that on YouTube. YouTube viewers, be aware that you can watch a larger selection of shows on our website: www.levitt.tv. —Webmaster

From R.B. (TX): It is a pain in the neck to give to you. I see that you succeeded. We appreciate your perseverance in supporting this ministry. You may find interesting the Tips from our webmaster regarding donation options below. Besides PayPal, a new system—Square Cash—offers a giving method for anyone with an email address and debit card. We've posted an article about Square Cash on our website at <http://wp.me/pieUD-1Pw>. You can also call 1-800-966-3377. Please let us know if one of these options eases the process of giving. —Mark

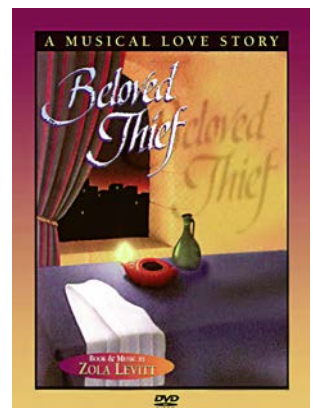
Beloved Thief Musical DVD and CD

The ancient Israeli wedding customs, as they parallel the great moment of the coming of the heavenly Bridegroom, are portrayed in exciting Israeli music and drama. This fully-staged musical with fine actors and singers in period costumes of first-century Israel is an enchanting and inspiring hour, worthy of many repeated viewings. (Romantic secret: the leading actor and actress met on the set and married in real life!)

Order DVD online at: <http://store.levitt.com/DBT>

Order CD online at: <http://store.levitt.com/BTD>

(or see pp. 18 & 19)



From M.H. (AZ): I finally found the delivery info. I almost gave up because I can barely see it. I suspect you lose orders because of this.

Tips from ZLM's Webmaster:

Our ministry's web store at www.levitt.com might work better for you with a different browser, such as Firefox, Safari, or Chrome.

Donations: Our website runs all credit card numbers—including donations—through our store to keep them secure. The store encrypts your sensitive information so it's never available for thieves to intercept. That extra safety-step may seem peculiar for entering a donation. The PayPal option is simpler. Please see www.levitt.com/donate for all donating options.

We appreciate your making constructive criticism as specific as possible. For example, you might suggest that we adapt an approach used at a particular website.

Least in the Kingdom?

Dear Dr. Baker,

I am a Believer of 30-plus years. I am now being told that it is wrong to celebrate Christmas, Thanksgiving, even birthdays; that I will be "least in the Kingdom" if I don't keep Torah. What happened to accepting Christ as Messiah being the only prerequisite to the Kingdom?

This really confuses me. Please, can you offer any help? I do know that confusion is NOT of God. —D.

Dear D.—

These people are legalists. There has been an ongoing debate in the Church about the pagan timing of Christmas. Rather than curse the darkness, these people need to use the one time of the year when many unbelievers think about the birth of the Messiah, and give a Gospel witness to them explaining why Jesus came into the world.

Thanksgiving was started by God-fearing and Bible-believing Puritans, so the notion that it is unbiblical is absurd—especially when the Word commands us to "give thanks unto the Lord" (Psalm 107:1). Faith in Christ is what justifies us before God, not keeping—or trying to keep—any law (Galatians 2:14-16). Merry Christmas! —Todd

The one Christmas light that never burns out...



“I will bless those who bless you”

Dear ZLM,

We read through the *Levitt Letter* as soon as it arrives and find it most interesting.

When an unexpected check came the other day, B. suggested we send this gift to your work. God bless you all. B. and E.H. (KS)

Shalom B. and E.H.—

Thanks for the supportive note AND the generous donation! You said “unexpected check.” Unexpected, yes; but now, let’s see how the Lord blesses you for blessing the children of Abraham (Genesis 12:3). I understand that reward is not your motivation, but I enjoy when God blesses those who are generous toward the Jewish people. May you continue to enjoy our work and succeed in yours! Gratefully —Myles and Katharine

By Any Other Name

Dear Myles,

Why don’t you want to be called “Rabbi”? It means “teacher.” Your programs, like Zola’s, bless me. —M.C.B. (VA)

Greetings M.C.B.—

I smiled at your inquiry about my reluctance to be called “Rabbi.” In my early days, Moishe Rosen, founder of Jews for Jesus, admonished about that. Perhaps he could see the future. I have not had the formal training to be acknowledged within Judaism as a rabbi. I do not want to offend my Jewish extended family with that appellation. However, as I say in my forthcoming marriage book, “Rabbis call me Pastor, pastors call me Rabbi, my patients call me Doc, and my family calls me *meshugganah* (Yiddish for “crazy”—I was the first in my family to accept Yeshua. Thankfully, my mom and sister did as well!)

My title is not as important as the message I carry through this ministry! Shalom —Myles

**A Long-Time Bible Student**

Myles and Katharine,

Thank you very much for your newsletters and the work you two are doing for our Lord and Zola Levitt Ministries. You two are spot on with your ministry and I truly thank you.

I “found” Zola Levitt several years ago while going through the TV channels. He fascinated me as a Christian; I soon became a supporter. I am 70 years old, accepted Jesus as my Savior as a very young man, and have been a student of the Bible for all my adult life. You two have made a positive and enriching impression. Please accept my heartfelt thanks, and may God bless. —J.H.

Shalom J.H.—

Thank you for your kind note. It encourages us to hear heartfelt appreciation, especially from those who have lived a good while and know the spiritual landscape well. Blessings —Myles and Katharine

Rabbi?



Apostate Church of Rome?

Dear Mr. Weiss,

It saddens me greatly to ask you to remove my name from your mailing list because I truly love Israel and the Jews. However, I absolutely cannot condone what I read now about your gross lack of discernment concerning the Roman Catholic Church. Being Irish, I know the RCC and its heresies and apostasy all too well. I have not just read about them; I have lived them.

I ask you, where is the “commonality” between biblical grace and the works required by the RCC? Where in precious Scripture do I see that I must venerate Mary as my advocate? Where do I find biblical reason for a Mass, their continuation of a sacrifice that was a finished act of Christ on the cross?

You have been placed in a position of authority. My heart breaks when I think how dangerous your beliefs are in these Last Days when the very ungodly organization you are tolerating seeks to swallow the true Church whole. (I refer to the organization, not the members—who are to be pitied.) —L.M.P. (ME)

Shalom and Whoa! L.M.P.—

You sound like the sons of thunder, ready to call down fire upon the entire Catholic world (Mark 3:17, Luke 9:54). Yes, there are serious errors within Catholicism. As a Jew, I am painfully aware of the scurrilous treatment of my people during the Inquisition. BUT, when a priest preaches to a gathering of business and Church leaders, “Mary cannot save you, saints cannot save you, only the blood of Jesus can save!,” I need to acknowledge his commitment to the true Gospel.

When I meet precious born-again Catholics—as we do on ZLM’s Holy Land tours—I need to celebrate The Savior we have in common. ALL religious institutions have imperfections and need cleansing. Isn’t that what His transforming work is about? We Believers are being changed into His likeness and image ... right? Blessings —Myles

P.S. You may be especially interested in Classic Zola on [page 11](#).

Dear L.M.P.—

There are Roman Catholics who know that they are saved by trusting in Jesus alone and not by the convoluted sacramental system of Roman Catholicism. They become Word-based followers of Yeshua, rejecting anything that contradicts the Word of God and the Gospel—including the many Catholic traditions that deny salvation is by faith in Christ alone, by God’s grace alone. —Todd ★



Israel Helping Make Nevada's Desert Bloom



SCIENCE: JSpace.com

Nevada is looking to Israeli expertise to help turn its desert green. Governor Brian Sandoval led a travel mission to Israel's Negev in October to learn more about how Israeli technology can help rejuvenate Nevada's lackluster farming industry with indoor farming.

"This is a segment we think has a lot of potential," said Bonnie Lind of the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development. Currently, Nevada has only 40 acres of indoor farming—a number Lind hopes will grow thanks to an Israel-Nevada collaboration aimed to share arid water conservation and farming techniques.

The lack of farms in Nevada costs the state an estimated \$4 billion annually in revenue from food that must be imported to feed Las Vegas tourists.

One of the main barriers to growing food is the lack of water in the region. "Water is so stressed in southern Nevada that literally every drop is being fought for," said Navin Twarakavi, a soil researcher at Nevada's Desert Research Institute.

Israeli farmers have long adapted to chronic water shortages in Israel's south with innovative technologies that reduce water use. "One of the prominent areas of mutual interest is water management, given the ongoing challenges posed both in Israel and Nevada by drought and potential water shortages," explained Uri Resnick, deputy consul general of Israel to the Southwest United States.

"Over the last year the Southern Nevada Water Authority has engaged with Israel's national water company, Mekorot, in intensive cooperation between joint working groups in a number of domains, focusing specifically on water quality and water security, waste water and recycled water, hydrology, and joint research and technological development," Resnick added.

Resnick also explained that making the Negev bloom has taken more than scientists and technology, but also a bit of faith.

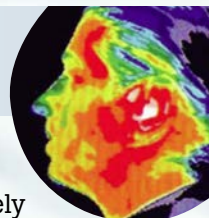
"Seeing tomatoes, melons, dates, flowers, cutting-edge irrigation systems, and state-of-the-art computer processors blossoming amidst these inauspicious surroundings

lends new meaning to the word faith," he explained. "It is the stuff that great states—and great partnerships—are made of."



New Therapy for Brain Cancer?

MEDICINE: BY ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN / Israel21c.org



An Israeli postdoctoral fellow has identified a genetic protein likely to be involved in the development and spread of glioblastoma, the most common and aggressive type of brain cancer in adults.

Each year, approximately 22,000 people in the United States are diagnosed with a potentially life-threatening brain tumor. Glioblastoma tumors are extremely difficult to remove surgically, and they press on or damage brain tissue as they grow. Chemotherapy and radiation do not help much; the median survival rate even with these interventions is just over a year, and only about 10 percent of glioblastoma patients live five years or longer after diagnosis.

Supported by the Israel Cancer Research Fund (ICRF), biochemist Regina Golan-Gerstl identified a protein—splicing factor hnRNP A2/B1—that is highly “overexpressed” in tumor samples from patients with various types of brain cancer when compared with samples taken from healthy brains. The finding was reported in the journal *Cancer Research*, published by the American Association for Cancer Research.



Working in the laboratory of **Rotem Karni** (*!)* at the Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada of the Hebrew University-Hadassah Medical School, **Golan-Gerstl** (*below*) and her team injected lab mice with glioblastoma cells. Mice in the control group rapidly developed large tumors. In the second group of mice, the scientists used a biologic “knockdown” technique to reduce hnRNP A2/B1 before injection. Those mice developed only small tumors or no tumors at all.

“These results suggest that hnRNP A2/B1 is a driving oncogene—a gene that causes normal cells to become cancerous—on its own and probably directly contributes to glioblastoma development,” said Karni.

“Down-regulating hnRNP A2/B1 levels in glioblastoma cells should be considered as a new strategy for glioblastoma therapy,” he said.



Assad Using Enemy Jihadis

BY NICHOLAS BLANFORD (r) CSMonitor.com



Syria's embattled President Bashar al-Assad has long presented his regime as a beacon of stability against rebels he insists are foreign-funded al-Qaeda jihadis bent on turning the country into a strict Islamist state.

Assad's claim is becoming a self-serving reality. A combination of regime resilience bolstered by support from Russia and Iran, international hesitance to provide military assistance to Assad's opponents, and opposition disarray is pushing frustrated rebel groups toward the Salafist jihadi end of the spectrum, raising alarm in the West that Syria is becoming a haven for al-Qaeda.

In September, the Assad regime braced for U.S.-led airstrikes in response to its alleged chemical weapons attack in August. Rebel groups planned to use the airstrikes to gain military advantage on the ground. But a last-minute deal between the U.S. and Russia forestalled the air campaign. For opposition rebels frustrated by limited military and financial assistance from the West, the postponement of the airstrikes was the final straw.

"There is a lot of hatred for America now. Americans are traitors and we don't trust them," says a Lebanese who has fought with Syrian rebel factions for two years. Frustration with the West is not the only factor strengthening the Salafist component of the armed opposition. Rebel brigades of the FSA (Free Syrian Army) that had followed the more accommodating Muslim Brotherhood are shifting toward Salafism due to the lure of funds—particularly from Saudi Arabia, whose support has a price.

The Assad regime, nominally secular, has a long history of tacit cooperation with militant Islamist groups that on paper it should regard as mortal enemies: Syria served as an entry point into Iraq for Islamists to join the insurgency after 2003; Assad released from prison in 2006 a Palestinian Islamist who went to Lebanon and founded an al-Qaeda-inspired group with Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian recruits that became a full-blown jihadist group.

[\(continued next page\)](#)

The Syrian civil war...





Assad continued

"The [regime] strategy is to let al-Qaeda take over the insurgency," a European ambassador says. "The hardliners around Assad believe that the plan is working beautifully and that they just need to stay the course. 'Soon the rebels will all be al-Qaeda and the West will come back to us again.'"

A few FSA rebels are reportedly receiving military training at the hands of the CIA and U.S. Special Forces in Jordan. But to the frustration of FSA commanders, the U.S. is micromanaging operations by arming rebels to carry out missions that target al-Qaeda-affiliated groups rather than forces loyal to the Assad regime.

Encouraging Islamist groups carries the risk of backfiring on the regime as much as it complicates the West's desire to remove Assad. Salafist groups are some of the most effective at fighting the Assad regime.

If the West wishes to check the rebel drift toward jihadis, it must seek ways of winning back factions with funding, arms, and training—commodities that the West has shown little inclination to provide.

"I am beginning to think that the regime's hardliners could win," says the ambassador. "They are turning the opposition into al-Qaeda and we are all playing into it. The main fight now is against al-Qaeda, not against the regime." ★

President Bashar al-Assad strategizes with his military



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Israel renders Gaza tunnel unusable



Gaza Terror Tunnel Built with Israeli Cement

By Shalom Bear / JewishPress.com

The Gaza terror tunnel uncovered in October was built with cement supplied by Israel. Because in the past Hamas was using cement and steel to build reinforced bunkers and terror tunnels, Israel restricted in 2007 the flow of these materials to humanitarian projects generally overseen or requested by international humanitarian organizations, often using European Union funding.

Following EU, UN, and international pressure (as well as official requests by the Palestinian Authority), Israel eased some of the restrictions on cement and iron imports. But Hamas has apparently been diverting the cement and steel to build their latest mile-and-a-half-long terror tunnel that reached into Kibbutz Ein HaShlosha in western Negev.

An anonymous security source said that Raed al Atar, the head of Hamas's military wing, was responsible for this particular terror tunnel. Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon temporarily halted the transfer of building materials into Gaza. Whether the international organizations knew about the diversion should be investigated.

Saudi Divorces His Wife Because She Kissed Horse

Emirates247.com

A jealous Saudi man divorced his wife after discovering she had kissed a horse when he saw her picture with the filly, which she had posted on social networks.

"After he saw the picture showing his wife kissing a horse at a farm near Riyadh, the man divorced her," *Sada* newspaper said.

"The wife said she is not sorry for what she did and was not upset by splitting from a man who cannot distinguish between humans and animals. She said she is very proud about that picture as it expresses her love for Arabian horses."



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Israel's Maronite Christian Allies

By Aviel Schneider / *Israel Today*

"The Jewish State is the only country in the Middle East where Christians are respected and able to live in peace," says Aramean Shahdi Halul, 38, a former IDF paratroop officer from Galilee. "We are the only Christians in the Middle East living in security and freedom. So it is our duty to serve in the army and defend our land. I am doing it with pride and love, with my Jewish comrades." Today, 20 percent of 18-year-old Arab Christians join the army even though the State of Israel does not make any effort to recruit them.

According to his Israeli ID card, Halul is an Arab, but he denies it. "I am an Aramean and I want to be recognized as such by the State of Israel. We are Israeli citizens, our religion is Christianity, we belong to the Maronite denomination, and our nationality is Aramean."

The Maronites emerged in the 7th century as an offshoot of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Antioch, and the community numbers more than 10,000 in Israel.

Halul speaks Aramaic with his sons Aram and Yaakov. "Jesus spoke Aramaic too," he says proudly. "We not only live in the Land of Jesus, we also speak His language. What do we have in common with Muslims? Nothing!"

"Arab Christians in Israel see their fellow Christian brothers and sisters in Syria and Egypt being persecuted and killed," he continues. "Most realize they are living in safety with the Jews."

"Churches are burning in countries surrounding Israel, but Palestinian

[Christians] take the side of the Muslims," added Halul. "The Church is afraid of the Muslims. It thinks it can appease them as long as it criticizes Israel. But Muslims hate Jews and Christians! In their eyes we are infidels and enemies!" He added that in Bethlehem and Ramallah, Christians either pack up and move abroad in frustration or stay and join the Palestinian struggle against Israel.

"Arab Christians should automatically take the side of the Jewish state because the Bible connects Jews and Christians," asserts Halul. "Instead, [Palestinian] church leaders take the side of the Muslims, thereby supporting the Islamic fight against Israel. That's insane."

In the wake of the "Arab Spring" and the increasing persecution of their brethren, a growing number of Arab Christians are recognizing that their own fate is bound up with Israel's. "If Israel was destroyed, it would also mean the end of the Christian community in the Land," Halul says. "Christians can no longer sit on the fence; they have to support the Jews for the sake of their own survival."



Gezer, Israel's Lost City

ARCHAEOLOGY: By Aviva and Shmuel Bar-Am
TimesOfIsrael.com



After the Exodus from Egypt, the Israelites returned to the land promised to them by Almighty God. But although they took over many fortified Canaanite cities in the legendary land of milk and honey, several remained out of reach.

One of these was Gezer, located on the edge of coastal plains in an area allotted to the tribe of Ephraim. During Solomon's reign, Gezer became part of the Israelite empire when an Egyptian Pharaoh devastated the city, then offered it to Solomon as a dowry when the king married his daughter.

Archaeologists find Tel Gezer a fascinating site, featuring monumental columns from one of the largest Canaanite temples in Israel and an imposing Solomonic gate identical in almost every detail to the two gates at Hazor and Megiddo. Indeed, an energetic King Solomon traveled the country checking on all of his extravagant projects, so visitors who cross the threshold no doubt walk on stones trodden by Israel's wisest monarch.

Gezer was situated on an extremely strategic spot, above a coastal byway that serviced traders, warriors, and travelers for thousands of years. Though now desolate, over three thousand years ago Gezer was a major city well-known to the Egyptians and ruled by people who often corresponded with the Pharaohs. There were strong commercial connections between Gezer and Egypt and pictures of the ancient city have been found in both Egypt and Mesopotamia (Iraq).

Unlike some biblical historical sites whose identities are uncertain, no one doubts that this tel is the biblical city of Gezer. A number of stelae (standing stones) still in a row proclaim now as then the borders of Gezer in both Hebrew and Greek.

One of the most significant finds in Israel was made on this tel. Known as the Gezer Calendar, it is the earliest known specimen of Hebrew writing. The calendar lists the eight periods of the agricultural year. Contemporary Israeli farmers find this calendar particularly interesting because it proves that their ancestors reaped the same harvests as they reap, and processed the same wine. ★



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Gezer's stelae



(photo credit: Shmuel Bar-Am)

Israel's "Attack Zoo"

ElderOfZiyon.blogspot.com

Gulf News reported in October:

A small mammal at risk of extinction might seem an unusual source of stress for humans, but an influx of rock hyrax on Palestinian farms near the Israeli segregation wall is creating an added burden for farmers in the area.

The uncharacteristically wide and dense spread of this omnivorous animal has caused farmers heavy losses as the animals eat all available vegetation.

Palestinian farmers have alleged that Israeli colonists have released a large number of rock hyrax behind the Israeli wall with the aim of harming Palestinian land. The affected farmers claim it has taken them great efforts to learn the animal's name and that they've been unable to handle the influx.

Hassan Zaid, a Palestinian farmer, said the animal, locally named "Al Wabar Al Sakhri," eats both green and dried grass and trees, leaving the farmers with serious losses. Zaid said that the animal lives between rocks and has taken to using holes in the Palestinian side of the Israeli wall as shelter.

That last part may be true; rock hyraxes like to live in small holes or cracks of walls and cliffs. It even says so in Proverbs 30:26: *The rock badgers are a feeble folk, yet they make their homes in the crags.* [KJV calls rock badgers "conies."]

Gulf News didn't bother to see if the animal (which does not appear to be endangered) is bothering Jews as well. Not surprisingly, it is. The BBC reported in 2011:

Israel's hyraxes are cute, furry, and have a characteristic chirping song. But they are becoming a serious pest. The animals, also known as rock rabbits, have moved into residential areas of Galilee and have been destroying people's gardens.

Scientists have now discovered why: hyraxes love to make their homes in the debris from building sites. ★

Note below what Dictionary.com says the rock hyrax was called in Arabic in the 18th century (and well beyond). The irony is too delicious.

dam-an [dam-uh n]
noun

1. a hyrax, *Procavia syriaca*, of Syria, Palestine, etc.: the cony of the Bible.
2. any hyrax.

Origin:

1730–40; < Arabic *daman* (*Isra'il*), literally, lamb (of Israel)



Israel's Secret Doctors

BY ROBERT FULFORD (r) / NationalPost.com



To help refugees from the Syrian war, Israeli doctors and aid workers must do their work furtively. When they go into refugee camps in Jordan, they change clothes so that they can fade into the background. They must be smuggled in and out. Above all, they don't want anyone to know the names of their patients. They move "under the radar," in the words of a clandestine organization in this field. When they treat Syrians in Israeli hospitals, they make sure no visiting journalist learns details that will identify the patients to authorities back in Syria.

Usually, Israel announces when it contributes to emergency relief. The case of Syrian aid is different. Syria does not recognize Israel and forbids its citizens to go there. Israeli doctors are not welcome in Jordan, where their work has been denounced as a violation of Jordanian sovereignty. And Israel is anxious not to be involved in the Syrian civil war. It does nothing, officially, that could make it look like the medical corps of the rebellion.

For Syrians, the possibility that their own government will punish them adds to the horror of their situation. Over the past summer, scores of patients were covertly brought across the border from Syria to be treated by Israeli doctors.

For patients' friends or relatives, Israel becomes a last hope when no Syrian medical help is available. Masad Barhoum, clinical director at Western Galilee Medical Center, recently told an NBC reporter that many patients arrive unconscious. "When they wake up and find that they are in Israel, they are anxious and afraid."

A Syrian woman in the hospital said she came to Israel because her daughter was hit by a sniper's bullet. "The hospital in my town was destroyed. They saved her here, but now I am afraid to go back. We will be marked."

An Israeli organization, iL4Syrians, operates anonymously in Syria and in other desperate countries. Providing food and medical supplies for those who need them, it relies on secrecy to protect both its local contacts and its own practitioners. Its website identifies no directors or staff but carries a defiant slogan: "Nobody asks permission to kill. We do not ask permission to save lives."



Israeli hospital

They explain that "We focus on countries that lack diplomatic relations with Israel, transcending differences." They argue that a respect for the sanctity of human life expresses Jewish tradition and culture. As they see it, this applies to Israel's toughest and cruelest enemies as well as anyone else.

Since all of these efforts are unofficial and unrecorded, no one can say how many Israelis are involved. Tom Gross, a British-born commentator on the Middle East, has a 15-minute film showing an aid group visiting refugees. The refugees don't expect them to arrive and are surprised when they learn that their benefactors are Israelis. That makes some of them nervous, but **others say in Arabic, "May God bless Israel."**

The irony of this heart-rending paradox is inescapable. Demonized doctors from a despised nation work in secret, at their own peril, to save the lives of those who are taught to hate them. Only God could orchestrate this story! —Myles ★



Jewish Humor, etc.

ATHEIST HOLY DAY

An atheist hired an attorney to bring a discrimination case against Christians and Jews and the observances of their holy days. The argument: It was unfair that atheists had no such recognized days.

The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel declaring, "Case dismissed!"

The lawyer immediately objected to the ruling saying, "Your Honor, how can you possibly dismiss this case? The Christians have Christmas and Easter. The Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur, and Hanukkah. Yet my client and all other atheists have no such holidays."

The judge leaned forward in his chair. "But they do. Your client, Counselor, is woefully ignorant."

"Your Honor, we are unaware of any special observance or holiday for atheists."

The judge said, "The calendar says that April 1st is April Fool's Day. Psalm 14:1 states, 'The fool says in his heart, there is no God.' Thus, it is the opinion of this court, that, if your client says there is no God, then he is a fool. Therefore, April 1st is his day. Court is adjourned."

You gotta love a judge who knows his Scripture! ★



A cheerful heart is good medicine — Proverbs 17:22



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Consult www.tct.tv
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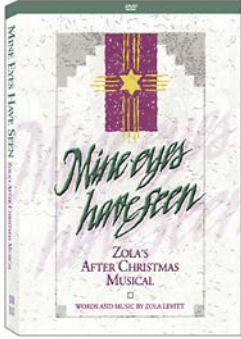
Our entire TV Airing Schedule is posted at
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