

Levitt Letter



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

Anti-Semitism Now Acceptable? p. 8

The Arguments Over Jerusalem part 1

By Paul Gherkin / FirstOneThrough.wordpress.com

Jerusalem has long been considered the thorniest issue in the Israeli-Palestinian Question. In 1947, the United Nations proposed partitioning the land into two states, placing Greater Jerusalem and Greater Bethlehem into an international zone called the "Holy Basin" (see page 2). This Holy Basin would be part of neither Israel nor Palestine, to remove the sensitive region from the conflict.

However, the UN's plan was rejected by the Arab League states, whose armies of Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, and Iraq launched a war to destroy Israel in May 1948. At war's end, the Holy Basin was divided, with the western half of Greater Jerusalem and Hebrew University (established in 1925) falling under Israeli control, and Greater Bethlehem and the eastern half of Jerusalem falling under Arab control.

[\(continued p.2\)](#)

Dry Bones HISTORY

FRENCH MAP FROM THE YEAR 1791 SHOWING JUDEA AND SAMARIA, A CENTURY AND A HALF BEFORE 1948, WHEN THEY WERE OCCUPIED BY TRANSJORDAN ...

... AND RENAMED "THE WEST BANK".

www.drybones.com



The Arguments Over Jerusalem: pt 1 *continued from cover*

In a two-state resolution, the Israelis propose splitting the Holy Basin whereby they control all of Greater Jerusalem and the Palestinians Greater Bethlehem; the Palestinians seek to have all of Greater Bethlehem and the eastern half of Jerusalem as their capital, giving Israel the western half of Jerusalem. Which side has the better claim?

Jerusalem holds many holy sites, including The Temple Mount (sacred to Jews and Moslems) and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (sacred to Christians). While Christianity and Islam consider specific locations sacred, only Judaism considers the city as a whole sacred.

Advantage Israel

Care and access of each religion's holy places:

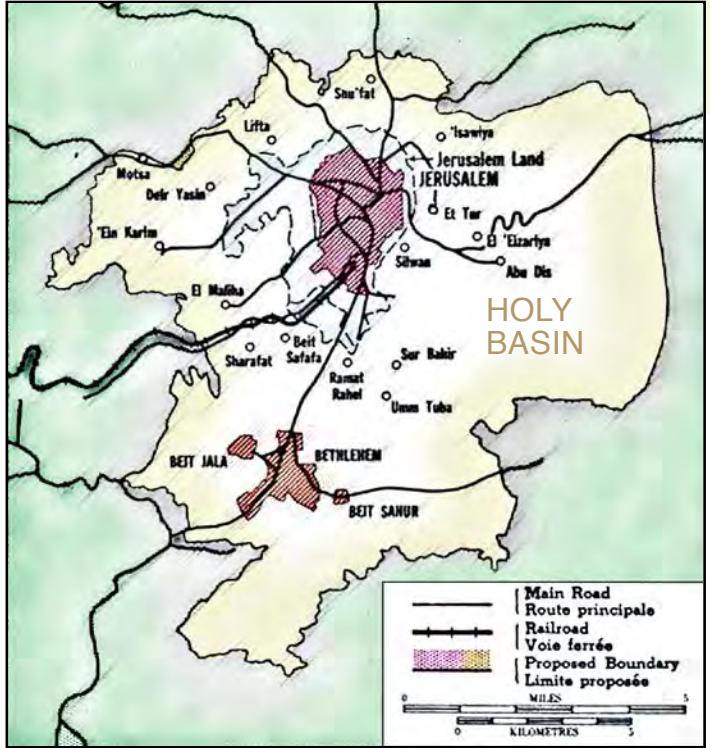
In this, the divide between the Palestinian Arabs and Israel is stark. During their brief period of control (1949–1967), the Jordanian and Palestinian Arabs evicted all of the Jews from Jerusalem and forbade their reentry, even during religious holy days. Unsupervised digging on the Temple Mount destroyed important and sacred sites.

Under Israeli control since 1967, all of the holy places remain open to all religions. Israel makes extensive efforts to maintain all the religious sites under its control and performs archaeological digs mindful of scientific rigor while balancing religious sensitivities. **Advantage Israel**

The **history** of Jewish people in Jerusalem extends back 3,700 years when Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice. Jerusalem became the unified capital of the Jews under King David 3,000 years ago and site of two Temples (Solomon's 954 BC–587 BC and Herod's 516 BC–70 AD). Jews continued to live there and move there over the centuries except when they were banned during the Crusades (early 1200s) and under Arab rule (1949–1967). Arabs came to the region and city of Jerusalem as part of the Moslem invasion in the seventh century, roughly 2,300 years after Jews. **Advantage Israel**

Only one people ever made and considered Jerusalem to be its **capital**: the Jews. During the times when Moslems ruled the region, Jerusalem was never the central seat of government. **Advantage Israel**

Next month we look at the historical treatment of the area's citizens in order to predict their future. ★



Back to Cover

To Index

Levitt CONTENTS Letter

Myles To Go [4](#)

Katharine Weiss [6](#)

Eitan Shishkoff
Our Man in Haifa [7](#)

New Anti-Semitism [8](#)
BDS Movement Defied [9](#)

Classic Zola [10](#)

Ask the Chaplain [12](#)

TJF Report [13](#)

A Note from Mark [14](#)
ZLM Bulletin Board [15](#)



Parsons: Hebrew Lesson [16](#)



Letters to ZLM [22](#)
Jerusalem in Pictures [25](#)



Science [26](#)
Fresher Veggies



Medicine [27](#)
Stopping Cancer



Middle East
Out of Water [28](#)



Select Briefs [21, 30](#)

Archaeology [32](#)



Palestinian Police [34](#)
Jewish Humor [35](#)



“The veil deliberately marks women as private and restricted property, nonpersons. The veil sets women apart from men and apart from the world; it restrains them, confines them, grooms them for docility. A mind can be cramped just as a body may be, and a Muslim veil blinkers both your vision and your destiny. It is the mark of a kind of apartheid, not the domination of a race but of a sex.”

Ayaan Hirsi Ali

And the Feminists Are ... Where?

Myles To Go
By Myles Weiss
ZLP Host



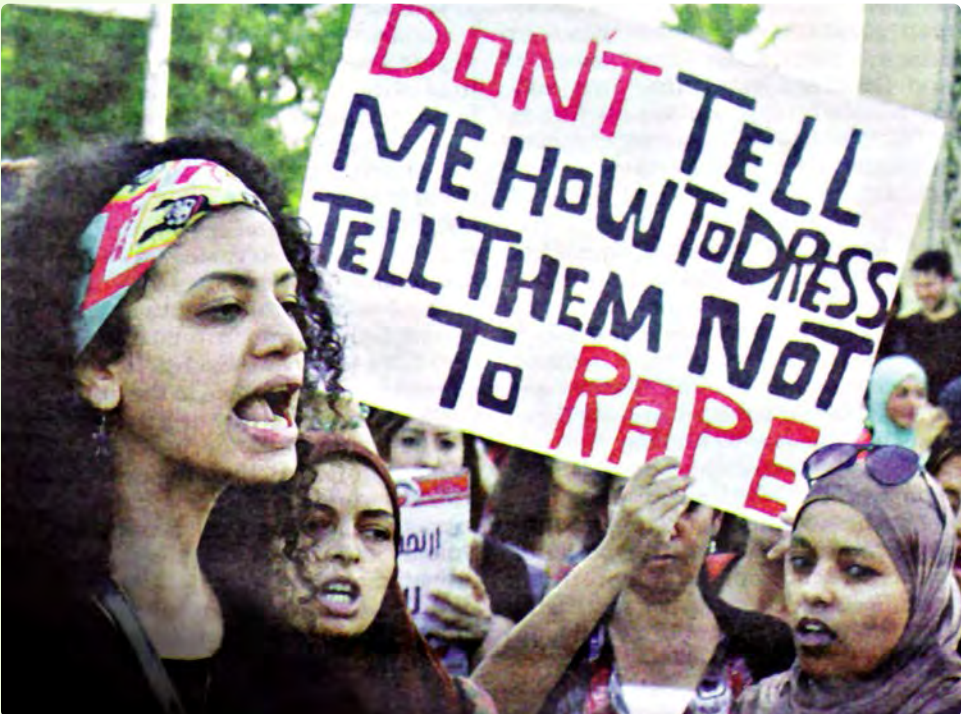
The loud and seemingly brave (but often abrasive) feminists of my Woodstock generation stand eerily silent in the face of Moslem aggression in America and around the world. While women are forced into a chattel status in Moslem-dominated societies, we hear little from those who champion the comfy, suburban challenges to women here at home. Kidnapping, rape, child molestation, and genital mutilation seem not to move our strong sisters. The bra-burners of the past became the face-turners of the present, apparently ignoring the practices of Islam.

Thank the Lord there are some genuine heroines among us. **Brigitte Gabriel**, author of *Because They Hate: A Survivor of Islamic Terror Warns America* and *They Must Be Stopped: Why We Must Defeat Radical Islam and How We Can Do It*, knows Moslem aggression well. She grew up a nominal Christian in Lebanon, taught to hate the Jewish people. After Moslems in Lebanon wounded her mother during a jihad against Christians, she found herself in an Israeli hospital:



"I was amazed that the Israelis were providing medical treatment to Palestinian and Moslem gunmen. ... These Palestinians and Moslems were sworn, mortal enemies, dedicated to the destruction of Israel and the slaughter of Jews. Yet, Israeli doctors and nurses worked feverishly to save their lives. Each patient was treated solely according to the nature of his or her injury. The doctor treated my mother before he treated an Israeli soldier lying next to her because her injury was more severe than his. The Israelis did not see religion, political affiliation, or nationality. They saw only people in need, and they helped." (Gabriel in an interview with *The Jerusalem Post*).

(continued next page)



Where?... continued



Now, ISIS appears to have declared war on conservative blogger **Pamela Geller**, another heroine of our era. Geller helped plan a



“Prophet Muhammad cartoon contest” in May that was attacked by two gunmen in Garland, Texas. ISIS claimed responsibility for the shooting, marking the first time the terror group called an attack by homegrown terrorists on American soil one of its own.

Cartoon contest organizers, including Geller, knew they’d be targeted but refused to back down. Following the vigilant protection by the Garland police officer who killed the two terrorists, ISIS claimed to have “71 trained soldiers in 15 different states ready at our word to attack.”

ISIS did come to Texas, but they could not take it.
—Erick Erickson

Undaunted, Geller plans to host more conferences exposing Islam’s Koranic plan to conquer the world.



Perhaps quieter, yet no less important a heroine, **Ann Corcoran** of Refugee Resettlement Watch writes and offers short videos detailing the insidious insertion of Moslem refugees into American and European communities. This Islamic migration has been going on for at least seven years under the auspices of the United Nations with the cooperation of the American government!

Western nations are importing a population of marginalized Moslems into areas that cannot sustain them economically, an activity that can turn the U.S. into a European-style morass of Moslem ghettos and eventual collapse.

Thanks, ladies, for your sharp-eyed watch over this “peaceful religion.” ★



Notable Quotable

Re: Moderate Moslem in America

“My son—a gentle, caring, smart, and nonviolent person—was a Muslim and said his prayers.”
—Azam Soofi, whose son **Nadir** was one of the two slain attackers of the Garland, Texas cartoon contest. (The Dallas Morning News)



“We have 71 trained soldiers in 15 different states ready at our word to attack any target we desire.”
—Social media post signed **Abu Ibrahim Al Ameriki**, an Islamic State (ISIS) leader, lauding the Garland attack and warning of more. (Voice of America)



Jews and Druze Beat the Blues

Katharine Weiss
ZLP co-host



By a young Messianic student in Haifa (as told to Katharine Weiss)

Sitting in the Aroma Café waiting for the director of the University of Haifa's International School to arrive, I have about half an hour until my afternoon lecture begins. Through the door comes a man on a mission. I assume he is the Director. I raise my hand to get his attention. He immediately sees me, raises his hand in acknowledgment, and walks over to me. I stand and introduce myself; we shake hands and casually begin conversation.

Me: Are you the director of the International School here at Haifa?

Man: No, I am a lieutenant colonel in the Israel Defense Forces [IDF]. Who are you?

Me: I am studying Hebrew at Ulpan Etzion here in Haifa, looking into the Master's program in National Security at the University of Haifa.

Man: Why are you here?

Me: I am Jewish and I want to make *aliyah* (immigration to Israel). I want to learn the language and serve in the IDF.

Man: Welcome to your home. I have served in the army for the last 25 years. As a Druze, it is different for me because I am not Jewish. But I know one thing and that is that Israel must remain a Jewish state. I will serve every day of my life to protect that cause. *[The Druze are a small, mystical offshoot of Islam. They believe in faithfully serving the nation into which they are born.]*

Me: Wow! Thank you for all that you do.

Man: If you want to take my phone number, we can set up a time for you to visit in our home. You may stay for as many nights as you like, and we'll talk all about your future in the army.

As we exchange contact information, I feel an overwhelming sense of peace and reassurance that no matter which direction in life I choose, as long as I live each day fully surrendered to the Lord, He will provide for all my needs.



Benjamin Netanyahu with Druze leader, Sheik Muwaffak Tarif

What were the chances that I would flag down a lieutenant colonel in the IDF and strike an immediate friendship? He was heartened by my intent to move from the U.S. to Israel to take a stand for the Jewish homeland; I was inspired by his incredible hospitality, warmth, and dedication to Israel. Being a Druze makes him a minority in the Jewish state. Druze have unique beliefs, traditions, values, and culture. However, his and my differences paled next to our shared understanding, zeal, and dedication that Israel must remain under Jewish sovereignty. ☆

An Israeli Civil Rights Movement

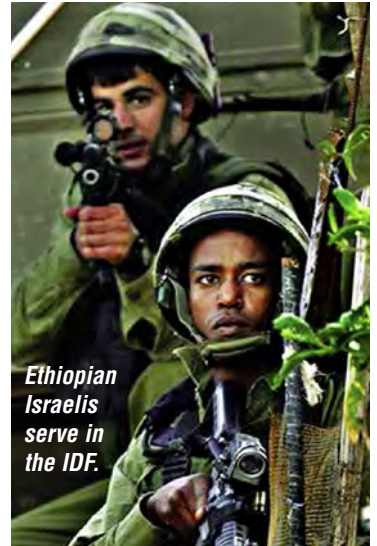
OUR MAN IN HAIFA By Eitan Shishkoff (r) with wife Connie



As a participant in America's civil rights movement in the 1960s, I remember the injustices suffered by the African-American community. Its members longed for one simple reality—genuine equality. This longing led men and women whose people had experienced centuries of degradation by the white "civilization" to take to the streets and the courts and eventually alter the course of history. Now, a similar scenario—yet more perplexing—is unfolding in Israel. Once again, those treated prejudicially are African-rooted. And they are just as Jewish as their light-skinned Jewish-Israeli neighbors. In May, years of frustration and disappointment spilled over in a series of demonstrations, one of which turned violent.

The trigger for these protests: the beating of an IDF soldier in uniform, a soldier of Ethiopian descent. Camera footage of the incident revealed no justification for police violence against a young man serving in Israel's military. In a later interview, however, the officer explained that the area was cordoned off due to a bomb threat. He agreed that there is discrimination against Ethiopians but insisted that his job is to protect all citizens, no matter their color. The viral video induced many Ethiopian-Israelis to vent pent-up frustration. Those who took to the streets came from families airlifted from Ethiopia and Sudan in the dramatic Operations Moses (8,000 immigrants in 1984) and Solomon (14,300 in 1991). In the 31 years since Israel rejoiced at the bold rescue and tearful arrival of Ethiopian Jews, the immigrant community has grown to 135,500, of whom 49,600 were born in Israel.

An Ethiopian-Israeli member of our congregation is a healthcare professional and a veteran of the Israeli army. He and his wife are raising their daughters as Israelis in every way. When I asked him about his experience with racism in this country, he poured out his heart, relating the daily discrimination he and other Israelis of Ethiopian origin endure. "I watch non-Ethiopians relate with my white colleagues with smiles and laughter. Then they turn to me and act as if I don't exist; I'm less than a full person in their eyes. Do you know that we are only 2% of the nation's population, yet our youth make up 40% of young Israelis in jail? These youths grew up in Israel and would be complete strangers in Ethiopia, yet they are not accepted by many other Israelis. I am not endorsing violence in any way. But the pain and frustration being expressed by the protesters does not surprise me."



Ethiopian Israelis serve in the IDF.

This dedicated disciple of Yeshua, who deeply reflects the character of Messiah, agreed with me that the Body of the Lord in the Land must take the initiative to better understand the plight of Israeli citizens with Jewish-Ethiopian roots. It's time to live in solidarity with all Israeli Believers, regardless of racial, national, or cultural background. ★

Amid international accusations of apartheid, Israel immediately responded to these shameful events and reopened its dialogue regarding race relations. Eitan's grief over prejudice is the proper response for all Believers. —Myles

New Wording Makes Anti-Semitism Acceptable

BY DOVID EFUNE (r) Algemeiner.com



French philosopher and public intellectual **Bernard-Henri Lévy** (left) observed recently that an emerging new language for anti-Semitism is once again making the world's oldest hatred acceptable. "Anti-Semitism in Europe is taking on a new form, is adopting a new wording which makes it again acceptable... by a growing number of French and European people."

Explaining his thesis, the philosopher noted, "One of the questions ... of anti-Semitism ... is to inhabit the wording that makes the hatred possible and legitimizes the hatred. It gives the feeling to the one who hates that he hates for good reasons." Jews have at times been despised for "killing Christ." At other times, Jews were considered to be a corrupting race.

Today's emerging anti-Jewish bigotry rests on three false arguments:

- Anti-Zionism: Jews deserve to be hated because they are faithful to an illegitimate state.
- Holocaust denial: Jews deserve our distrust, our hate because they traffic what should be the most sacred part of themselves.
- Jews use the Holocaust to belittle the suffering of others, particularly the Palestinians.

The widespread adoption of these three smears, Lévy warned, "could spark the atomic bomb of anti-Semitism."

Describing the overall climate for Jews in France, which has seen some of the most deadly and brutal attacks in the past decade, the philosopher warned, "The situation is critical, of course. For the first time since long [ago], ... Paris and [all of] France is a place that Jews are killed because they are Jews.

"I know a lot of French Jews who cannot move from their home to a restaurant without being escorted by two or three or four brave policemen because they are under threat of this new criminal ideology of our time, which is world jihad."

"Jews are not the only target, of course," he added. But "for sure, Jews today are on the top of the top of the list of potential victims of this world jihad." ☆

Anti-Semitism in Paris



“Made in Israel” Labels Defy BDS Movement

BY DAVID SHAMAH / TimesOfIsrael.com



The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement (BDS), which seeks to cut economic ties with Israel, shows no sign of letting up. Yet concern over the possibility that their products will be boycotted has not stopped Israeli manufacturers and exporters from identifying with Israel. Quite the opposite, according to Economy Ministry figures: While in 2013, 760 Israeli manufacturers marked their products marketed abroad as “Made in Israel,” by 2014 that number had grown to 1,024.



It was just another indication that Israeli technology is welcomed around the world, according to **Ohad Cohen**, who heads the Foreign Trade Administration in Israel’s Economy Ministry.

“Most of our production is in intermediate goods: chemicals, machine parts, technology. Israel’s main customers are the businesses that use these components, and for most companies, business is business; they keep politics out of the picture. That’s not to say that some businesses over the Green Line have not been affected, said Cohen. But overall we have great products and people around the world are happy to buy them.”

Among those affected companies—and an exception to the labeling rule—might be SodaStream, one of the most identifiable Israeli consumer products sold abroad, which recently changed the labeling on some of its products to “Made in the West Bank” after a

complaint in the state of Oregon. SodaStream has long been a target of BDS groups and its success has made it a magnet for protestors.



But the “Made in Israel” label will soon be restored, after the company closes its factory in Mishor Adumim (east of Jerusalem and outside the Green Line) and relocates to a new factory in Beersheba. According to the company, the move to a new industrial zone in southern Israel was not related to the BDS.

And although there is great pressure on European Union governments to boycott Israeli—or at least West Bank-manufactured—goods, several experts say that such boycotts might not be such a great idea, after all.

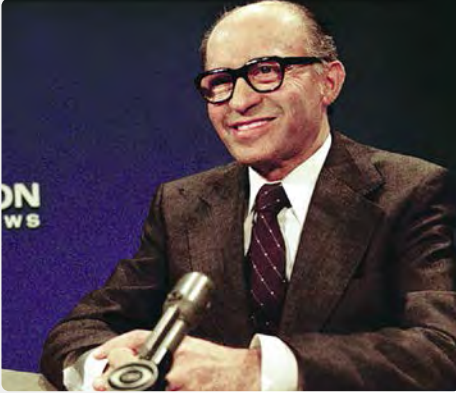
Commenting in a recent interview in *Forbes*, Kristin Lindow, senior vice president at Moody’s Investors Service and Moody’s lead analyst for Israel, said that “the sanctions do run the risk of hurting the Palestinian economy, which is much smaller and poorer than that of Israel, as seen in the case of SodaStream,” where hundreds of Palestinian Authority resident workers who will not be given permits to work in the Negev factory (which is over 60 miles from the Mishor Adumim plant) are likely to be fired.

“The impact of BDS is more psychological than real so far and has had no discernible impact on Israeli trade or the broader economy,” said Lindow.



1981—The Old Soldier—Menachem Begin (1913-1992)

CLASSIC ZOLA from 1981: 34 years ago



The Begin government is about to fall in Israel. It seems that Prime Minister Menachem Begin has lost his majority in the Knesset (Parliament) and new elections will soon be held to replace him.

This is nothing unusual with the parliamentary system of government like Israel's. It's a democracy closely resembling our own except that the leadership can be changed whenever the parliamentary majority feels it necessary. **Rather than having four-year, set terms as we do, the Israelis can dispense with the reigning government when they feel it's time to do so.**

Menachem Begin has led a long and distinguished career in service to his country. Beginning as a front-line revolutionary in the days of the 1948 War

of Independence, he has risen to the highest post in the land, only to be toppled by untenable economic situations. Israel's terrible inflation rate, now 135%, has become too much for the citizens to bear.

The Old Soldier has done well overall. He is the first king of Israel since Solomon to conduct trade on a peaceful basis with Egypt; he is the first Hebrew to make a friend of Pharaoh since Joseph. Through much criticism, a series of critical heart attacks, and extremely difficult times with terrorism and Palestinian relations, Begin has stayed at his post and given his all. When his government falls, it will be said that all of the problems finally outdistanced the leader. But the hearts of his countrymen know the truth: He is old and sick, and it is time for him to rest. Still, Israel will look long and hard for one as devoted and talented to replace him.

Shalom, Prime Minister Begin. We Believers will continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Just as pols predicted Netanyahu's defeat in March's election, so Begin proved them wrong when his government did not topple and he was re-elected prime minister in June 1981. —Editor

(continued next page)



2015—Netanyahu Forms a Coalition, Tells Cabinet: “Leave differences outside”



PM Benjamin Netanyahu

By **Oren Liebermann** of CNN and **Gideon Allon** of IsraelHayom.com

Only 1 hour before the deadline, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced in May that he succeeded in forming a coalition government, coming to an agreement with the final party required for a coalition, the right-wing Jewish Home party, at 10:30 p.m. local time.

President **Reuven Rivlin**, who spoke with Netanyahu by phone at 11:10 p.m., thanked the Prime Minister: “I congratulate you on completing the formation of the government. I look forward to the convening of the Knesset as soon as possible to approve the government.”



Netanyahu had six weeks to form a government after the March 17 elections in which his Likud party won 30 seats. They beat his main rival, Zionist Union’s Isaac Herzog, who won 24 seats.

Immediately after a heated debate in the Knesset plenum a week later, during which the 34th government of Israel was voted in by a slim majority of 61 MKs, the new lineup of ministers convened around the cabinet conference table for the first time.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remarked on the bitter disagreements surrounding the distribution of ministerial appointments he had presented to his fellow Likud members only a few hours earlier. “From this moment on, we must leave our differences outside this room and focus on doing good for the citizens of Israel, all the citizens of Israel,” Netanyahu said at the start of the cabinet’s first meeting.

“We will take decisive... action against any attempt to challenge our borders

and our security. All the enemies of our country should know that we have red lines.” Netanyahu said.

In his remarks, Netanyahu also remarked on the stalled peace process: “We will continue our efforts to advance a diplomatic solution while preserving our interests, which are key to the security of the citizens of Israel.”

A few MKs, unsatisfied with their appointments, chose to register their protest by not entering the plenum. They emerged only toward the end, to help the coalition secure a majority in the vote of confidence in the new government.

The debate ran two hours late because Netanyahu and his Likud faction were at odds over who would get which appointment.

When Netanyahu was asked to present his government, Arab MKs heckled him. When Netanyahu said, “My government will pursue peace,” all 13 MKs from the Joint Arab List burst out laughing. Two were removed from the Knesset because they refused to quiet down. The rest of the faction walked out in solidarity.

“We will form a government, and it will work under some constraints, but I am willing to leave the door open for its future expansion,” Netanyahu said. ★



The CARTOON KRONICLES

Ask the Chaplain

Dr. Todd D. Baker
Zola Levitt Ministries
Staff Theologian



Q It seems the more I read, the more confused I get from seemingly conflicting scriptures. Here are my questions:

1. Alcohol/wine—a sin or not a sin? I don't want *any* sin in my life. I do enjoy an occasional glass of wine or beer with my husband or friends.

Some scriptures indicate alcohol is okay, some say no.

2. Water baptism—essential for salvation or not?

Acts 2:38 states pretty clearly that Believers need to repent *and* be baptized. Therefore, it seems that for salvation, one must be water-baptized.

Acts 2:38

Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

And also Mark 16:16

He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

3. Why do Believers worship on Sundays instead of on the Saturday Sabbath, as per the 10 Commandments? Since we were grafted in, shouldn't we still take part in *Shabbat* worship? After all, Jesus taught in the synagogue on the Sabbath.

Please help me be 100% sure of this so that I will not mislead anyone when I witness and try to bring them to the Lord. I don't want to be responsible for sending someone to hell because I gave incorrect information. I hope you know the Word well and can give me scriptural answers.

A **Drinking wine in moderation is not a sin.** God "causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the service of man, that he may bring forth food from the earth, and wine that makes glad the heart of man, ..." (Psalm 104). Jesus' first miracle was changing water into wine (John 2:1–11). John used the Greek word for *wine*, not grape juice.

Baptism is not necessary for salvation. We are saved by God's unmerited grace to those who believe the Gospel, not from works (Ephesians 2:8–9; Romans 10:9–10, John 3:16; Galatians 2:14–16). The work of baptism, thus, does not save anyone; and because nothing we can do will save us—there are no laws we can follow or acts we must perform—no incorrect information from you will damn anyone's soul. They need only believe that Jesus died in their place to receive God's Gift.

The Sabbath has been fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 4). Our rest is now in the Person and perfect work of Messiah (Matt. 11:28–30). The Disciples and other followers of Yeshua began gathering to break bread together on Sunday to commemorate the day of our Lord's resurrection (Acts 20:7). ★

Jewish Humor



To
Index

The God of Second Chances and Many More

By Dr. Todd Baker



On this ministry's 33rd Gospel outreach to Israel, veteran **To The Jew First** team members Eric Oler and Robin and Sue Hopper joined me in ministering to a receptive young Israeli man. **Adam** said that as a tour guide in Israel, he often leads Christian pilgrims in the Holy Land and needs to learn more about Yeshua in the New Testament! Adam boasted, "You know, Yeshua lived most of His life here in Nazareth."



Adam in Nazareth

I showed Adam the complete Bible that our ministry distributes to Arabs and Jews in the Land. It contains both the *Tanakh* and *B'rit Hadashah* (Old and New Testaments) bound in one volume, in Hebrew. Adam's face lit up. "I need to have one, then." When I explained that Moses and the Prophets speak about Yeshua from the beginning to the end of the Jewish Bible (Old Testament) (Luke 24:27), Adam agreed that this message is something every Jewish person needs to hear.

Adam expressed a desire to understand how Messianic prophecy connects the two Testaments. At His First Coming, Yeshua fulfilled all the Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament, thereby establishing beyond doubt that He is the true Messiah of Israel. I gladly gave Adam a complete Hebrew Bible and beseech you to pray with me that this young Israeli will meet his Messiah in those pages.

In 1 Corinthians 1:22, Paul observed that Jews require a sign. In Eilat, I

went to one of my favorite restaurants for an early dinner. It had gone out of business. Disappointed, I went to a second restaurant; they wouldn't open until later in the evening. At the third, the dining room was empty, so I went to the kitchen. The staff said they opened in two hours. I found a fourth restaurant; it was open. The waiter looked familiar and, pointing to my Star-of-David-and-Cross necklace, he reminded me that we had met before. His name was **Joseph**. On a previous outreach, Robin and I had given Joseph (*below*) an extensive witness for Yeshua and offered him a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures. He politely, but adamantly, refused.

Robin and I had met him in an electronics store across town. At the restaurant now, his attitude performed an about-face. I had advised him not to curry the Lord's displeasure by rejecting the New Testament again, and he responded, "No, no, I will take it now. This is a sign from God!"



Joseph pointed heavenward, indicating this sign of divine appointment. He enthusiastically high-fived me and accepted both Testaments. What a marvelous example of God's faithfulness! Our Lord obviously had not finished reaching for this young man. Rather than give up on him after he rejected the Gospel the first time, the God of second chances and many more sent our TJF ministry back in such a way to provide Joseph a sign of God's power, convincing him to accept this second offer. ★

A NOTE FROM MARK / By Mark Levitt

Chastity Works Better than Abstinence



Author and newspaper writer Arleen Spenceley is a single, 29-year-old virgin, who practices “a virtue called chastity.” Her

article “No Sex, No Problem” recently appeared in the Dallas Morning News. The excerpts below may encourage certain readers to embrace chastity rather than endure abstinence. —Mark

Abstinence has only one requirement: no sex. But chastity defines sex as a sacred, physical sign of the vows spouses make at the altar, designed to express a married couple’s union and for procreation.

Chastity provides depth where abstinence lacks it. Chastity requires us to abstain from sex outside marriage, but unlike abstinence, it also explains why. Chastity clarifies that we are not supposed to abstain from sex outside marriage because sex is bad (it isn’t), or because it will soil us (it won’t), but because of what sex is: an expression of the unity achieved by sacred matrimony—[and a foreshadow of Jesus’ prophesied union with the Church.]

Sex: A Good Mutual Gift

All people who practice chastity must govern their appetites instead of being governed by them. Chaste single people save sex (or sex from now on) for marriage. We [Spenceley writes] believe that marriage is designed to result in the destruction of self-absorption, and that we are designed to create a pleasurable, sexual relationship with the person we marry, not to marry somebody because the sex is “good.” Chaste married people agree to neither use nor abuse each other, and to treat sex as a mutual gift of self, not as mutually advantageous selfishness.

Stories about Christian kids (or kids of other religions) who turned into adults who saved sex for marriage and wish they hadn’t, fuel derision for the reli-

gious belief systems that influenced their decisions to save sex. But their regrets don’t unmask premarital abstinence as a bad idea. They expose an actual bad idea: teaching abstinence without also teaching chastity.

Some people who abstain from sex until marriage have traumatic wedding nights, or hate sex, or get divorced. But they do not have traumatic wedding nights, or hate sex, or get divorced because they abstained; abstinence doesn’t cause dysfunction. Part of what causes this kind of dysfunction is abstinence promoted outside chastity, which is a virtue that necessitates good sex ed and marriage prep.



Abstinence just challenges us not to have sex. Chastity challenges us to live lives in which desire is subservient to reason, which practice

equips us to love as Jesus does: selflessly. [Eph. 5:2, 1 Tim. 1:14]

Children who turn into adults who don’t know the difference between abstinence and chastity—but were raised in Christian churches—have been robbed. The adults who told them to abstain from sex without also discussing chastity, sex, or relationships have been irresponsible. Sex isn’t bad. And it’s time, by teaching chastity, to make sure that kids become adults who know that. ★

We live in the days foreseen by Rav Shaul (Apostle Paul) in 2 Timothy 3:1–7. The idea of living for God and trying to become less selfish seems quaint today, but brings up images of nobility from times past. —Myles



ZLM Bulletin Board

Seeing Is Believing Treat yourself to an uplifting, six-minute virtual tour of the Apple of God's eye. Gorgeous scenery, an abundance of smiles, and snappy music await you at <http://wp.me/pieUD-2gy>. See Israel's seas, cities, harbors, architecture, archaeology, art, culture, technology, people, skies, sports, and varied wildlife. You'll scuba- and sky-dive ... no passport, parachute, or snorkel necessary. Such a rainbow of cultures and traditions, you may need to catch your breath before watching it again.



Pray for
the peace of
Jerusalem

Minoring in Anti-Semitism?

UC Riverside (UCR) offers a class that, according to 20 watchdog/advocacy organizations, meets the U.S. State Department's definition of anti-Semitism. The class "Palestinian Voices" (which deceptively shows both the Israeli and Palestinian flags) is really "Palestine & Israel: Settler-Colonialism and Apartheid," according to its syllabus. The teacher leads Students for Justice in Palestine, dedicated to eliminating the Jewish state. Students in 8 courses received credit for listening to propaganda of Omar Barghouti, founder of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, which routinely promotes the blood libel lie. *Source: jns.org*

Cord-Cutter Debate

TIME magazine columnist Joel Stein announced, "My TV-watching experience as a cord cutter (ex-cable TV viewer) is not only cheaper but better. My Roku simply finds whatever show I want to watch on Netflix, Amazon, Hulu, or a bunch of other services." However, his fellow *TIME* columnist James Poniewozik observed that "being liberated sometimes means trading one master for another." He believes viewers can economize if they *really* cut by forgoing certain channels, (but not ours, of course). Please see levitt.com/roku.



Free Item

Pamphlet of the Month

American taxpayers have long been allowed to make charitable gifts of stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and other securities that are worth more than they cost, and take an income tax deduction based on the gift's full current value, bypassing capital gains tax that otherwise would be due upon sale. The free pamphlet ***Giving Securities*** explains the basics of harnessing long-standing tax benefits. To receive this pamphlet at no charge, email us at staff@levitt.com or write to our P.O. Box.

To
Index

"Come Home!"

Zola
Tours to
Israel



See [page 36](#)
for details



Hebrew Lesson



The “Super Sign” of Israel

Reprint by John J. Parsons

הַיּוֹחַל אֶרֶץ בַּיּוֹם אֶחָד אִמְיָנָלָד גּוֹי פְּעַם אֶחָד

“Shall a land be born in a day?
Shall a nation be brought forth in a moment?”
- Isaiah 66:8

הַיּוֹחַל	אֶרֶץ	בַּיּוֹם	אֶחָד	אִמְיָנָלָד	גּוֹי	פְּעַם	אֶחָד
(2) (1)	(2) (1)	(2) (1)	(2) (1)	(4) (3) (2) (1)	(1)	(2) (1)	(2) (1)
e-chat	pa-am	goy	im-yiv-va-led	e-chad	be-yom	e-retz	ha-yu-chal
in a moment?	shall a nation be brought forth	in a day?	shall a land be born				

Are we living in the End Times? Are we part of the “terminal generation” before the return of the Lord? The Torah predicted that the “end of days” would commence only *after* the return of the Jewish people from worldwide dispersion to the Land of Israel (Deut. 30:1–3), and indeed the theme of exile and return is repeated in the prophets (Jer. 23:3; 32:37–38; Ezek. 37:21, etc.). Therefore it is surely *extraordinary* that Israel was reborn as a nation in their ancient homeland on May 14, 1948 (5 Iyar 5708), after nearly 2,000 years of exile among the nations. The existence of the modern State of Israel is entirely consonant with the various New Testament prophecies regarding the advent of the Messiah, since Jesus taught that the Jewish people would reside in the Promised Land at the time of His second coming, and that the city of Jerusalem would be surrounded by enemies of the Jewish state (see Matt. 24–25; Mark 13; Luke 21).

If we understand a “generation” to mean 70–80 years in duration (as stated in Psalm 90:10), then when Jesus said, “*this* generation (ἡ γενεὰ αὐτῆς) shall not pass until all these things take place” (Matt. 24:34), He was referring to the generation that would originate with the restoration of the modern State of Israel, which further implies that Daniel’s 70th Week (i.e., the Great Tribulation) could begin very soon indeed, perhaps within as few as 5–15 years (add another 19 years if the generation begins with the annexing of Jerusalem in 1967). And while it is certainly true that the rapture could occur at any time, and that “no one knows the day or hour” of *Yom Adonai HaGadol* (וּסְיִהוּת הַגְּדוֹל), the “great day of the LORD,” Jesus faulted the Pharisees for failing to discern “the signs of the seasons” (Matt. 16:3) and for missing the “time of their visitation” (Luke 19:44).

“Shall a land be born in a day? Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment?” Like other prophecies given in the Scriptures, this one is “dual aspect,” since it was *both* partially fulfilled when the Jewish people reestablished the State of Israel in 1948, and it will be entirely fulfilled at the outset of the Millennial Kingdom after the return of Messiah (see Isa. 66:7–16; Rom. 11:26).

Meanwhile we behold the miraculous restoration of the “Fig Tree” and understand that the great harvest draws near, friends. May God help each one of us be awake, ready, with hearts full of steadfast faith (1 John 3:2–3; Titus 2:11–14; Matt. 24:32). **Am Yisrael Chai! The people of Israel live! Soon and very soon we are going to see our King!** ★



Acts: Then and Now *...the story continues.*

8 programs on 2 DVDs

Myles and Katharine show us the implications of the Acts of the Apostles in history and the future.

The Birth of the Church Myles teaches about the birth of the Church on location at the Jerusalem Temple. Evangelist Jacob Damkani, a Persian Jew, fearlessly brings the Gospel to Israelis.

The Good News At Jerusalem's Liberty Bell Park, Myles illustrates how the Gospel traveled west, with a positive impact on Europe and the Americas. Katharine interviews Rita Tsukahira, who leads a Mt. Carmel ministry for troubled Israeli Arabs and Jews and for refugees from Africa.

To Hear Something New On Mars Hill in Athens, Myles teaches about what Paul encountered while bringing the Jewish Gospel to the Greek world. Dr. Dan Juster explains the theological connection between Jewish and Greek thought.

The Word Goes Forth from Zion Out of Paul's Corinthian letters come timeless instructions on how to live together in a vibrant faith community. Myles interviews Asher Intrater and his son regarding the faith life of the contemporary Messianic community.

The One New Man In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul immortalizes the unity of the Spirit between Jews and Greeks (non-Jews) in Messiah.

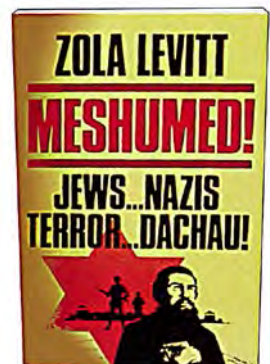
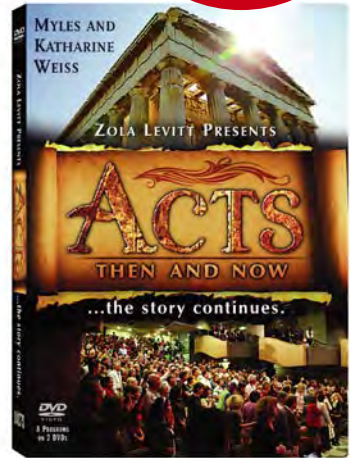
The Price He Paid for Us In the Garden of Gethsemane, Myles discusses the blood of the sacrificed Lamb. Interviews with local Believers underscore the price to follow Jesus in Israel today.

Upon This Rock Matthew 16 proclaims the identity of Messiah. Tents of Mercy ministry has provided Russian immigrants with humanitarian aid and "living water."

The First and the Last We get a "God's eye" view of the role Messianic Believers play in these Last Days.

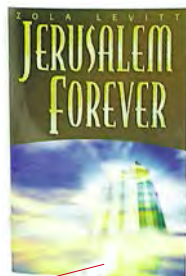
Meshumed! book by Zola Levitt

Remarkable stories of Orthodox Jews who accepted their Messiah even in the concentration camps of World War II Europe! Some of the most dramatic testimonies in print. Originally commissioned as an official history of one of America's oldest and finest missions to the Jews.



Zola's Classic Study Booklet Library

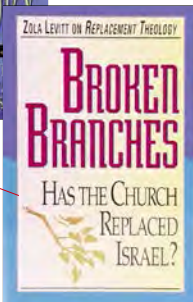
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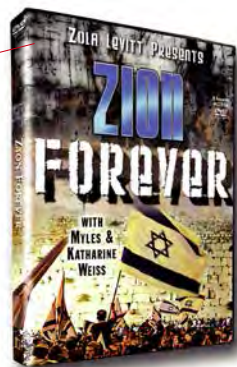
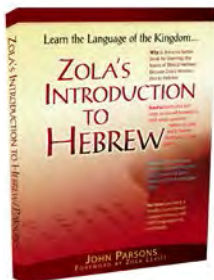
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Sar Shalom (Prince of Peace)

Dr. Jeffrey Seif's passage-by-passage exposition of Jesus' principal teachings is brought to life through on-location production with real-world re-enactments, all performed by Israelis. (2 DVDs)

Sermon on the Mount We consider the "Beatitudes" (Matt. 5:1–12) and Jesus' exhortation that Believers be "salt" and "light" (5:13–16).

Crimes of the Heart Matthew 5:17–20 leads us to consider how Jesus fulfills the Torah. Murder begins in the heart (5:21–26), and adultery begins with desire (5:27–30).

The Law Brought to Life Jesus speaks to divorce and the marriage bond in 5:31–32, and other human bonds in 5:33–37. Verses 38–42 deal with how to be gracious even toward the ungracious.

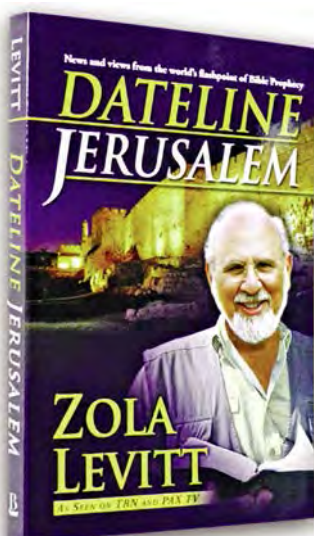
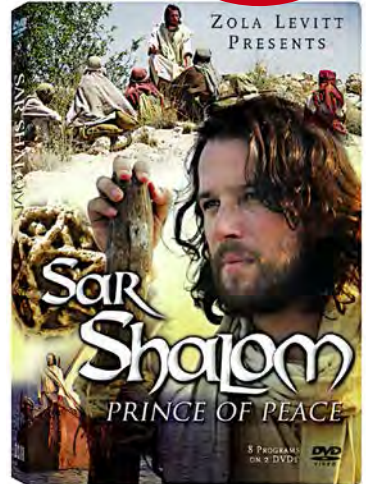
Models of Behavior Jesus teaches how to deal with enemies (5:43–48) and doing good to please God and not men (6:1–4). His teachings on prayer follow in 6:5–15.

Eternal Investments Matthew 6:16–18 notes that fasting pays dividends; laying up treasures on Earth, alone, does not (6:19–21). Generosity brings moral health (6:22–23).

God's Material Provisions Jesus challenges followers to serve either possessions or God (6:24). Blessings abound to those who serve Him (6:25–34). We must not rush to judge others (7:1–6).

God's Spiritual Provisions Matthew 7:7–12 addresses tenacity and God's benevolence in the Christian's life. The "narrow path" we must walk (7:13–14) is not the path chosen by the majority. Our "fruits" testify on our behalf (7:15–20).

Yeshua—Foundation Sufficient for Salvation Deception of self and others gives way to truth at Day's End (7:21–23). Jesus advises us to build our hope for salvation on the right foundation—Him (7:24–29). Jeff offers closing reflections.



Zola's Final Book: *Dateline Jerusalem*

"News and views from the world's flashpoint of Bible Prophecy." From insights into media bias, to Israel's proper role in world affairs, *Dateline Jerusalem* is packed with hard-hitting analysis plus new and startling information. What is the Palestinian agenda? Will Israel survive in today's hostile climate? Can America win the war on terror? What end-times events are around the corner? After giving his own testimony, Zola devotes chapters to the Jews, Moslems, Palestinians, government, media, education, churches, End Times, and questions and answers. If you like the *Levitt Letter*, you'll adore this book. Unconditionally guaranteed—until the Rapture, that is.



Banned from Jerusalem, Jews Thrived on the Golan

BY AVIVA & SHMUEL BAR-AM / TimesOfIsrael.com

Less than a hundred years after the Romans quelled the Jewish revolt and destroyed the Temple, the Jews, led by Shimon Bar Kokhba, fought again for Jewish independence. The Romans quashed this revolt as well.

Jewish settlements in the south were destroyed, and Jerusalem became off limits to the Jews. Many of those who survived moved to the Galilee; and during the 4th century, large numbers moved from the Galilee to the Golan. It is not surprising, then, that during the Byzantine era (330–1453), fully 25% of Israel's synagogues were located in nearly three dozen Golan Heights communities.

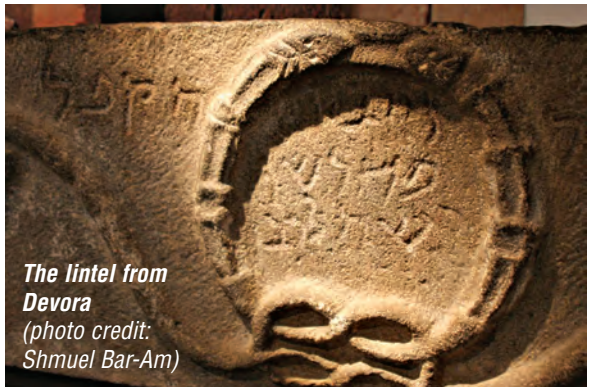
The Golan Archaeological Museum in Katzrin displays finds from the region, including a rich collection of religious artifacts: sculpted menorah decorations from ancient villages Yehudiya and Pik, a sarcophagus lid naming 26-year-old "Shimon son of Abun" found at Ein Nashut, and the unique capital that once topped a column at that village's 5th-century synagogue. The Hebrew inscription on a slab of tightly rolled copper that probably was carried on a chain around the neck sings the praises of God.

An unusual exhibition consists of artifacts from the obscure Yeturian nation. A desert tribe, the Yeturians set up a kingdom in the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon while the Nabataeans were establishing themselves in Israel's south and the Hasmoneans ruled the center.

Freedom fighters lost the Jewish city of Gamla to the Romans in 67 A.D. The museum displays armor, coins, and weapons from the Roman-Jewish battles. A coin unique to Gamla bears the inscription "For the Redemption of Jerusalem."

Byzantine-era synagogue remains include one particular column, described in 1885 by researcher Gustave Schumacher, who found it in the ruins of the Jewish settlement at Pik. After Israel took control of the Golan in the Six-Day War, archaeologists searched for the column at Pik, combing the area but with no success. A few months later, an army officer walking through a cemetery in the Syrian town of Kuneitra saw a pillar painted white. Rain had removed some of the paint, revealing writing underneath. The column that Schumacher had noticed at Pik had been removed from the site by the Syrians, along with other major artifacts.

A decorative lintel from ancient Devora is one of the most significant archaeological discoveries in the Golan. In Hebrew, an inscription reads "This is the *beit midrash* (house of study) of Rabbi Elazar Hakapar," a rabbi who figures prominently in the Talmud. Stressing the virtue of humility, Rabbi Elazar Hakapar used the parable of a house and warned people not to behave like the lintel over the door. Instead, they should strive to become more like the doorstep, on which others climb. Ironically, what remained when the house collapsed was this lintel. ★



*The lintel from Devora
(photo credit: Shmuel Bar-Am)*



Letters to ZLM

For ministry products and TV programs, visit the [web store](#) and [video archives](#).

Should Christians Observe “Shemithah?”

Dear ZLM,

Some in my Bible study group think we should study Jonathan Cahn’s book *The Mystery of the Shemithah*. You don’t seem to address this issue on [levitt.com](#).

Should we as Christians be putting emphasis on the *shemithah* year? I’ve found articles arguing both sides, and all seem to base their reasoning on Scriptures. I’m confused. Can you clarify? Thank you. —G.F.

Shalom G.F.—

I’m glad you asked. Be assured that you are not alone in questioning the current emphasis on this unique calendar phenomenon. The *shemithah* (rest on the seventh) has become a very popular distraction, along with the “blood moons.” On our last tour, several precious Believers came specifically to be in Israel during the solar eclipse associated with the “blood moons” of 2014–2015.

My reading of the Bible leaves no doubt that God set this pattern in Israel: He expects the land to rest every seven years (Leviticus 25:1–7, 26:27–35). In ancient times, this was a known requirement of the laws of Moses; however, my natural brethren were not always faithful to God in this regard. At times, the Lord went to dramatic lengths to ensure that the rest time owed the land was “repaid” —even using captivity and exile to awaken the people to their need and their disobedience (Jeremiah 25:8–12, 2 Chronicles 36:15–21).

In modern Israel, the religious leaders often find a way around biblical mandates. This is considered a rabbinic mitzvah. Many rabbis declare that the biblical obligation is “in effect only when a majority of the Jewish people live in the Land of Israel.” Other authorities state that *shemithah* has the status of a biblical commandment only when there is a functioning *Sanhedrin*, the authoritative court in Jerusalem.

As we say, “Two Jews, three opinions.”

In the nineteenth century, when Jews began resettling the Land in significant numbers, the population was on the verge of starving. Due to the dire

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



situation, many prominent rabbinic leaders endorsed what is known as *heter mechira*, which permits the sale of Jewish-owned land to non-Jews for the duration of the *shemithah* year!

Jonathan Cahn's book sparked the current interest in the Sabbath rest of the land. Jonathan, well respected by the Messianic believing community, intended his writing to educate the Body about Israel, about the Body itself, and about the world; he notes interesting parallels between ancient Israel and modern America. As with the blood moons, I thank the Lord we are not looking to the Mayans or to date-setters but to the Word and the Spirit of God.

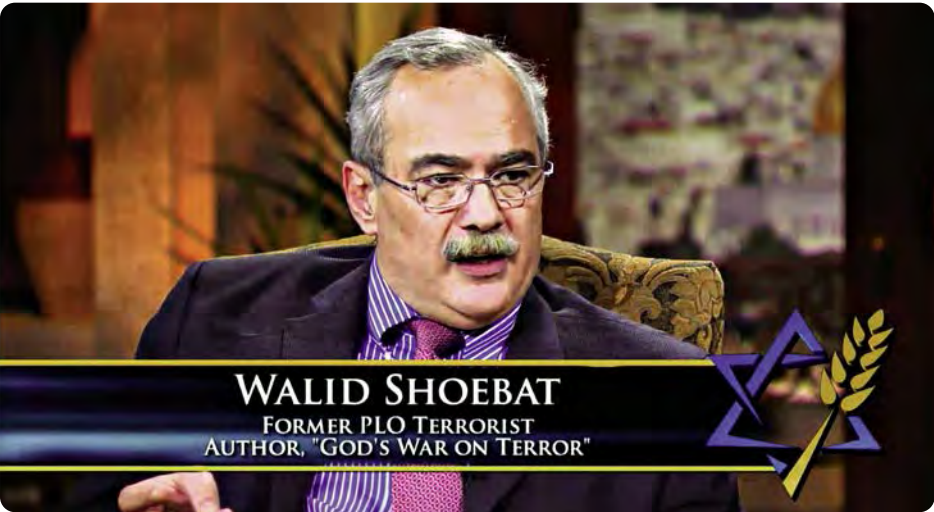
That said, **I do not believe Christians need to observe the *shemithah* year.** However, we can learn much about God's ways by studying His system, which is now understood and supported by the agricultural and biological sciences.

We also need to pray that God's judgment will not fall on our own beloved nation. The last seven years represent a distancing between Israel and America. According to Genesis 12:1–3, Believers should watch for judgment and repent for the actions of Western governments and churches. It is time to renew the Church's call to "watch and pray"! Blessings —Myles

Walid ... a Charlatan?

Dear ZLM,

Is Walid Shoebat a charlatan? We definitely don't trust the mainstream media, but this guy doesn't seem to pass the smell test... just so many nuts out there, we don't know whom to trust anymore. —C. and E.W.



Shalom C. and E.W.—

I have known Walid for years and interviewed him on the radio many times before Katharine and I came to work with ZLM. Walid is constantly under attack by the media AND has death "fatwas" (decrees) placed on him by former jihadist colleagues. He has even had to live "underground" at times.

I believe that Walid IS the real thing and has a heart for the kingdom of God. We would be wise to consider his significant eschatological (end-times) insights. Walid and his son Theodore keep track of the caliphate that is due to rise in the End Times and its attack on Western civilization. You can see why a former jihadist Moslem who is a born-again Christian, advocate for Israel, and also loves the Jewish people is under attack. Blessings —Myles

Fair Game

Dear Myles,

The cartoon caricature of President Obama in your *April Levitt Letter* (p. 21) displays oversized ears, presumably to make him look more apelike. Please, Myles, explain why the unflattering, cartoon-esque figure of the U.S. president should evoke in Believers a loud belly laugh or scornful grin.

Imagine that you and I are standing before the Lord whose pointed questions reduce us to stammering, beet-red-faced school kids. Behind Him, angels snicker and glare at us. Nah, Jesus is God, and He would never do such a thing and neither would His angels. As Christians, shouldn't we be more (and more) like Jesus? Shouldn't we be balanced, evenhanded, understanding, and especially compassionate?

No human is perfect, and that includes Obama. But he is trying to do his best for America against fierce opposition from right-wing mudslingers. ZLM does not want to be identified with them! P.S. As the cartoon indicates, pseudo-Christians *have* done terrible things to their fellow man. —H.W.H.

Greetings H.W.H.—

Your note accuses the *Levitt Letter* of unChristian behavior due to our choice of cartoons. You may recall our settling a “cartoon-gate” several years ago, but it appears that we need to go around this mountain one more time. What piqued me was your implication that the portrayal of President Obama is based in racism. Them's fightin' words.

Since when is a political figure's visage off limits and his policies beyond reproach? Oh that's right... since the resurgence of Moslem orthodoxy, which disallows pictures of Mohammed.

We in the West have a fine tradition of mocking politicians, without regard to religion, gender, color, creed, national origin, or physical appearances.

Caricature in word and illustration constitutes a longstanding journalistic tradition. Read Jonathan Swift, H.L. Mencken, or Mark Twain, or research the history of political cartoons.

Read your Bible and listen to Elijah before the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18). As long as our government pressures Israel into existentially vulnerable positions, ZLM will raise our voice. Would you suppress that?

Try writing to Al Jazeera or *Inspire* (al-Qaeda's e-magazine) and request that they stop portraying Jewish people as bloodthirsty cannibals who feed on the blood of Moslem children. Do something useful with your letter writing.

We already temper our TV and newsletters to quell charges such as yours. What you're receiving is the faith-based, kinder, gentler version of political portrayals. Shalom —Myles

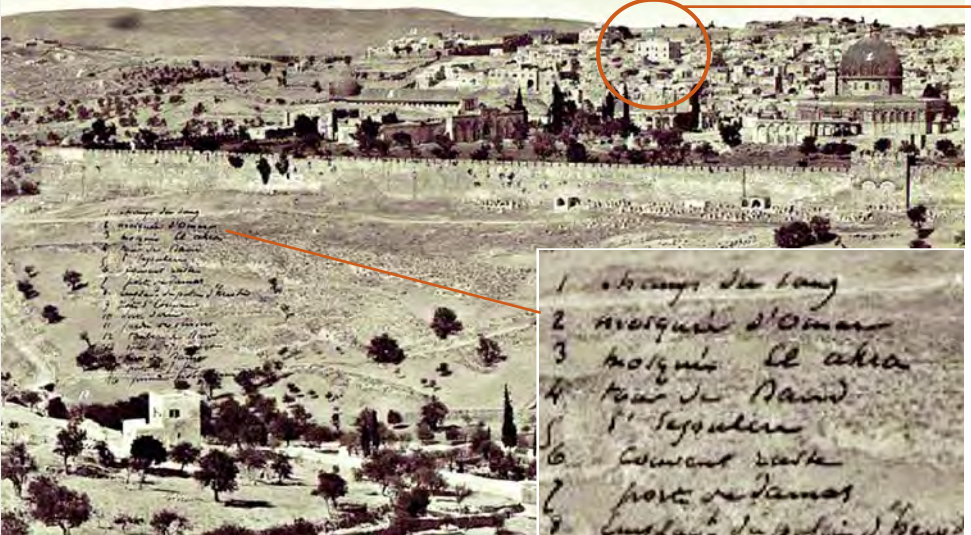


Jerusalem in Pictures

IsraelDailyPicture.com



The Ottoman Imperial Archives in Istanbul continues to digitize its massive collection of documents, photos, and illustrations, realizing the importance of digitizing its treasures and sharing them with the world. This historic photograph of **Jerusalem's Old City** was taken from the Mount of Olives about 1870.



Jerusalem's **Temple Mount** with the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque. Also note the small Islamic graveyard in front of the city wall and the Golden Gate. (*Ottoman Imperial Archives*)

We surmise that the photographer or owner of the photo was French from the notes made on the image (*enlarged right*) to identify 16 sites numbered on the photograph. It is difficult to read the notes, but number 2, *Mosque d'Omar*, and number 12, *Tombeau de David* (David's Tomb), are legible and in French. The date can be approximated by one of the landmarks *not* contained on the tourist list—the **Tiferet Yisrael Synagogue** near the Hurva Synagogue in the Jewish Quarter.



The Hurva, built in 1864, is the building on the left with the dome. Short of funds, Tiferet Yisrael didn't complete its dome until Emperor Franz Josef of Austria visited the site in 1869 and supposedly asked why it had no roof. "Why, the synagogue took off its hat in honor of Your Majesty," he was told. He

contributed money for the project, and the synagogue was dedicated in 1872.



The photo of the topless synagogue, therefore, was prior to 1872.

Both synagogues were blown up during the 1948 War for Independence. The Hurva was recently rebuilt, and there are plans to rebuild Tiferet Yisrael.



Keep Veggies Fresh for a Month, Sans Fridge



SCIENCE: BY **DAVID SHAMAH** (r) TimesOfIsrael.com

A new technique developed by Hebrew University researchers that extends the life of vegetables for weeks without refrigeration could **help break the cycle of poverty among rural farmers in the developing world.**

Dozens of technologies help farmers grow healthier, hardier, and better-tasting fruits and vegetables—many of them developed in Israel—but few technologies extend the life of produce. While some fruits and vegetables can be kept in cold storage for months, others—like leafy vegetables—have to be brought to market within days, before they begin to wilt.

Storage is a problem for farmers all over the world, especially in the developing world. Farmers who have no access to refrigeration—due to a lack of electricity, inability to afford equipment, infrastructure problems—are basically at the mercy of local wholesalers who offer them far less than their produce is worth.

Instead of taking their produce to the cities, where it can fetch the market price, farmers in rural India and Africa have to sell at below-market prices locally because by the time they get to the city, their produce will have gone bad. Selling their produce for sub-subsistence wages, farmers get barely enough to live on and replant the next season—thereby prolonging the cycle of poverty.



The new technology invented by **Dr. Rivka Elbaum** (Faculty of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Quality Sciences, Robert H. Smith Institute of Plant Sciences and Genetics in Agriculture at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem) entails dipping the cut leaves into a solution that is proprietary and has been patented in the U.S. and Israel.

In a number of experiments, the solution was shown to delay senescence and chlorophyll loss in lettuce leaves as well as other leafy vegetables, such as celery, spinach, cabbage, kale, parsley, basil, cauliflower, and broccoli.

The technology was displayed at Agritech 2015, a major agricultural technology event in Tel Aviv that drew some 10,000 visitors from Israel and abroad, including agricultural ministers.

Developers are working on the form of delivery for the solution—possibly as a mist spray in the produce section of the supermarket, with the sprayers using the solution instead of water. One application is enough to keep lettuce leaves fresh for a month; it's not clear whether further applications will preserve leaves for a longer period. ☆



A pepper and lettuce leaf (left) treated with the new solution after a week without refrigeration; on the right, untreated produce

*Photo:
Dr. Rivka
Elbaum*

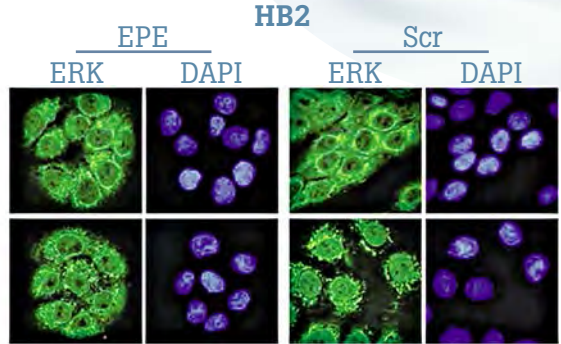


To Stop Cancer, Block Its Messages

MEDICINE: WEIZMANN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE / Weizmann-USA.org

A living cell transmits a constant stream of messages from its outer walls to the inner nucleus, where the day-to-day decisions are made. But this rapid, long-distance communication system leaves itself open to mutations that can give rise to a “spam attack” that promotes cancer.

Prof. Rony Seger and his team at the Department of Biological Regulation, Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel, have proposed a method of shutting off the overflow of information before it can get to the nucleus. If the initial results hold up, the method could be used to treat a number of different cancers—especially those that develop resistance to current treatments—and might possibly induce fewer side effects than current drugs do.



Immortalized cells, left, pretreated with a drug that blocks the ERK signal, and right, without the pretreatment. Top cells are untreated, while the bottom ones are stimulated.

Cells use proteins to communicate, sending messages through the membranes of cells and nuclei. A directive from outside the cell—for example a growth-factor molecule telling the cell to divide—stops at the cellular membrane. A receptor on the membrane’s outer surface accepts the message and passes its signal to the inner side. From there, “if the molecules were human messengers, they would have to traverse the equivalent of 43 miles to get from the outer membrane to the nucleus,” says Prof. Seger. Instead of sending messages by a single courier molecule, the cell speeds the process with a relay in which the message gets handed from one molecule to another. This membrane-to-nucleus communications system is known as a cellular signaling pathway; there are about 15 different pathways for transferring the cell’s main internal messaging, every pathway associated with a different disease.

Prof. Seger identified a number of proteins involved in these pathways, especially in a pathway called the MAPK/ERK cascade, which is involved in cancer. In normal cells, as proteins pass along the messages, the last protein in the relay slips into the cell nucleus, delivers the memo, and slips out again. But in certain mutations, the normally useful message becomes spam, sent over and over, flooding the nucleus’s “inbox.” This “spam attack” can be disastrous; in the case of messages such as “grow” or “divide,” the result can be cancerous.

A crucial step occurs when an ERK molecule undergoes the transformation that enables it to pass through the membrane surrounding the nucleus. Prof. Seger’s research revealed that an effective “spam filter” on the ERK pathway would involve blocking just this step, thus preventing “messages” from specific ERKs getting into the nucleus. He and his group designed a variety of molecules to enter the cell and block the transfer of ERK molecules into the nucleus. Working with Dr. Michal Besser of the Sheba Medical Center, they grew cells from different cancers in culture and then added different molecules to see which would best target ERK. One molecule performed quite well, even causing many of the cancer cells to die. Importantly, this molecule did not affect normal cells, suggesting that it targets the cancer process and, thus, may have fewer side effects than current chemotherapy drugs.

After testing the molecule in mouse models of human cancers, Prof. Seger noted that “the molecule worked even better in the animal models than it did in culture. **Several cancers, including melanoma, disappeared within days and did not return.**” That the molecule didn’t destroy the ERK but only stopped it from entering the nucleus may be good news for healthy cells: The ERK can still send a “delivery receipt” back up the relay line to the receptors so they don’t try to resend the message. ☆

The Middle East Runs Out of Water



BY DANIEL PIPES (r) WashingtonTimes.com

A ranking Iranian political figure recently warned that past mistakes leave Iran with water supplies so insufficient that up to 70% (55 million Iranians) would be forced to abandon their native country for parts unknown.

Many facts buttress the apocalyptic prediction: Once lauded in poetry, Lake Urmia, the Middle East's largest lake, has lost 95% of its water since 1996. What the Seine is to Paris, the Zayanderud was to Isfahan—except the latter dried up in 2010. Over two-thirds of Iran's cities and towns are “on the verge of a water crisis” that could result in drinking water shortages; already, thousands of villages depend on water tankers. Unprecedented dust storms disrupt economic activity and damage health.

Many others in the arid Middle East may also be forced into exile. **With one exception, much of the Middle East is running out of water** due to such maladies as population growth, shortsighted dictators, distorted economic incentives, and infrastructure-destroying warfare. Some specifics:

Egypt: Rising sea levels threaten to submerge the country's coastal cities (including Alexandria, population 4 million) and also contaminate the Nile Delta aquifer, one of the world's largest groundwater reservoirs. The Ethiopian government finally woke to the hydraulic potential of the Blue Nile that originates in its country and is building massive dams that may severely reduce the flow of river water reaching Egypt (and Sudan).

Gaza: Seawater intrusion and leaking sewage has made 95% of the coastal aquifer unfit for human consumption.

Yemen: Oil money permits Yemenis to indulge heavily in chewing *qat*, a leaf whose bushes absorb more water than the food plants they replaced. Sana'a may become the first capital to run out of water.

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

*A plane flies over the mountains in the south of the **Strait of Hormuz** as the trading dhows and ships are docked on the Persian Gulf waters near the town of Khasab, in Oman. (AP Photo/Kamran Jebreili)*



Out of Water... *continued*



Syria: The Syrian government wasted \$15 billion on failed irrigation projects (1988–2000). Between 2002 and 2008, total water resources and grain output dropped by half, causing 250,000 farmers to abandon their land. By 2010, in the hinterland of Raqqa, now the Islamic State’s capital, “Ancient irrigation systems have collapsed, underground water sources have run dry, and hundreds of villages have been abandoned as farmlands turn to cracked desert and grazing animals die off” (*New York Times*).

Iraq: Experts foresee the Euphrates River water soon halved (see Revelation 16:12 for those implications). In 2011, the Mosul Dam, Iraq’s largest, shut down due to insufficient flow. Briny seawater from the Persian Gulf has pushed up the Shatt al-Arab [river] destroying fisheries, livestock, and crops. In northern Iraq, water shortages have led to abandoned villages and dramatic decreases in barley, wheat, and date farming. Saddam Hussein drained the marshes of southern Iraq, destroying wildlife ecology and depriving the Marsh Arabs of their livelihood.

Persian Gulf: Vast desalination efforts, ironically, have increased the salinity level of Gulf Sea water, threatening fauna and marine life.

Israel provides the sole exception to this regional tale of woe. It too, as recently as the 1990s, suffered water shortages; but thanks to conservation, recycling, innovative agricultural techniques, and high-tech desalination, the country is awash in H₂O. Particularly striking: Israel can desalinate about 17 liters of water for one U.S. penny.

Israel’s desperate neighbors might think about ending their futile state of war with the world’s hydraulic superpower and instead learn from it. ✨

Love that last line! Israeli [water technology](#) is already helping [California](#) and [Nevada](#). —Myles



Third desalination plant built by Israel

Sea Knight: The new vessel will help keep Israeli sailors out of harm's way



Unmanned Boat to Intercept Smugglers

By Barry Rosenfeld / *Israel Today*

The Sea Knight, a new addition to the Israeli Navy, is tasked to intercept arms smugglers attempting to bring weapons into the Gaza Strip. With Egypt destroying most of the tunnels under the Gaza border, Hamas has escalated attempts to smuggle arms by sea. The navy has countered this with more patrols off the coast and introduced the unmanned Sea Knight.

Patrol-boat commander Lieutenant Colonel Liav says the Sea Knight is “a vessel which can shoot, issue warnings, squirt water, and conduct the most advanced types of surveillance—all without a human operator.”

Israeli patrols often intercept Palestinian fishing boats suspected of smuggling weapons into Gaza from Egypt, boarding the vessels and taking control. But such operations are inherently dangerous and this is the advantage of using an unmanned craft.

As Major Shlomi, the commander of a Sea Knight, put it: “Think of it as a scout that collects information and can also respond [with force] if needed,” thus reducing the risk to sailors’ lives.

SELECT MEDIA BRIEFS

1,500-Year-Old Grape Seeds

ScienceDaily.com

For the first time, grape seeds from the Byzantine Era have been found.

These grapes were used to produce “Wine of the

Negev”—one of the finest and most renowned wines in the whole of the Byzantine Empire.

The charred seeds, over 1,500 years old, were found at the Halutza excavation site in the Negev during a joint dig by the University of Haifa and the Israel Antiquities Authority.

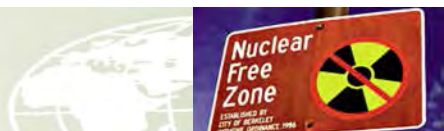
The seeds may help unlock the secret of ancient fine wine



“The vines growing in the Negev today are European varieties,

whereas the Negev vine was lost to the world. Our next job is to recreate the ancient wine, and perhaps in that way we will be able to reproduce its taste and understand what made the Negev wine so fine,” said Prof. Guy Bar-Oz of the University of Haifa, director of the excavation.





Israel Blames Arab Neighbors for Stalling on Nuke-free Zone

By Cara Anna / BigStory.AP.org

Israel blames its Arab neighbors for any failure of progress toward achieving a Middle East free of nuclear weapons, saying, "If a serious regional effort has not emerged in the Middle East during the last five years, it is not because of Israel." Israel's statement, distributed in April at the UN's 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), marks the country's first public comment since it showed up as a surprise observer. Israel has never publicly declared its nuclear weapons, and it is not a signer of the NPT.

As an observer nation, Israel cannot address the ongoing conference, where many countries have expressed frustration that a key meeting toward a Middle East nuclear weapons-free zone, promised for 2012, has not taken place. That goal was set at the last conference, five years ago.

AP/ANALYST/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS 3-4

DO THE MIDEAST MATH :

Establishing such a zone in one of the world's most tense regions is a topic of rare agreement between the United States and Russia, which otherwise have descended into a Cold War-like gloom. Both countries urge progress, with Russia



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expressing its "grave dissatisfaction" at the delay and Secretary of State John Kerry calling the proposed zone an "ambitious goal and fraught with challenges" but worth pursuing. And Iran, whose nuclear program Israel has loudly protested, has used the stalled zone as a chance to fire back. Speaking on behalf of more than 100 mostly developing countries, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif called for Israel to give up its nuclear weapons, saying they are a regional threat.

Israel's statement says it has been willing to meet with its neighbors toward setting an agenda for talks on a Middle East nuclear-free zone, but that after five rounds of consultations with some of its Arab neighbors in Switzerland between October 2013 and June 2014, the other states discontinued the talks. The statement notes that the consultations were "the first direct engagement between Israel and its neighbors on this issue in over 20 years" and that Israel "responded positively" to invitations by a Finnish facilitator for a sixth round of consultations, but they were postponed several times and didn't take place.

"This strident opposition to conduct a direct dialogue with Israel... underlines and reinforces the mistrust and suspicion between the states in the region," the statement says. "Ultimately, it is difficult to understand how any disarmament, arms control, and regional security issues can be addressed without any direct dialogue between the regional states, as the Group of Arab States suggests."

Israeli officials say the decision to attend the conference as an observer for the first time since 1995 reflects "Israel's commitment to the principle of nonproliferation." They also called for "direct engagement and dialogue" with Arab states on a broad range of security issues, based on consensus. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter with the media. ★

In one room in Jerusalem, 2,700 years of history

ARCHAEOLOGY BY BEN SALES / JTA.org



In 1999, **Amit Re'em** (*shown above*) began excavating an abandoned Ottoman prison in the Old City of Jerusalem, intending to transform the site into an event space for the nearby Tower of David Museum. Just 28 at the time, he hoped to uncover remains of a Herodian palace or part of a wall from the second century. He did find those things ... and more.

In one 160' x 30' space, Re'em unearthed an archaeological timeline of Jerusalem dating back 2,700 years. Layers from nearly every era of the city's history lay atop each other, from the time of the First Temple through the Roman, Crusader, and Ottoman periods and up to Israel's independence in 1948. Remains from those eras are strewn throughout the Old City, but rarely are they found so close together or so well preserved.

"The importance of the remains and the layering of them one on top of each other is like an open book, the whole historical and archaeological sequence of Jerusalem laid out in front of our eyes," Re'em remarked.

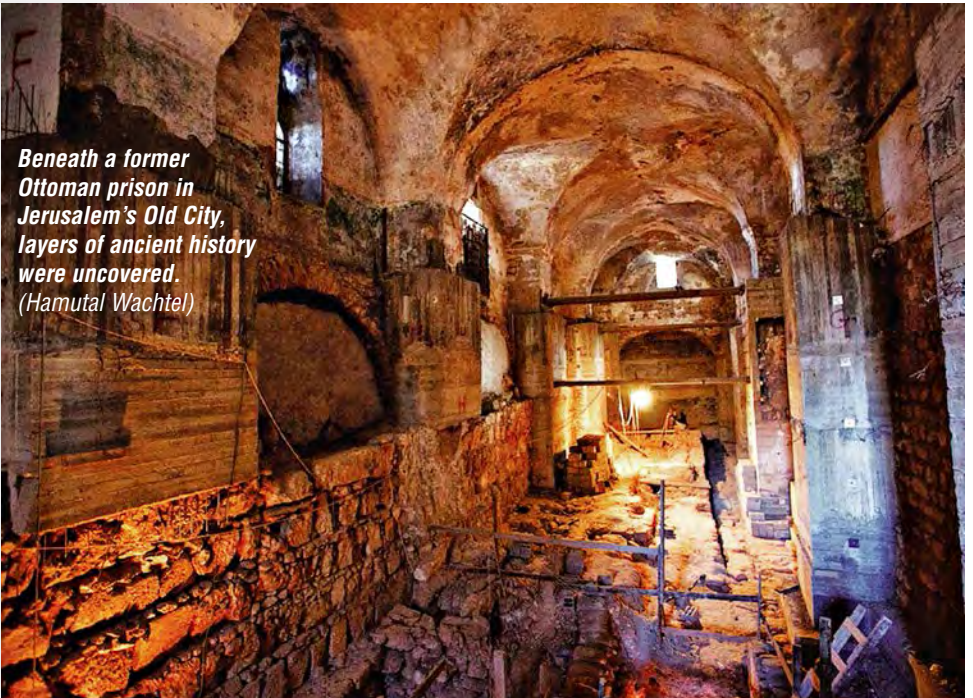
Called the *Kishle*—Turkish for "prison"—the site was built as a jail by the Ottoman Turks in the 1800s and used by the British in the 1940s to hold captured members of the Jewish militia. An imprisoned member of the pre-state Irgun militia etched a map of Greater Israel on the wall, still visible.

Below the prison lie the foundations of a fortification wall built in the eighth century B.C. by the ancient Jewish king Hezekiah, who like later rulers took advantage of the site's strategic high ground. Across the room are remains of another defensive wall built 600 years later by the Hasmoneans, who ruled Jerusalem after the Maccabean revolt.

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



Beneath a former Ottoman prison in Jerusalem's Old City, layers of ancient history were uncovered. (Hamutal Wachtel)



2,700 years ... continued



The room also houses the remains of the wall of a massive Herodian palace built near the beginning of the first century, as well as basins from the Crusader period that were likely used to dye fabric and tan leather. The current walls of the Old City, built by the Ottomans in the 16th century, sit atop the Herodian wall and later served as the outer wall of the prison.

Re'em believes the room may have been the site of Jesus' trial by Pontius Pilate. Pilate would have tried Jesus in a prominent location like Herod's palace, Re'em said, noting that the original route of the Via Dolorosa that Jesus followed to His crucifixion passed the spot where the Kishle now stands.

Re'em's findings convinced the Tower of David Museum not to build on the site. But after the dig ended in 2001, the room remained closed due to budget constraints until the museum's new director, Eilat Lieber, opened it to the public last year.

The room has not been changed since 2001 and looks like an active archaeological dig. Lieber hopes to place a glass floor above the remains and to augment them with 3-D imaging that will show what the space looked like in different periods.

Many of Re'em's conclusions about the room are based on dating techniques and inferences from historical sources. The claim that the walls belonged to Herod's palace stems in part from the writings of the historian Flavius Josephus. Re'em's belief that the basins were used for dyeing cloth derives from an account by Benjamin of Tudela, a medieval Jewish traveler, and the remnants of red dye on the basins' walls. ★



The entrance to a former Ottoman prison known as the Kishle in Jerusalem's Old City. (Oded Antman)



Palestinian Police Patrol Jerusalem Suburbs

BY MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH (r) BigStory.AP.org



Armed Palestinian police in dark blue uniforms have taken up positions in Abu Dis, a lawless West Bank suburb of Jerusalem, highlighting the shared interests of Israel and the Palestinians on day-to-day issues even when political tensions run high. The officers hope to catch scores of fugitive criminals and break up a rampant trade in drugs and stolen cars in three Arab areas on the outskirts of Jerusalem. The criminal activity routinely spills over into Israel, with most cars stolen there and some drugs sold in Jewish neighborhoods of Jerusalem.

“Crime has no color,” said Adnan Damiri, a spokesman of the Palestinian security forces. “It can harm us and them.”

The long-running absence of regular law enforcement in Abu Dis and other Arab suburbs of Jerusalem is linked to the turbulent history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As part of interim peace agreements reached in the 1990s, the area of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) was carved into a patchwork of jurisdictions. Israel maintained overall control over the territory it captured in 1967, along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. But a Palestinian self-rule government took over 38% of the territory.

Palestinian cities came under full autonomy, with armed Palestinian security forces operating there. Smaller towns and villages received limited self-rule, with restrictions on the deployment of Palestinian police. In Abu Dis, which abuts east Jerusalem, unarmed police patrolled the streets in the 1990s, but were ordered by Israel to leave after the outbreak of an armed Palestinian uprising in 2000. Since then, Israel has permitted Palestinian police to return for specific needs, such as crowd control or arresting fugitive criminals. At the same time, Abu Dis and other Arab suburbs of Jerusalem fell outside the jurisdiction of Israeli civil police, leaving a vacuum that drew car thieves and drug dealers.

Earlier this year, Israel lifted its ban and allowed 90 armed, uniformed officers to deploy in four communities—Abu Dis, Azariyeh, Ram, and Biddou—which have a combined population of about 130,000. Local residents cheered the decision.

“We need security in this town,” said Ashraf al-Muhtasseb, a restaurant owner in Azariyeh. “Thieves sneak into homes and steal in the middle of the day, drivers use stolen cars, and 13-year-old boys smoke marijuana.”

Israel recently eased restrictions on Palestinian movement, many imposed after the Palestinian uprising in 2000. Older West Bank residents—women above 50 and men above 55—can enter Israel and east Jerusalem without special permits. Palestinian doctors are now allowed to drive cars with West Bank license plates into Israel. Meanwhile, Israel has lowered the age for Palestinian men to enter Israel for work, to 22 from 24, and expanded the number of Palestinians permitted to work in Israel to 53,000.



Palestinian police in West Bank

Lt. Col. Kobi Gertswolf, head of the civil coordination branch of COGAT, the Israeli defense agency responsible for Palestinian civilian affairs, said such measures promote peace and stability. ★

Jewish Humor, etc.

Free Spirits

Morris was having trouble getting his neighbor Lenny to keep his chickens fenced in. Lenny kept talking about chickens being gentle creatures and having the right to go where they wanted.

Morris tried everything to keep the chickens out of his flowerbeds but without success. One day, a visiting friend noticed that Morris's flowerbeds were flourishing. The flowers were even beginning to bloom.

The friend asked how he managed to keep the birds away. "How did you make Lenny keep his hens in his own yard?"

Morris replied, "One night, I hid half a dozen eggs under a bush near my flower bed, and the next day I let Lenny see me gather them. The hens haven't returned since." ✪



A cheerful heart is good medicine —
Proverbs 17:22



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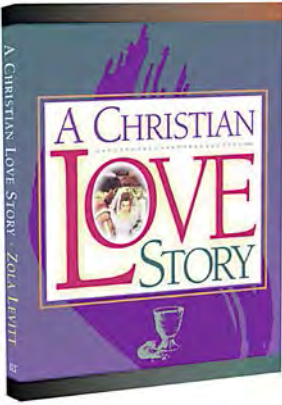
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