

March 2020



Tony and Jane Derrick

Dear Ministry Partner,

We continue our study of the Book of Ecclesiastes, in which “the Preacher” (generally accepted to be King Solomon) pursues the elements necessary for a life with purpose. In our study of the first chapter last month, we saw Solomon realize that all his self-accomplishments, *“everything under the sun,”* prove to be nothing more than *“vanity and grasping for the wind”* (1:14). In the second chapter of his journal, Solomon sets aside his workaholic endeavors as a means to a full life and examines whether personal pleasure can provide the elusive goal.

SOLOMON’S “I” PROBLEM (2:1–11)

Ecclesiastes 2:1–11 shows that Solomon’s quest for satisfaction doesn’t lie in meeting the needs of the people, only in his own satisfaction. Let’s listen in to find out if that pursuit will give the king what he craves.

The first two verses begin with laughter and mirth. What is mirth? It is the seeking of a joyful persona. Solomon concludes that laughter is “madness.” If I were to guess, Solomon is referring



Detail of *Visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon*, oil on canvas (1890) by Edward Poynter (1836–1919)

to the fact that when a comedian completes his routine, he retires to a solitude where there is no laughter or applause. It is life back to the way it was; in other words, “all is vanity.”

His next test of pleasure, in verse three, is as a wine connoisseur. Let’s be clear; Solomon was not a drunk. He

was not a back-alley wino trying to drown his sorrows. He was a well-educated king of Israel who wondered if bottled spirits might offer some relief from a mundane life.

Was that the answer? We undoubtedly all know someone who has tried to “drown” their sorrows in drink. A physician friend of mine says that more patients with congestive heart failure are seen after the Super Bowl than at any other time during the year. Why? They eat salty foods and drink too much alcohol. Solomon concluded that drink wasn’t the answer he was seeking.

(over please)

Solomon lists his attempts at personal satisfaction in verses four through eleven. He built houses, planted vineyards, provided water channels for the vineyards, and on and on it goes. His greatest accomplishment, of course, was building the Temple of God. Let's not forget that he did what his father, David, was not allowed to do.

Notice these statements in verses 4–10:

2:4 — "I made"

2:5 — "I made"

2:6 — "I made"

2:7 — "I acquired greater possessions"

2:8 — "I gathered for myself"

2:10 — "I denied myself nothing" Great wealth allowed Solomon to indulge in whatever he chose. He had no boundaries, as we will see in regard to his harem.

But, I call your attention to a note of importance in verse 9, *"So I became great and excelled more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also, my wisdom remained with me"* (emphasis mine). Remember that important point. When Solomon wrote in v. 10, *"whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them,"* he revealed one of his greatest failures.

"But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites — from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.' Solomon clung to these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned away his heart." 1 Kings 11:1–3

Who were these women?

- Moabites:** descendants of the oldest surviving daughter of Lot.
- Ammonites:** descendants of the youngest surviving daughter of Lot.
- Edomites:** descendants of Esau, who settled in the southeast border of Israel. The region was referred to as Edom or Idumea, but the Nabateans drove them out. Visitors to Petra become familiar with the name Nabatean.



Solomon and the plan for the First Temple, from a Bible card published by the Providence Lithograph Co., 1896

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YOU RECEIVED 739 MESSAGES FROM YOUR WIVES WHILE YOU WERE OUT

Sidonians: a people from the ancient Phoenician city north of Tyre. They worshipped Baal and Ashtoreth. Jezebel was a descendant of these people.

Hittites: among the dwellers in Canaan (at the time of Joshua) who opposed Israel. They were people that God instructed to be driven out ... but were not. Remember, Bathsheba's husband Uriah was a Hittite.

Wisdom didn't seem to rule the day concerning Solomon's harem. When Solomon reflected on his accomplishments in verse eleven, he concluded it was meaningless, like chasing after the wind.

Have you ever chased after the wind? Probably not; but you may have chased after a loose kite or a darting hummingbird. They are near impossible to catch.

But the wind? You can't catch it! Solomon's pursuit of a satisfying, pleasure-filled life was like that.

SOLOMON'S CONFUSION ABOUT WISDOM AND FOOLS (2:12–16)

In Solomon's next entry (2:12–16), he famously concluded that no difference exists between a wise man and a fool. They both will die and be forgotten. I disagree.

Yes; they both die, but wise living is advantageous. Consider the evangelist Billy Graham. His and his team's wisdom over the years served them well in protecting their reputations and giving them a voice to authentically preach the Gospel around the world.

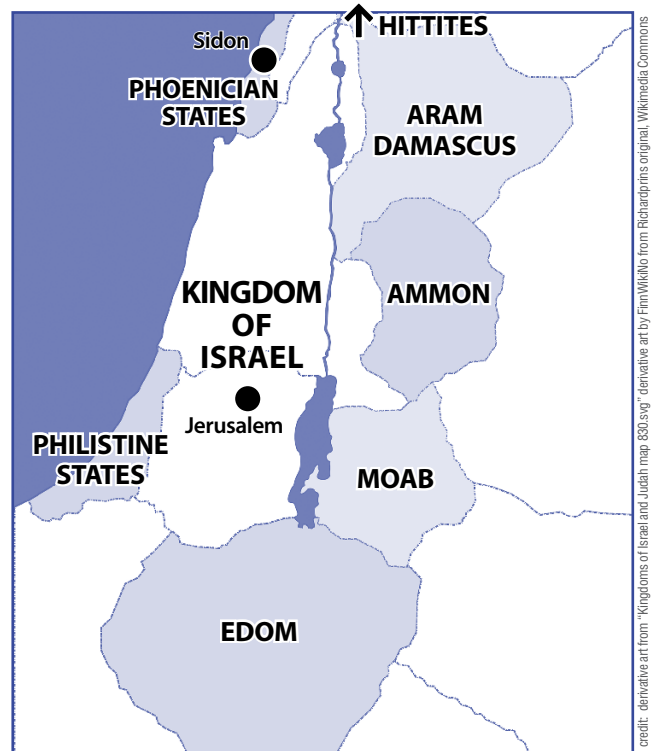
Now consider a man who became a drunken bum in the Bowery, and died with no identification, except a few words scratched on a piece of paper. Stephen Foster gave us the wonderful lyrics of "Camptown Races," "Oh! Susanna," "Beautiful Dreamer," and "My Old Kentucky Home," just to name a few. He died a fool despite being revered for his legacy. There is a difference, and I humbly disagree with Solomon on this point; wisdom does rule over the fool's lack of it.

Without the Good News of Yeshua, Solomon's writing depresses me. Do you believe that life is meaningless? I hope not, because you and I were made in the image of God and after His likeness. We have been bestowed with greatness within us — let's never forget that — and as Believers,* we look forward to eternal life in an inherited Kingdom.

SOLOMON'S LEGACY AND LIFE (2:17–26)

The concluding verses offer two thoughts. The first is found in 2:17–23. Solomon is worried about something he cannot control. He wonders if his legacy will remain intact after he has

* "Believers" is short for "believers in Yeshua/Jesus as Messiah."



Map of the Levant (or Canaan) circa 830 B.C.

passed from the earthly scene. Don't we all want to leave the best part of us to the next generation? We can live a godly, instructive life. Ultimately, we have no control over what will be done when we leave this world. **Solomon's father, King David, gave sage advice in Psalm 34:12–14,**

*"Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good?
Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and
do good; seek peace and pursue it."*

The second thought shines a ray of hope through the pessimism. In Ecclesiastes 2:24–26, Solomon admits that all that is good in life comes from the hand of God. Look at his words in verse 24: *"Nothing is better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of God."* We may be turning a corner in Solomon's philosophy of life. Remember in our study of James what he observed about our lives on this Earth? *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning"* (James 1:17).



Standing firm with Israel and ZLM,

Tony Derrick

P.S. Our next study in Ecclesiastes is about time. We mortals are all bound by time and space, so next month we will listen in to Solomon's thoughts on the subject. ★

Your personal invitation to join Zola Tours in the Holy Land



We meet many people who are waiting for a sign from God before they take a Holy Land tour. If that's you, consider this invitation *your sign!* We believe that the Lord desires all of His followers to *"taste and see that the Lord is good"* (Ps. 34:8) in the actual land of milk and honey (Ex. 3:17). No other place on the planet is God's Covenant Land. There's only one: Israel. Take this amazing opportunity to travel there with fellow ZLMers.

Many folks share stories of wanting to go while unsure how they could afford such a study tour ... and they ended up going! We pray for a similar miracle to happen for you. Your first step? Get in touch with Sandra in our Zola Tours office. Phone her at **214-696-9760**, email her at **travel@levitt.com**, or visit **levitt.com/tours**. She can walk you through every step of getting you ready for this unforgettable pilgrimage.

Fall Tour 2020 options

Deluxe (Israel only)	Oct 19–29	\$5,288
Grand Petra (Israel & Petra)	Oct 19–Nov 01	\$6,488
Grand Athens (Greece & Israel)	Oct 13–29	\$8,288
Ultra Grand (Greece & Israel & Petra)	Oct 13–Nov 01	\$9,488

Prices include tips, taxes, & fuel surcharge (subject to change).

NOTE:
We now spend
one extra day
in Jerusalem!

A Note from David and Kirsten Hart

Have you heard the term “shofar,* so good”? It’s a fun Israeli play on words. Well, we have some good news about *Our Jewish Roots*— shofar so good! Viewers are responding very well to the new program name. We’re getting thumbs up from everyone we talk to.

David and I just attended a gathering of many influential people in the Christian television industry, where we heard positive comments about the new program title. We’ve found that when industry specialists, such as Christian programming directors, agree that an idea is worthwhile, we’re usually headed in the right direction. We also recently guested on four different TV stations in the Atlanta area, promoting *Our Jewish Roots* to viewers in the greater Atlanta, Augusta, and Greenville (SC) markets. ZLMers certainly loved Zola, but they also enthusiastically endorse our new program name’s broader appeal.

We hope you’ve been enjoying Dr. Jeffrey Seif’s teachings on *Joshua* in our newest TV series and will invite your friends and family to watch with you. Word of mouth is the most credible way to promote viewership. We want everyone to experience the in-depth quality of our Bible teaching each week—the dramatic reenactments, the scenery from beautiful Israel, and of course, Zola’s classic music. *Our Jewish Roots* brings you a cornucopia of everything Israeli, Jewish, and Christian; and it *takes you* to the Land itself every week!

***Our Jewish Roots* programs this month**

When you open your Bible to the New Testament, the life of Jesus is told in the four Gospels. The next book, the Acts of the Apostles, is followed by letters to different congregations. The New Testament ends with the Book of Revelation, which describes events that will occur when the Messiah returns. This order of the books makes sense and is easy to follow. It would be natural to assume that The New Testament’s books were written as they appear in the Bible, but they weren’t. To see Paul’s letters in their chronological order (his letter to the Galatians was probably written first) and understand the events that prompted them to be penned, watch our revitalized series on Paul — ***In the Footsteps of the Rabbi from Tarsus***.

This **enhanced eight-part series** begins this month and sheds light on Apostle Paul — his movements and his message. Dr. Jeffrey Seif follows Paul’s footsteps across the ancient Roman Empire and analyzes his divinely inspired letters to early Church congregations, preserved in the New Testament. We packed an abundance of information into eight 30-minute programs that were filmed all around the Mediterranean, including Rome, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, the Aegean Sea, and elsewhere. Besides tracking



Jeff Seif

* A shofar is a ram’s-horn trumpet used by ancient Jews in religious ceremonies and as a battle signal, now sounded at *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*.

(continued p. 6)

the travels of Paul from Jerusalem to Damascus and back, to Tarsus and Antioch, then on his missionary journeys, **Jeff analyzes Paul's letters to the churches to see if what Paul wrote applies to Believers today.** (Hint: it does!) Tune in via television, internet broadcast, or levitt.tv.

Persecutor to Advocate — Dr. Seif gives us background on *Shaul* (Paul), beginning with his persecution of the early Church, his meeting Yeshua on the road to Damascus, and then events leading up to his first ministry.

Message for All Peoples — Barnabas calls Paul to join him in Antioch, and the two set out westward on the first missionary journey. Paul's powerful preaching leads Jews and many gentiles to faith in the Messiah.

Turbulent Journeys — Paul returns to Asia Minor and goes to Athens, where he preaches his famous sermon on Mars Hill. On his third missionary journey, Paul goes to riotous Ephesus and then back to Jerusalem where trouble finds him.

Road to Rome — Paul's legal troubles land him in stormy waters where he is shipwrecked at Malta. His appeal leads to a prison cell in Rome, but even it cannot contain Paul's desire to share the Gospel during the final years of his life.

The backdrops for *In the Footsteps* are breathtaking and the teaching inspirational. After watching this series, you may be ready to sign up for our fall Zola Tour to Greece and Israel. Kirsten and I will host the tour throughout the Mediterranean region, including Ancient Ephesus. Come, see for yourself this gorgeous part of the world, and walk in the footsteps of the rabbi from Tarsus.

If you've been a long-time viewer and supporter of this ministry, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Some ZLMers aren't able to view *Our Jewish Roots* on television or through the internet; nonetheless, they have been longtime readers of the *Levitt Letter* and this *Personal Bible Study Letter*—and to all of you, we offer a hearty "thank you." May your faithful financial sustenance keep us keeping on until the Lord's return.



Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim!—

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!" (Psalm 122:6)

David & Kirsten

David & Kirsten

P.S. Our ZLM family keeps this ministry up and running. I'm sure you're aware that this ministry is 100% financed by our viewers and news magazine readers. ★

Please find our enclosed *TV Airing Schedule* updated with our two new networks: TBN and TCT



Zola Levitt Ministries is ECFA approved!

The Miracle of Passover DVD, study booklet, CD (One of our most popular and best-selling titles!)

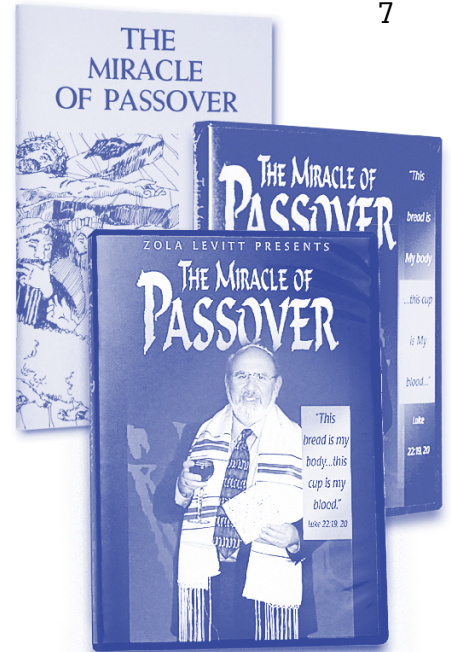
Passover, the crown jewel of the Biblical feasts, begins this year at sundown on Wednesday, April 8.

In the booklet, CD, and DVD, Zola explains the origin and significance of Passover and demonstrates the feast in which Christ is revealed through its very elements. This is one of the most basic and important Bible studies, shedding clear light on the mysteries of the Lord's Supper and unearthing the Jewish roots of Christianity.

Zola demonstrates how dramatically this traditional celebration, thirty-five centuries old, typifies Christ—even in Jewish homes that don't realize the Messiah for whom they wait has already come.

The Miracle of Passover

- ___ Passover DVD – \$26
- ___ Passover study booklet – \$8
- ___ Passover teaching CD – \$12



The Messianic Passover Haggadah — a Messianic book of celebration

You don't have to be Jewish to relive the Feast of Redemption — just redeemed! This 2-color, 36-page book guides you step by step through the traditional Passover Seder, the dinner Jews celebrate annually to remember the Israelites' rescue from Egyptian bondage.

This unique Haggadah focuses on Yeshua's teaching in the Upper Room, which institutes the Lord's Supper. The theme of redemption recurs throughout the evening. You'll find words and sheet music for the songs traditionally sung on Passover. Singing them will enrich your experience. Scripture quotations come from the popular *Complete Jewish Bible*.

The Miracle of Passover

- ___ Messianic Passover Haggadah – \$11

Passover Comination Package

- ___ All four Passover items – \$44
(DVD, CD, booklet, Haggadah)

Prices include shipping. Please allow 2–3 weeks for order processing.

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My check is enclosed for \$ _____

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Where and when do you watch *Our Jewish Roots*?

ZLM needs to ensure that we support the stations and networks that you appreciate. Please check only your primary viewing info below.

I WATCH YOUR PROGRAM ON:

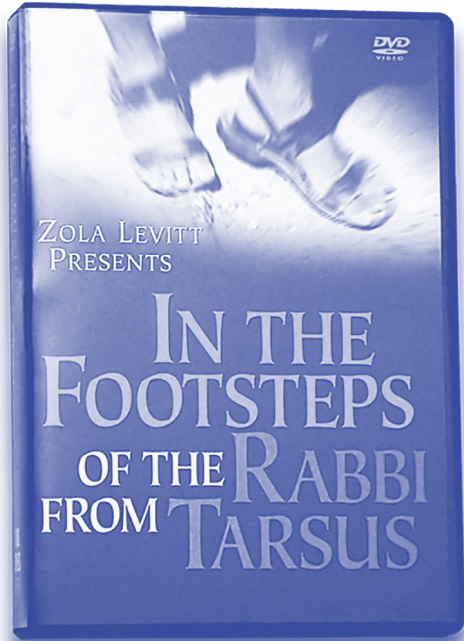
- DAYSTAR
- TBN, Thursdays 6:30pm ET (5:30 CT) (4:30 MT) (3:30 PT)
- TCT, Sundays 7:00pm ET (6:00 CT) (5:00 MT) (4:00 PT)
- Online, e.g. levitt.tv, YouTube, Roku, etc.
- My local channel's call letters are: _____
I watch on: (day & time) _____

I DON'T WATCH YOUR PROGRAM BECAUSE:

- I am unable to receive *Our Jewish Roots*.
- Other: _____

If you have given us this information in the past year, please don't provide it again unless your station or viewing time has changed.





In the Footsteps of the Rabbi from Tarsus DVDs
(Twelve 30-minute TV programs on 3 DVDs)

The revitalized 8-program series begins airing this month on *Our Jewish Roots*. While Jeff's teaching remains constant, this 2008 production features 12 programs taught by a younger Jeff, Zola's widow Sandra Levitt, and more of Zola's music. Quantities of this original DVD series are limited. Don't wait to order yours.

First Steps Toward Christ Paul's "conversion" and subsequent ministry in Damascus/Arabia.

First "Official" Ministry Journey Paul's movements in Jerusalem, Tarsus, and Cilicia, and his "Famine Relief" visit to Jerusalem.

Apostolic Ordination and Subsequent Missionary Journey Paul's apostolic launch and follow-up trip to sort out the angst that developed in the wake of his message to non-Jews.

Second and Third Missionary Journeys Paul's next missionary trips and his apparently ill-fated trek to Jerusalem.

Arrest and Appeal to Rome for Trial Paul's arrest, his transport to a Caesarean prison, and his appeal to Rome where he is eventually sent for trial.

Roman Imprisonment, Release, Travels, and Death Shows Paul imprisoned in Rome, his release and further ministry, and his eventual execution in Rome.

The next six programs consider Paul's divinely inspired Parchments in the order they were written — not from longest to shortest, which is how they appear in the New Testament.

- Paul's Earliest Writings: Galatians and 1 Thessalonians
- Follow-up to the Thessalonians, and 1 Corinthians
- Reconciliation with the Corinthians, and Roman Correspondence
- Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians
- Philippians and 1 Timothy
- Final Steps and Farewell Letters to Titus and Timothy

In the Footsteps of the Rabbi from Tarsus DVDs

- ___ 1 set – \$79
- ___ 2 sets – \$138

Combo Value Package:

One of Each! — **\$104**

- 1 **Passover** DVD
- 1 **Passover** CD
- 1 **Passover** study booklet
- 1 **Messianic Passover Haggadah**
- 1 set of **In the Footsteps of the Rabbi** DVDs

Prices include shipping. Please allow 2–3 weeks for order processing.

Please return this entire page with your order or donation. Thanks.

2003

Dear Tony,

(please check appropriate boxes)

- I appreciate Solomon's honesty about life. Though he was king of Israel and the wisest man ever, he was thoughtful in seeking a fulfilling life.
- Here is my gift for March to help cover the costs of creating new TV programs and adding two national networks for *Our Jewish Roots*.
- I am ordering teaching materials on the enclosed pages totaling:

___ Agree
___ Disagree

\$ _____

\$ _____



**Zola's
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Order Form**

Please complete the form on the reverse side.

Note TBN and TCT addition!

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