



January 2021

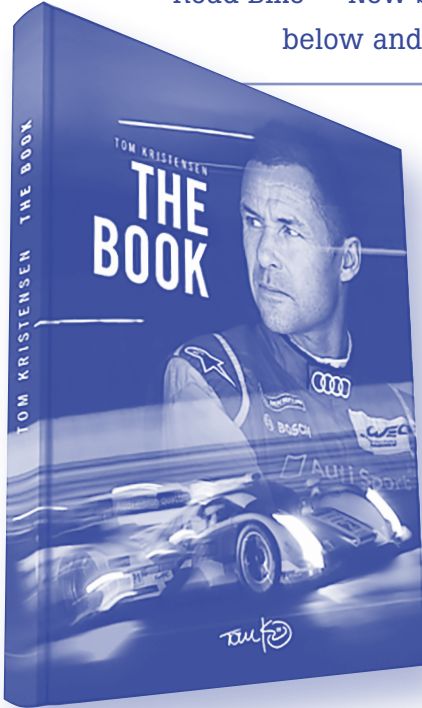


Books, DVDs, CDs, Songs,
Church Speaking, Israel Tours,
International Television
www.levitt.com

A PERSONAL LETTER FROM MARK LEVITT

Dear fellow ZLMer,

PLEASE CHECK OUT: the following two-minute television commercial, “The Lightest Electric Road Bike — New Scott Addict.” **See:** <https://youtu.be/EgaXOrjsDYY>. Or enjoy the synopsis below and watch the video afterward; it’s entertaining enough to replay.



THE TELEVISION COMMERCIAL

The Opening

The scene opens with **Tom Kristensen** asleep in bed, alternating between two dramatic dreams.

A former Danish race car driver,

Tom holds the record for the most wins at 24 Hours of Le Mans. Now 53, he remains a rugged man with a husky, affable voice.

Tomkristensen.com

details his championships that made him a modern-day legend.

Tom also happens to be an avid bicyclist.

Research shows that “sitting” has become the new “smoking,” with inactivity the killer. So, hats off to Tom for inspiring riders with his video endorsement of e-biking (electric-assist biking).

Two Dreams

In the first of his two contrasting dreams, Tom roars down a mountain road on a racing bike while a sports announcer narrates his progress. Then a clock loudly ticks and a crow crows just as the camera zooms in on an isolated, white chapel beneath stormy clouds,

the setting of Tom’s other dream.

We hear Tom’s distinctive Danish accent and now see him through a confessional screen, across from his priest. “Bless me father, for I have sinned. For years I resisted, told myself it wasn’t for me, that I would never touch it, that I...”

“Calm down, my son,” the priest interrupts. “What’s the *matter?*”

“A friend insisted,” Tom continues. “I tried it out, just this once — not for long.” The camera switches back to the aerial view of Tom cycling through winding, downhill turns at breakneck speeds. “And it was *fantastic*,” he confesses.

“Go on!” the priest prods, curious about what vice Tom is about to unveil.

“I thought there’d be no way I’d like it ...,” Tom adds.

Suddenly, a cuckoo clock bird screams, “Cuckoo! [That’s] cuckoo!” refuting the notion that anyone could dislike the pleasure Tom is divulging.

“... that it would slow me down or weaken me somehow. And now I’m *hooked* on it. I’m ashamed! Please, father, I beg you!”

“My son: I appreciate your honesty,” replies the padre. “We all know how hard you’ve been training. But to be absolved of your sin, you must go back to your roots. Do ten hill climbs — the hard way!”

(over please)

Getting Hooked

Suddenly Tom's alarm clock sounds; he wakes up. After retrieving his bike from his workshop, he's helmeted and dressed

up for that day's intense workout. "Ten hill climbs?" Tom rhetorically asks as he defiantly faces the camera. "Maybe tomorrow. Today I'll do *twenty!*"

The commercial by Scott Sports is promoting their Addict line of electric-assisted road bikes, an apparent wink at cyclists who joke about being addicted to biking. Tom, as you'll recall, confessed that he was *hooked*.

OUR OWN ADDICTIONS

In the October 2020 *Personal Letter*, Sarah Liberman related her own victory over sugar addiction. Living near Caesarea, she wrote candidly about "the 'sickness' of wealth," how gluttony appears to be "a sin without sermons," and warned about "allowing 'things' to take control." While food and exercise are gifts from above, they can eclipse our focus on God when taken to excess. Bible reading and prayer are immunizations and antidotes to help us abide by the wisdom of "moderation in all things." As Paul wrote:

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.
(1 Cor. 6:12 KJV)

DON'T BREAK THE LAW (of Physics)

To be clear, I came upon Tom's ad while researching a competing brand of e-bike. I ride 29 miles per day, weather permitting, in order to circumnavigate White Rock Lake in northeast Dallas. At age 60 and averaging 15 mph, I was sorely tempted by the prospect of going faster, saving time, and no longer getting dusted by riders half my age.

Imagine a little devil on my shoulder whispering in my ear, holding a three-pronged pitchfork and prodding, "Why not have some extra fun? ... You'll be getting the same exercise benefits with less effort!" Sanctification helps Believers* discern the sort of pushy rhetoric that Yeshua heard after fasting for forty days and nights: "... *command that these stones be made bread*" (Matt. 4:1–11).

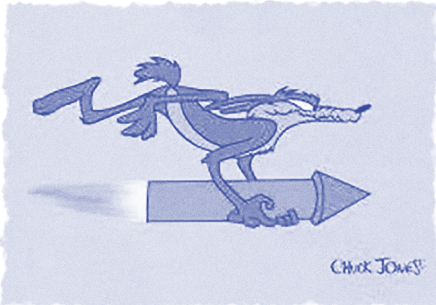
Meditation over a few laws of physics eventually led me to realize that an e-bike would more than double the risks of my daily rides — even if I didn't go anywhere near the bike's top speed of 28 mph. Rather than assert that e-bikes are of the devil or that no one should ever own one, I see them as analogous to other potential pitfalls for us mortals. Like college loans and reverse mortgages, e-bikes can be appropriate in certain instances, but only after exhausting other options.

DON'T BREAK THE LAW (of Spending)

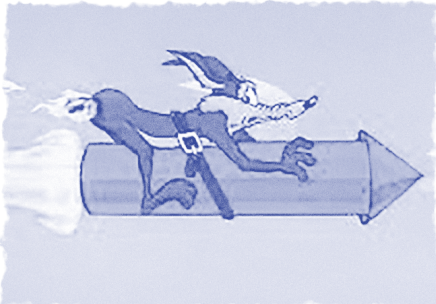
Just as speeding up your ride is dangerous, turbocharging your spending with credit holds perils. Options that may be wise for a responsible steward could be poison for a push-over — perhaps an impulsive or undisciplined Believer. Moderate debt can be good medicine, but who wants to overdose? Slowing down a bit, whether it's our spending or lifestyles, gives us more time for reading and prayer. "*Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth*" (Psa. 46:10) — timely Scripture for when you and I are well advised to shelter in place.

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

Weaker riders or those coping with excessive hills, for instance, could benefit from an e-bike's occasional assistance if they don't mind more maintenance and will, or even *can*,



Wile E. Coyote on a standard Acme rocket



Wile E. Coyote on a bigger, faster Acme rocket (1 Cor. 6:12 KJV)

resist the temptation to impersonate Wile E. Coyote on an Acme rocket. For cyclists who already ride faster than the average 12 mph, adding an electric motor could be tempting fate by **giving the devil a ride**. Excessive speed, whatever you're riding or driving, is too often a contributing factor in accidents — and their consequences.

College Loans

Speaking of college loans, the five-minute video at <https://youtu.be/PE66HEZBZYE> dramatizes how millions of families unwittingly gave the devil a ride when taking on excessive debt that never goes away, not even with bankruptcy. As of 2017, 42 million Americans had a total of \$1.3 trillion in school loans. One in four borrowers is behind, and over 8 million are in default. If you know anyone who might cosign on a college loan and tangle with Sallie Mae, please suggest that they watch this cautionary tale, perhaps beginning at the 3:35 mark.

Reverse Morgages

Reverse mortgages are another type of potentially perilous debt that can hammer family net

worth. Despite high upfront costs and treacherous gotchas, however, sometimes no better alternative exists for consumers without heirs (or heirs unable to assist). To investigate the potential pitfalls of reverse mortgages, see:

1) **"The Dark Side of Reverse Mortgages"** by stewardship advice columnist Scott Burns at <https://assetbuilder.com/knowledge-center/articles/the-dark-side-of-reverse-mortgages>,

2) **"How Does a Reverse Mortgage Work?"** at <https://www.daveramsey.com/askdave/home-buying-and-selling/how-does-a-reverse-mortgage-work>,

and

3) **"Reverse Mortgages are Scams"** (an eight-minute video) at <https://youtu.be/rxVeW09K5oo>,

the latter two by Dave Ramsey.

Never Give the Devil a Ride

Here's a bulletin board item from the May 2016 *Levitt Letter*:

When the devil says, "Let's make a deal," let the hands of **Jesus** take the wheel! Enjoy the 3½-minute music video:

<https://youtu.be/kZxVYy30Fhs>

From the Land Whar...

... the grass grows Blue: "Never Give the Devil a Ride." Soulful singer Brad Davis rhythmically beseeches:

When you're on the road to nowhere, with a million miles to go,
and you're lookin' for someone to share the ride;
and you see "him" in your headlights, waitin' for some weary soul.

And he's standin' with temptation by his side,
Never give the devil a ride.

He'll be in that driver's seat, as soon as he's inside.

(continued p. 4)



ZOLA TOURS UPDATE

Please reread this excerpt from the January 2021 *Levitt Letter*:

In 2020, for the first time in four decades, we missed filming Holy Land television footage and hosting our spring and fall study tours. The setbacks and inconveniences caused by COVID-19 have forced us to adapt (which we've done rather well) and primed us to be especially grateful when we return to Israel this fall.

Thank the Lord for Capernaum Village. Near Dallas, it has been a wonderful location for dramatic re-enactments of Biblical events. PTL, despite the pandemic, we've successfully kept our two new national television networks — TBN on Thursdays and TCT on Sundays. We've been blessed by Sarah Liberman, our Sabra on the ground in Israel, whose *Personal Letter* messages began last July, and for Tony's incredible Ecclesiastes study that resumed in the August 2020 *Levitt Letter*.

SARAH WILL RETURN

Speaking of Sarah, she will resume writing this *Personal Letter* next month. Born and reared in Israel and totally embracing both Testaments in all facets of her life may make her as Jewish as you can get. Between you and me, she accepted zero pay for her writing until the pandemic torpedoed most all of her Bible teaching and singing gigs.

As you probably know, the *Levitt Letter* is our free, monthly, 36-page news magazine. It shamelessly (read: proudly) extols the virtues of Israel as the only land ever decreed by God to be gifted to His Chosen People. This ministry has nothing negative to report about Israel, warts and all. Israel is the Apple of our eye as well as God's (Zech. 2:8). That puts our organization on His team and vice versa. What could be more basic or fulfilling? Whoever understands Gen. 12:3 ("And I will bless them that bless thee ...") will readily recognize God's consistent blessings on this ministry's efforts.

Each *Personal Letter* is theoretically a fund appeal. As you have seen over the months and years, ZLM's fund appeals often get lost among the abundant Bible teaching. This tendency results in more readers being edified while the few continue supporting us. You who *do* uphold our ministry, however, see decade after decade ZLM staffers' devotion to teaching the Bible and sharing Yeshua. Thanks for staying with us.



In His service,

Mark Levitt

P.S. "Under the CARES Act, beginning in 2020, individuals who do not itemize deductions may deduct up to \$300 in charitable cash contributions. The limit applies regardless of marital status. This universal charitable deduction is an above-the-line deduction and is deducted from the taxpayer's income prior to calculating adjusted gross income. And it is taken in addition to the standard deduction." *Source:*

http://www.ecfa.org/Documents/News/ECFA_CARES_Act_Document.pdf ★

A Note from David and Kirsten Hart

Many of us in the past few months have “agreed to disagree.” However, I see worldwide gratitude that 2020 is over. A fresh new year sounds wonderful! Was every day of 2020 exhausting and depressing? Not at all. In fact, our family celebrated the birth of our newest grandson, Ty David Hart on May 14. That was a glorious day!

In the midst of confusing and trying times, God provides continuing joy, peace, and the underlying assurance that He is ultimately in control. Regardless of what we see and hear around us, and despite many walking through rough days due to Covid-19, we have reason to be hopeful. The pandemic aspect of 2020 *has* been incredibly harsh. If you have lost a loved one this year, our hearts go out to you and your family.

After the disappointment of seeing both spring and fall 2020 tours canceled, we’ve now learned that our Spring Tour 2021 would have faced the same Covid travel restrictions. It breaks our hearts to be postponed yet again. Yet I have to remind myself that no one else is able to tour Israel, either.

Zola Tours: We’re Ready



I foresee a celebration when we can once again enter the Promised Land. We’d love for you to be there with us as we tread where the Creator of the Universe resided in human form. To celebrate with us, contact our tour manager Sandra at **214-696-9760**, travel@levitt.com, or get more information at levitt.com/tours.

The exact details of our tour this fall are still evolving. Uncertainties with cruises are leading us to suspend our popular Greek extension and Mediterranean cruise. However, Zola Tours may develop alternative options for our traditional Israel pilgrimage. Walking and worshiping where our Lord did is sure to enhance your spiritual walk... and bless Israel in the process.

CANCELED Spring Tour 2021 — Canceled

Fall Tour 2021 options

Economic uncertainty in Greece related to the coronavirus prevents us from visiting Greece on our Fall 2021 Tour.

Deluxe (Israel only)	Oct. 18–28	prices TBD
Grand Petra (Israel & Petra)	Oct. 18–31	prices TBD

FALL 2021 dates are tentative.

Speaking of blessing Israel, you may not realize that our ministry maintains a **Good News Benevolence Fund** that enables ZLM to offer assistance to folks-in-need who are associated with the ministry. Examples include staffers’ personal emergencies and sustenance for Israeli tour guides and bus drivers. We not only travel to Israel; we also publicize sister ministries there and, since Zola’s heyday, periodically assist our Israeli allies during lean years.

Financial Funnies

#160

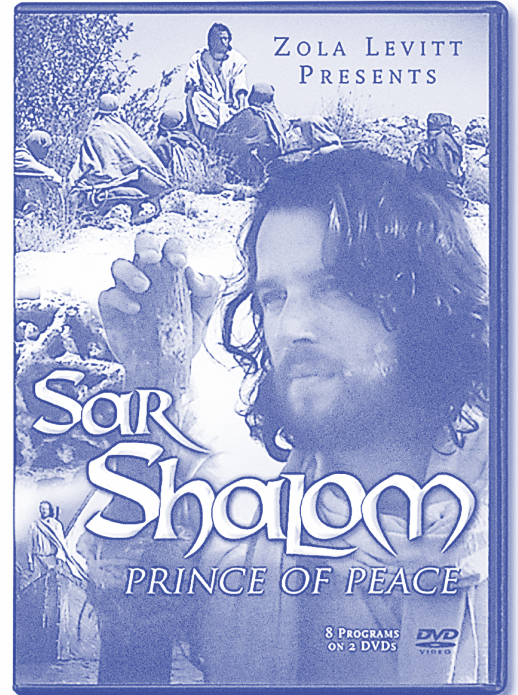


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Our Jewish Roots TV programs in January

Our Jewish Roots finished 2020 in decent shape, prepared to hit the ground running in 2021. Not being able to tape our Bible teachings in Israel hasn't slowed production of new television programs. We do whatever it takes to continue airing fresh content with insight into the strong Jewish roots of Christianity for all of our viewers.

Because of your financial support, we are able to bring you these programs in January. Our current season of unrest cries out for a series about peace. **Sar Shalom: Prince of Peace**, which was filmed in Israel, explores what it means to walk in the footsteps of Israel's Messiah. **Jeff Seif's** passage-by-passage exposition of Yeshua's principal teachings comes to life through dramatic re-enactments produced in Israel and performed by Israelis.



Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1–16) — We consider the “Beatitudes” and Jesus/Yeshua’s exhortation that Believers be “salt” and “light.”

Crimes of the Heart (Matthew 5:17–30) — We contemplate how Jesus/Yeshua fulfills the Torah, murder begins in the heart, and adultery begins with desire.

The Law Brought to Life (Matthew 5:31–42) — Yeshua speaks of human bonds like divorce and marriage, and explains how to be gracious even toward the ungracious.

Models of Behavior (Matthew 5:43–6:15) — Yeshua teaches how to deal with enemies and emphasizes doing good to please God rather than men, and how to pray.

Eternal Investments (Matthew 6:16–23) — fasting pays dividends; laying up treasures on Earth alone does not. Generosity brings moral health.



Jeff Seif



Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim! —

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

David & Kirsten

David & Kirsten

P.S. We're all familiar with the term “every vote counts.” Well, every dollar counts too, and each donation to our ministry is used to spread the Gospel through our television program, www.levitt.com, and print and social media. Let's make 2021 the year when, no matter what the world's economy looks like, this ministry expands and grows in ways we never dreamed possible. Thanks in advance for your gifts. ★

Mine Eyes Have Seen

Zola's After-Christmas Musical DVD

(one 30-minute TV program)

In this "after-Christmas musical," Zola narrates the moving story of Simeon, the aged-but-faithful servant who waited to see the Messiah face to face. This beautifully staged, half-hour presentation will have you singing along with Simeon and Anna about the arrival of the King of kings, the Holy One of Israel.

Soundtrack available on *The Works II* CD and in MP3 format from iTunes, Amazon, and Google.

Mine Eyes Have Seen

____ DVD – \$26

See next page for our
Combo Value Package



Note: The actor portraying Baby Jesus is Zola's grandson.



Zola Levitt Ministries is ECFA approved!

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

Box 12268 • Dallas TX 75225-0268 • 1-800-WONDERS (966-3377) for orders & donations

Please return this tear-off with your donation or the entire page with your order. Thanks.

My check is enclosed for \$ _____

Please charge \$ _____ to:



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Expires ____ / ____ Card security # _____

Cardholder's
Signature _____

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, Wed. 11:00pm ET, Fri. 6:00pm ET
- TBN, Thursdays 6:30pm ET
- TCT, Sundays 7:00pm ET
- 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.





Heaven and Earth book Ken Berg's favorite Holy Land photographs and stories

For four decades, the producer of Zola Levitt's television programs has traversed the Bible Lands with his camera at the ready. Now this well organized, full-color portfolio of Ken's most inspirational shots chronicles key appointed places that God chose as backdrops for His Holy Writ, the Bible, to unfold. From the mountaintops to the rivers and seas, deserts, and archaeological excavations, Ken's narrative lets the reader commune anew with Scriptures written thousands of years ago.

- 1 copy – \$25
- 2 copies – \$45
- 3 copies – \$63



Messianic Grafted-In sterling silver necklace (1 1/2" x 1/2", 15/8" with bail)

A solid sterling silver rendition of a classic Messianic symbol that combines the menorah, Star of David, and the Christian fish. Stir curiosities and witnessing opportunities with this tribute to light, God, and abundant love (Malachi 3:3). Includes 18" sterling silver chain.

- 1 necklace – \$48
- 2 necklaces – \$88
- 3 necklaces – \$117

Combo Value Package: One of all 3 items! — \$86

- 1 *Mine Eyes Have Seen* DVD
- 1 *Heaven and Earth* book
- 1 *Grafted-In* Necklace

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

Please tear off coupon to donate. Return entire page with order. Thanks.

2101

Dear Mark,

(please check appropriate boxes)

Your examples about moderation in all things — our speed, spending, eating — shed helpful light on 1 Corinthians 6:12.

Here is my donation for **January**. ZLM's television series *Sar Shalom: Prince of Peace* should reassure viewers as an anxious, new year begins.

I am ordering teaching materials from the enclosed pages, totaling:

- Agree
- Disagree

\$ _____

\$ _____

Please complete
the form on the
reverse side.



**Zola's
Donation &
Materials
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