



July 2021



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FROM SARAH, OUR *SABRA* ON THE GROUND IN ISRAEL

Dear Friend,

Greetings to you from the Holy Land. I'd like to thank several of you for responding to my letters and writing in with questions and words of encouragement.

Since I last wrote, Israel and Hamas (the terror organization controlling the Gaza Strip on Israel's southern border) engaged in eleven days of violent altercations with casualties on both sides.

While you may be familiar with the foreign news coverage of the events, I want to share a boots-on-the-ground perspective and, more importantly, the causes and aftermath. Here in Israel, we are unfortunately getting use to these disruptions.

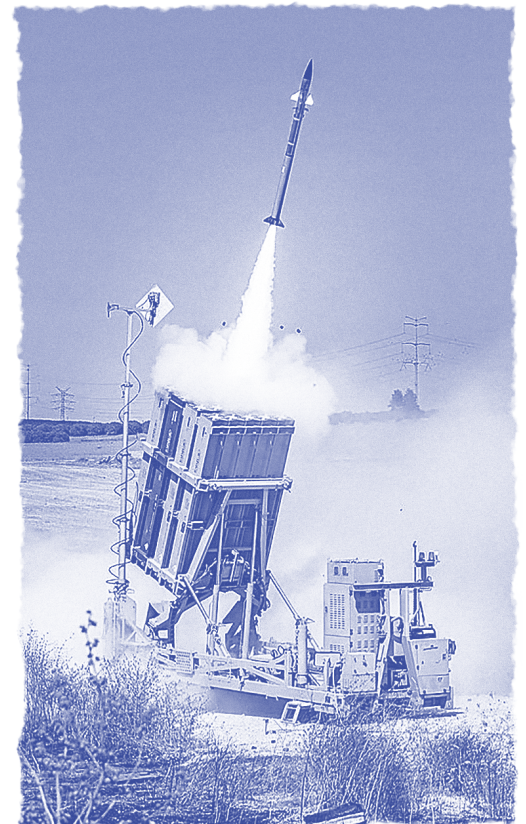
The most significant aspect of these eleven horrifying days was not the rockets coming from Gaza or Israel's response to this attack. It was rather the explosive violence in Arab-Jewish relationships within Israel, specifically in what we call the mixed cities. Mixed cities are areas in which Arabs and Jews live together, neighborhood next to neighborhood, in the same municipality.

The violence between Arabs and Jews — vandalism, shootings, and horrible lynchings (murderous attacks outside the law, not limited to hangings) — provided quite a shock to us longtime residents. The **sudden explosion of violence** was devastating and heartbreaking. The very idea of coexistence came under attack in an instant... **with no warning**.

As I reflect on those two weeks in mid-May, it appears that Hamas's major achievements were destroying relationships between Jews and Arabs inside Israel and increasing their own support in the West Bank, which is currently controlled by their rival, the Palestinian Authority (PA).

THE ORIGIN AND SPREAD OF THE CURRENT TENSIONS

Ostensibly, the tensions began due to an ongoing argument concerning the true ownership of some real estate in Sheikh Jarach, an Arab East Jerusalem neighborhood. A recent decision by the Supreme Court awarded ownership of some homes to their original Jewish owners. During the Islamic month of Ramadan — already a sensitive time — emotions erupted when Israeli police moved to enforce that court order.



Iron Dome launches a Tamir interceptor during Operation Guardian of the Walls, May 2021

(over please)

This enforcement action caused already rising tensions to explode as Ramadan-fasting and -praying Arab Muslims began to riot on the nearby Temple Mount. In an effort to keep the violence from spilling into Jerusalem's Old City, Israeli police placed restrictions on the people entering and leaving the Temple Mount.

Hamas (the rulers in Gaza) took up the cause of Sheikh Jarach. Then, in an unprecedented move, Hamas lobbed rockets at Jerusalem on Jerusalem Day — a day when Israelis celebrate the reunification of East and West Jerusalem and the return of the Western Wall to Jewish hands following the 1967 Six-Day War.

While tensions rose in Jerusalem, young Arabs in Lod, a mixed city where Jews and Arabs have been living together in relative peace for over 60 years, began demonstrating in solidarity with the chaos in Jerusalem. That night, a young Arab man was fatally shot by a Jew who claimed to be defending a nearby Jewish neighborhood from an advancing Arab mob.

This killing set off what became the most violent period between Arabs and Jews inside Israel since the '60s. The following night, violent Jewish and Arab riots spread through other mixed cities, including Aki, Nazareth, and Haifa.

When news of these altercations spread, increasing numbers of young Jews and Arabs took to major junctions of inter-city roads all over Israel in protest. The abundance of events overwhelmed police forces, who were vastly outnumbered. Both Jewish and Arab mobs carried out violent lynchings. A real and very present spirit of lawlessness spread throughout the country.

THE POLITICS OF THE CURRENT TENSIONS

My family and many others did not dare leave the perimeter of our little town for nearly two weeks. The riots and mobs attacking families (some with babies and young children!) in cars passing through these inter-city junctions imprisoned and shocked us. Fear soon replaced our astonishment: Are we charging headfirst into civil war?!

That question raises two other questions:

- Why did Hamas decide to risk firing rockets at Jerusalem?
- What made Israeli Arabs react with such violence *this* time?

Just before the events of Sheikh Jarach, the PA, led by Mahmoud Abbas, suddenly canceled the West Bank and East Jerusalem elections, fearing that Hamas would win and take power in the West Bank. Hamas successfully hijacked the roughly two million residents of the Gaza Strip in 2007 by killing the Gazan leaders of Fatah (which later became the PA in the West Bank).

Hamas has been designated a terrorist organization by the U.S. since 1995 and the EU since



2003. It will never agree to Gaza being economically and civically stable because Hamas loses its legitimacy if Gaza succeeds. Nor does its boss — Iran — wish for calm and peace in Israel. Hamas will never accept the existence of the State of Israel and will instigate violence to keep peace and normalcy at bay.

If there were legitimate leadership in Gaza that wanted real peace, Israel would agree and make many concessions to sign such a treaty. However, because no such leadership exists, Israel took the opportunity to deal decisively with Hamas. For the past few months, Hamas operatives had been shooting rockets into civilian populations in Israel’s southern and central regions, as is their usual practice. Israel surgically — and with minimum civilian Arab casualties — removed Hamas’s rocket-building capabilities and other terrorist tools in Gaza as part of this Operation Guardian of the Walls.

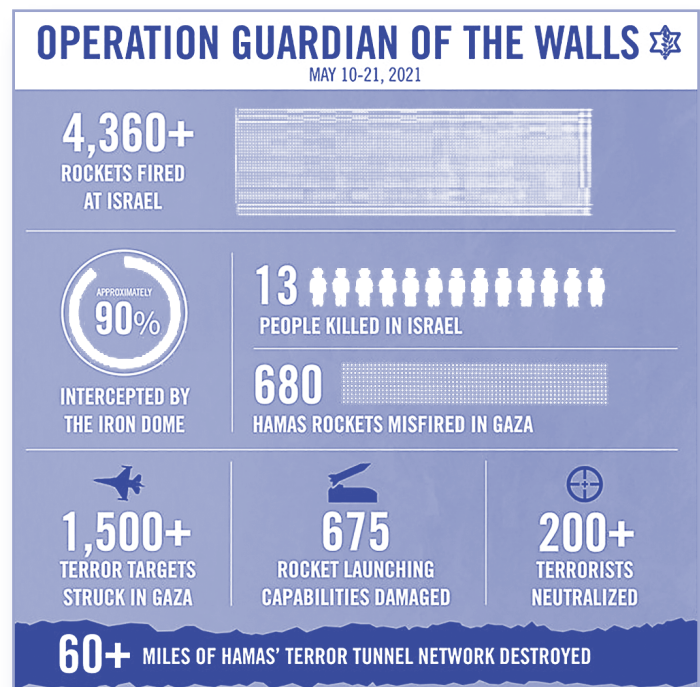
THE “FLAW” IN THE IRON DOME

In 2011, Israel developed the Iron Dome to shield its population from Hamas rockets. During this recent attack, it proved to be 90% accurate even though Hamas tried to overwhelm the system by firing large numbers of rockets in rapid succession. This short-range air-defense system saved many lives in Israel and kept Israel from having to enter Gaza with IDF ground forces, which also minimized casualties on both sides.

As protective as the Iron Dome system is, it also helps perpetuate the tension cycles between Israel and Gaza. Israel developed this one-of-a-kind defense to deal with the inability to reach an agreement with Gaza and the Hamas terrorist organization. Hamas continues to pour its wealth into developing weapons and military infrastructure instead of building a prosperous society.

Examining the identities of the Arab rioters inside Israel shows that they were primarily young men, ages 17–20. As many as 40% in this demographic don’t have work and aren’t in school, and thus they turn to a life of mischief and crime. Sixty percent of convicted Arabs are young men with no job or schooling. In the Arab society, a majority of parents lack high levels of education and don’t invest money or effort into educating their children.

These young Arabs compare their lives to their Jewish contemporaries’, especially in the mixed cities where the disparity and lack of opportunities available to them are glaring. Another major factor: For many years Israel chose not to deal with the rising violence within its Arab population. Currently, as many as half a million illegal weapons in these cities and towns contribute to many killings. One could say that it was only a matter of time before the violence would spill over into confrontations with Jews.



(continued p. 4)

TIMED TO DISRUPT PEACE

The timing of all of these events was no coincidence. Israel was within 48 hours of a historic change whereby this coexistence between Jews and Arabs would manifest itself politically: forming a national government that, **for the first time**, would be backed by an Arab party. Extreme political forces — both Jewish and Arab — were unwilling to accept this situation and fueled the rumors, hatred, and fear that drove these riots on both sides. As a recent commentator on Israeli radio noted: “Empathy and fear cannot coexist.”

We cannot disregard the spiritual timing either: The violence occurred during the convergence of Ramadan, Jerusalem Day, and Pentecost Sunday. The devil does not want God’s plan of reconciliation between Arabs and Jews through the Prince of Peace/Yeshua to unfold.

Satan continues his assault on the city of the great king — Jerusalem. There is no solution to this situation in the natural realm. We, as Believers* the world over, must stand in unity and pray for the people of this Land. Pray for the spiritual awakening of the people who live here — that they would walk according to God’s Word and law and not according to the ways of the world.

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned” (Isaiah 9:2).

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (Psalm 122:6).



Im tirdefu lada-at oto —

“Press on to know HIM!” (Hosea 6:3 NLT),

Sarah Liberman | *שרה ליברמן*
 Sarah Liberman ENGLISH HEBREW

P.S. Do you have a special prayer for Jerusalem or a word that God gave you for the situation here? Please write to me and let me know. ★

Zola Tours: A Zola Tours Promise

To be honest, after reading Sarah’s article, some would-be pilgrims may be wary about traveling to Israel this October. But rest assured: **Zola Tours visits only the safest locations.** In the decades that we have been taking tours to the Holy Land, our groups always felt safe and secure. Our tour guides are savvy professionals in both teaching and guiding groups through the regions and cities in Israel.

Kirsten and I host the tours as well as lead worship. We promise peace of mind as we sing and worship in the Holy Land. Please come with us and share our experience each time we land in Tel Aviv. When our feet touch that covenant land, we are filled with the deep sense of *peace*.

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

Sandra, our travel manager, is buttoning down every detail for our upcoming October tour and arranging flights for our Spring 2022 Tour. For reservations or more information, please contact her at **214-696-9760**, travel@levitt.com, or levitt.com/tours. She can help you prepare for your journey of a lifetime!

**NOTE:
NO price
increase!**

Fall Tour 2021 options

Deluxe — Israel	October 18–28	\$5,288
Grand Petra — Israel & Petra	October 18–31	\$6,488

Uncertainty in Greece due to the coronavirus prevents us from visiting Greece on our Fall 2021 Tour.

Spring Tour 2022 options

Deluxe — Israel	March 14–24	price TBD
Grand Petra — Israel & Petra	March 14–27	price TBD

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


A Note from David and Kirsten Hart

We hope that you enjoyed the inside scoop from **Clayton Herring** last month. Here’s a little scoop on Clayton, our behind-the-scenes producer for *Our Jewish Roots*. He is a healthy eater! Whenever we go out to eat during production week, he orders grilled salmon and salad. A humble and gifted lover of Yeshua, Clayton is an all-around gentleman and scholar.



Clayton Herring

TALENTED AND TRAINED
 Graduating in '82 with a Radio, TV and Film degree, Clayton has helped with several facets of our TV production for the last several years. He is gifted in both video and audio, operating a camera and audio gear, and setting up the lights. He's been a Believer since his early teens, and his versatility as a professional is one reason our quality productions don't require the huge staffs characteristic of secular TV.



Clayton Herring as he first appeared in the January 1995 *Levitt Letter*



Sammy Davenport

June found the whole *OJR* television team busy at our Dallas, Texas production offices and in the local TV studio. We’ve also branched out into a new area!

Sammy Davenport — we really must spotlight him here

soon — is the arranger behind the music of *Our Jewish Roots (OJR)*, having worked with Zola for decades. Most of the music on the program is from Sammy’s gifted fingers on the keyboard and his various instrumentalists. Now his creativity helps Kirsten and

me bring much beloved Church hymns to *OJR* viewers.

Naturally, in true Sammy Davenport style, these hymn renditions will have a lush and novel Israeli feel. These new songs (we recently recorded five at Charley Pride’s recording studio in Dallas) will be featured in the new *OJR* television Bible-teaching series ***Faith for the Future***. We’ve already created music videos for the programs and plan to tape additional footage when we return to Israel.



Kirsten Hart recording in Charley Pride’s studio

(continued p. 6)

Our Jewish Roots TV programs in July

Letters and Preview of Eretz Israel — Dr. Seif and the Harts answer letters from viewers and preview our series *Eretz Israel*, which begins next week.

In the eight-part television series *Eretz Israel (The Land of Israel)*, Dr. Jeffrey Seif takes viewers through the Land of Israel. By exploring the Bible's accounts of the Holy Land's past, present, and prophetic future, we discover an inextricable relationship between the people of Israel and the land of Israel.

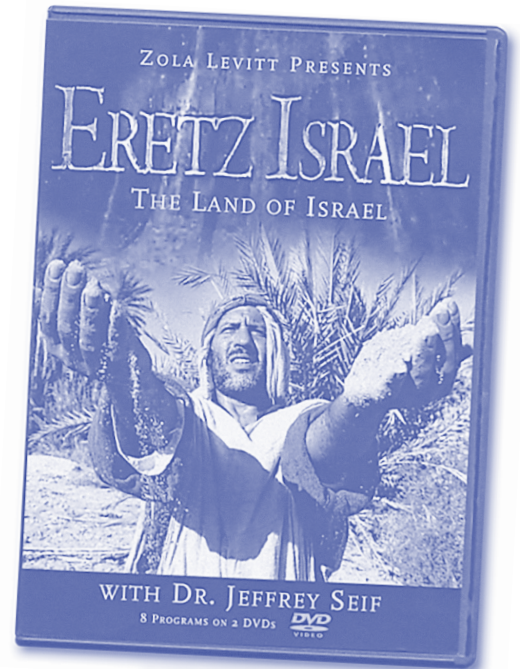
Former CBS correspondent David Dolan helps explore the modern-day struggles that accompany the re-establishment of the ancestral Jewish homeland. On-location TV footage, dramas, and Zola's wonderful music punctuate the series.

The Land Promised — In Bethel, we explore God's promise to Abraham: that his descendants are eternally bound to what we call the "Promised Land."

Promised to the Next Generation — In Beersheba, we discuss how God visited Isaac there and confirmed His intention to give the Land to Isaac and to his seed.

To All Generations — Discover how Bethel became a "gate[way] to heaven" (Genesis 28:17). God affirmed to Jacob the promises He made to Abraham and Isaac.

Kirsten, Dr. Seif, the whole ZLM team, and I consider it an honor to create these Bible-teaching TV programs and newsletters for you. Thank you for encouraging and supporting us. Please remember to pray for the whole nation of Israel and ...



Jeff Seif



Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim! —

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

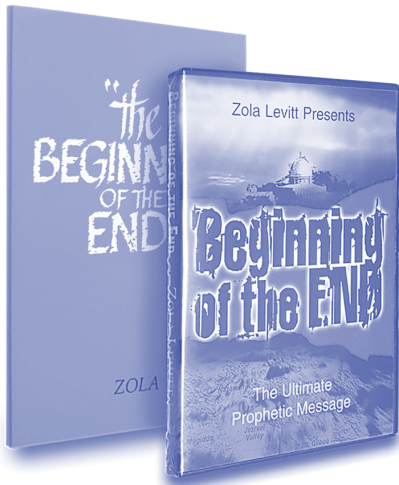
David & Kirsten

David & Kirsten

P.S. We depend on your gifts. Pledged funds like Zola's Monthly Gift Program help us budget for new programs and projects (see p. 7). If you believe in what we teach about the Bible, would you kindly back us with generous and cheerful giving? (2 Cor. 9:6–7) *Toda Raba* ("Thank you very much" in Hebrew). ★



Zola Levitt Ministries is ECFA approved!



Beginning of the End teaching CDs and book

A most unusual study with a dramatic urgency. The Rapture, the antiChrist, the Third Temple, Armageddon, and the Second Coming are among the subjects considered, along with world affairs leading to The End. A "must read"!

The CD features Zola's teaching, plus his original music and soundtrack from the dramatic TV series (it is a 2-CD set). Due to the cost of replenishing our inventory of DVDs, this video teaching is now available only at levitt.tv/classic_zola. It can be viewed for free because of ZLM's policy of ensuring easy access to our essential Bible teaching, hopefully even after the Rapture of the Church.

Beginning of the End

- ___ 1 book – \$13
- ___ 1 set of CDs – \$17
- ___ 1 book *and* CD set – \$27

See the next page for our
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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, 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: _____
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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.



Kings and Kingdoms DVD set Eight 30-minute programs on two DVDs

From the Books of 1st and 2nd Kings and on location in Israel, Dr. Jeffrey Seif examines the rulers of ancient Israel and Judah, whose stories reveal lessons in Godly leadership. David and Kirsten Hart discuss their applications for us. In this eight-part series, we hear Israeli perspectives on the kings, and Sarah Liberman teaches us Hebrew.

Israel's First Kings Dr. Seif discusses the reason for Israel's first two kings—Saul and David—and the expectations placed on them. Those in leadership—in fact, all Believers—face a constant temptation to drift away from Biblical values.

Kingdom Divided Even wise Solomon made foolish mistakes by allowing his heart to drift away from the Lord. His son Rehoboam drifted much farther and caused Jeroboam to lead 10 of the 12 tribes in rebellion, creating the northern Kingdom of Israel. The two tribes that remained—Judah and Benjamin—formed the southern Kingdom of Judah.

Israel's Omri and Ahab Omri seized Israel's throne by mutiny. Deterioration continued when his heir Ahab (the worst king ever) not only turned away from God but actively opposed Him.

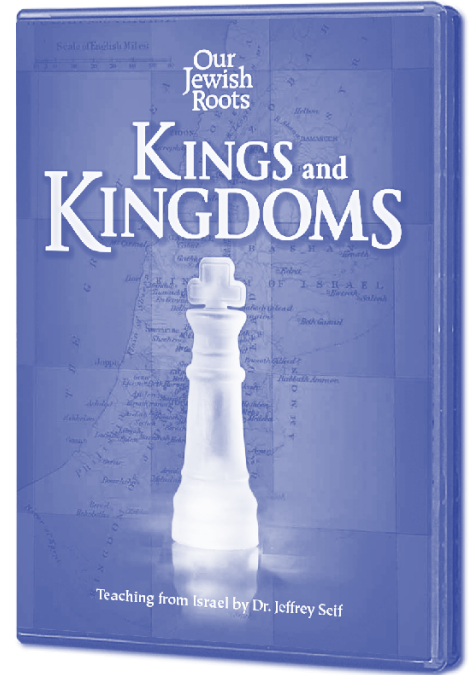
Israel's Jeroboam II and Hoshea Evil King Jeroboam II was still praised for securing Israel's border. Leaders should be trustworthy, not bloodthirsty. King Hoshea reaped what he sowed and, unfortunately, so did Israel.

Judah's Joash and Uzziah Young leaders need wisdom and guidance from advisers who are tethered to God's Word. King Joash's zeal for the Lord faded as his pride grew. King Uzziah became so obsessed with power, the Lord smote him with leprosy.

Judah's Hezekiah and Manasseh Good King Hezekiah did not depart from following God and His commandments. Faithfulness pays dividends! Unfortunately, Hezekiah's son Manasseh brought Judah horror and bloodshed for the five decades of his rule.

Judah's Josiah and Zedekiah King Josiah rediscovered God's Word and took it seriously. Oh, that our leaders would do the same! Poor leadership leads to bad consequences. Josiah's son Zedekiah rebelled against the Lord, paving Judah's road to ruin.

Israel's Future King The prophet Isaiah looked to a reunited Israel's ultimate King—the Lord Yeshua, who will return to rule from David's throne.



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Please tear off coupon to donate. Return entire page with order. Thanks. 2107

Dear Sarah, *(please check appropriate boxes)*

God desires for ALL to believe in Him and have eternal life through Jesus. Believers pray for Jews, gentiles, and Arabs to come to faith in Messiah.

Agree
 Disagree

Here is my donation for **July**. I'm helping ZLM continue teaching the Bible's truth and today's news about Israel through materials and broadcasting.

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

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