



February 2023

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



Books, DVDs, CDs, Songs,  
Church Speaking, Israel Tours,  
International Television  
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Dear Friend,

Greetings from Israel. As part of the newly formed government coalition led by re-elected Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the right-wing parties signed important agreements after the elections. In the past, such deals designated financial support for the parties' causes and constituents. For example, ultra-Orthodox parties received large amounts of money for religious schools or subsidies for Torah students (approximately 140,000 men who study Torah instead of working).

Unlike previous negotiations, this time the agreements included hefty financial settlements and, for the first time, significant changes to important laws, our legal system, the Israel Defense Forces, and more. These new agreements, which will change many aspects of life in Israel, are based on a minority of the population's convictions.

### Amending the Law of Return

One change is a permanent amendment to the Law of Return. This law, developed approximately two years after the State of Israel was formed in 1948, established who could immigrate to Israel. For the most part, the law allowed any Jew who desired to settle in Israel and become a citizen to return to the Land.

The Law of Return gave these Jewish immigrants special status as *olim* (those who make *aliyah*—Jews who immigrate to Israel). It also offered financial benefits to help *olim* get established in Israel. The 1950 law, however, was not rigid in determining who qualified as a Jew.

The founders of the State of Israel adopted this rule: Anyone the Nazis intended to murder in the concentration camps during the Holocaust because they were Jewish would be accepted as a Jew. The Nazis deemed anyone with at least one Jewish grandparent to be worthy of death. Therefore, the newly-formed State allowed all those who could not prove their mother was Jewish but could prove that they had one or more Jewish grandparents to be granted citizenship under the Law of Return.



Survivors of the Buchenwald camp arriving at Haifa port, July 15, 1945

(over please)

## Jewish Rights in Israel

Beyond the right of return, being a Jew includes many other important rights in Israel, including the ability to purchase and own land, a house, or an apartment. (Purchasing real estate is very difficult for those who aren't Jewish.) Jews also have the right to marry (non-Jews can't be married by the State of Israel) and to be buried in a cemetery (though non-Jewish cemeteries were established through the years).

During the two decades after passing the Law of Return, court cases increased as people sued the State seeking citizenship based on their own definition of Jewishness. (For instance, some people feel ethnically Jewish, others are religious Jews, still others are born Jewish but practice another religion, etc.) Lawsuits were especially common among those going through a religious process of converting to Judaism. Because most of these cases dealt with an important question, the Law of Return was amended in 1970 to specify who is considered a Jew.

## Narrowly Defining a Jew

The 1970 amendment adopted the Orthodox Jewish definition, which is a narrow classification. It stated that a Jew is only someone who was born to a Jewish mother or converted to Judaism and is not of another religion. Thus, Messianic Jews (Jews who are believers in Yeshua as Messiah) do not qualify as Jews for the Law of Return. The amendment also legalized the "grandchild clause," which specified that a grandchild of a Jew may make *aliyah* and become an Israeli citizen.



Israeli Orthodox Jewish men celebrate Purim

## Lineage Through the Father

You don't have to be a Bible scholar to notice that the first part of this amendment seems to contradict Scripture. Beginning in Genesis chapter 4, human lineage is noted through the father, not the mother.

The Bible presents this male-focused line, especially from the Patriarch Abraham. In the New Testament, Matthew (chapter 1) and Luke (chapter 3) highlight the lineage of Yeshua. Matthew begins with Abraham and notes the 41 generations that followed him until the birth of the Messiah. Luke goes back to Adam, a total of 77 generations.

**So how and when did this change from the father's lineage to the mother's occur within Judaism?** Some attribute it to Ezra's time, after the Israelites repented of their unfaithfulness to God when the men married foreign women and followed their pagan religions (Ezra 9–10).

During the Second Temple Period, by the time of the later writings in the Mishnah (the

Jewish oral traditions regarding the Law), a distinction was made related to marriages. When a Jewish man married a Jewish woman, their children's identity was determined according to the father's association (such as a priestly family — a Levite or Cohen — or an "ordinary" Israelite). If a Jewish woman married a non-Jewish man, the children would be considered part of Israel. In a marriage between a non-Jewish woman and a Jewish man, however, the children were not considered part of Israel.

Some of the reasons that Jewish writings associate the child with the mother is that she carries the baby during pregnancy, maintains a close connection to the child after birth, and is the primary nurturer for the child. Thus, the mother's traditions and culture are highly influential in the child's life. Some scholars also point to the influence of Roman laws during the Second Temple Period, as the Romans also recognized citizenship according to the mother's genealogy.

## Removing the Grandchild Clause

Currently, the religious and right-wing parties want to remove the grandchild clause from the Law of Return. If they succeed, only confirmed children (not grandchildren) of Jews will be able to make *aliyah* under the Law of Return.

The reasoning for this change is that the majority of people making *aliyah* each year since the 1990s are not Jewish. Most Orthodox Jews claim that the State has allowed mostly non-Jews — those who were not born Jewish but are family members of Jews, people who married a Jew, etc. — to immigrate and receive benefits.

Supporters of the amendment argue that the change is necessary because, especially in recent decades, the children of Jews living outside of Israel (in the Diaspora) are more highly assimilated into the culture of the countries in which they live. Supporters contend that Diaspora Jews also stray from their Judaism, their support of Israel, and their recognition of the importance of a Jewish homeland.



Jewish Ukrainians arriving at Ben Gurion airport in March, 2022

## Preventing Jews from Making Aliyah

The proposed change to the law means that many people who might want to move to Israel in the future will not be able to do so. But while trying to keep non-Jews out of Israel, the right-wing parties will make it impossible for some who should be able to immigrate to do so.

This is a significant shift that we, as Believers,\* cannot ignore. God's perspective on Jewish *aliyah* is noted in Bible prophecies that address the re-gathering of the nation of Israel. God has declared that He will bring His people back and establish them once again in

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



this land: *"I will gather you from the nations and bring you back from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you back the land of Israel again"* (Ezekiel 11:17).

In recognizing that this door may be closing for some Jews, **we must pray** that those whom God has called to this land will be able to immigrate. **We must also pray** for the leaders of Israel to make appropriate decisions, because their actions can have a major impact on many people of future generations. ☆



Passport from Israel



*Im tirdefu lada-at oto —*

*"Press on to know HIM!"* (Hosea 6:3 NLT),

*Sarah Liberman* | *סarah ליברמן*  
 Sarah Liberman      ENGLISH      HEBREW



## Zola Tours: Wide Open Doors

While the future of making *aliyah* for Jewish people is uncertain, the doors are wide open for anyone wishing to *visit* the Holy Land. We understand that some potential pilgrims have been reluctant to travel to Israel, but now it's easier and safer than ever.

Masks are no longer required on flights. Covid tests or proof of vaccinations are no longer mandatory. **It's a green light to GO!** Once our Zola Tours pilgrims gather at JFK airport, we travel as a group. Our new family forms instantly, and Kirsten and I (David) will ensure you receive the warmest hospitality.

You still may be able to join us in March. If you already have a passport, contact Sandra, our travel manager, at **214-696-9760**, **travel@levitt.com**, or **levitt.com/tours** ASAP to reserve your spot. And if March is too soon, we will again journey to Israel this fall. Why not give yourself (and maybe some family members) a life-changing Bible study tour?

### Spring Tour 2023 options

|                              |             |         |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|
| Deluxe — Israel              | March 13–23 | \$5,788 |
| Grand Petra — Israel & Petra | March 13–26 | \$7,288 |

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

### Fall Tour 2023 options

|                              |               |     |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----|
| Deluxe — Israel              | October 16–26 | TBD |
| Grand Petra — Israel & Petra | October 16–29 | TBD |

*(We tentatively plan to offer our Greece extension again in Fall 2024.)*

## A Note from David and Kirsten Hart

### EZEKIEL'S ALIYAH VISION

Sarah, we learn so much from your writings each month. Living in the U.S., it is easy for us to lose touch with Israelis' daily realities, but your message in the *Personal Letter* keeps us connected. Zola's heart was to teach us about the Jewish roots of Christianity, and you continue that tradition as you inform us about current challenges facing the people of Israel.

Jews in Israel experience a trifecta, if you will, that few people will ever know. They are Jewish by nationality, religion, and ethnicity. What the future holds for those desiring to make *aliyah* to their homeland awaits to be seen. We pray that the prophetic days Ezekiel foresaw will continue until all Jewish people who want to return to the Covenant Land can do so.

### COMING SOON

This month, Kirsten and I (David), Dr. Seif, and the *Our Jewish Roots* production crew will assemble in the Dallas area to produce a new television series about the **God of Miracles**. Dr. Seif filmed the teaching segments in Israel several months ago, and we are excited to present this series to you. We believe that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob *still* performs miracles! If you have experienced a life-changing miracle, would you share your story with us? Email the ministry at [staff@levitt.com](mailto:staff@levitt.com) (**subject: MIRACLES**) or write your story and mail it to us at P.O. Box 12268, Dallas, TX 75225.



*Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim!* —

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

*David & Kirsten*

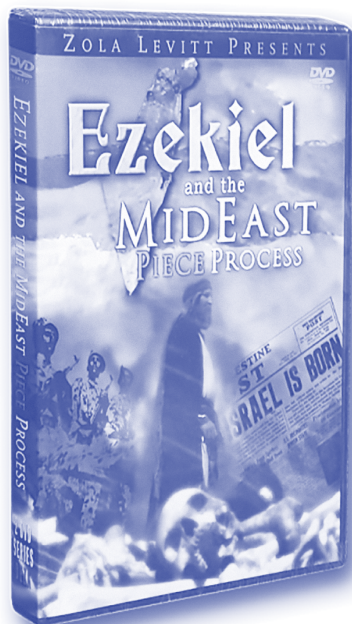
David & Kirsten

**P.S.** In this month when many think about love, Kirsten and I wish to express to you our love and gratitude for partnering with ZLM. Even if we have not met you in person, we still consider you family. So, in honor of Valentine's Day, from a couple whose last name is *Hart*, please know that we are immensely thankful for your prayers and financial support that keep this outreach strong and hopeful in 2023. Much love to you! ☆

(continued p. 6)

## Our Jewish Roots TV programs in February

This month, we will finish ***Ezekiel and the MidEast "Piece" Process***. Then, we begin an encore presentation of ***Sar Shalom: Prince of Peace***. Encore presentations are series that people have greatly enjoyed and want to watch again in order to gain insights they may have missed before. We believe that you will experience the same in ***Sar Shalom: Prince of Peace***.



### ***Ezekiel and the MidEast "Piece" Process***

**The Valley of Dry Bones** — Israel's reemergence as a nation is dramatized through Ezekiel's startling vision of skeletons rising from the ground, forming a mighty nation. Independence Hall in Tel Aviv serves as the backdrop to a remarkable prophecy that is being fulfilled in our generation.

**Battle of Gog and Magog** — The nations surrounding Israel are bent on its destruction. Yet thousands of years ago, Ezekiel foretold an End Times war and predicted a miraculous triumph for Israel.

**The Restored Temple** — Ezekiel prophesied a restored Earth and a new Temple in Jerusalem from which miraculous healing waters will flow. Ultimately, God's ways will be known on Earth.

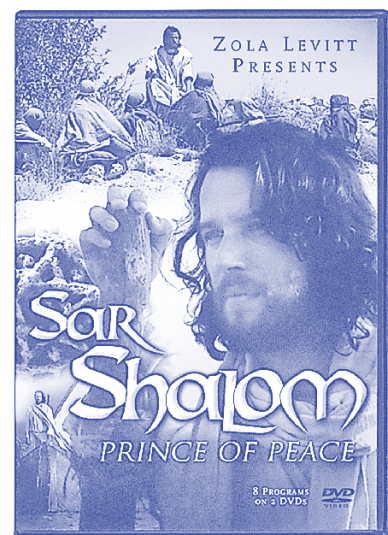
### ***Sar Shalom: Prince of Peace***

Explore what it means to walk in the footsteps of Israel's Messiah. **Dr. Jeffrey Seif** provides a passage-by-passage exposition of Jesus' principal teachings. These are brought to life through on-location production in Israel with real-world dramatizations by Israeli Believers.



Jeff Seif

**Sermon on the Mount** — From Galilee, Dr. Seif teaches on the "Beatitudes" (Matt. 5:1–12), especially unpacking Jesus' exhortation that Believers are "the salt of the Earth" and "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13–16).



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## ***The Warrior King: David-like Leadership for Goliath-like Times*** DVDs and book

DVD set is eight 30-minute TV programs on two DVDs

*The Warrior King* tells the story of King David's time; but it is also the story of our own time. With challenges larger than Goliath all around us, we need Bible-based leaders now more than ever. In this eight-part series, Dr. Jeffrey Seif speaks to that need. Dramatic re-enactments — shot on location in Israel — complement the teachings in this series.

**THE CALL** We consider how David captured the heart of Israel, his selection by Samuel, and the amazing battle with Goliath that catapulted him to renown.

**DAVID AND SAUL** Unfair trials often checker the road to success. We explore David's abuse at the hands of King Saul, and his bond with the king's son Jonathan. We evaluate Saul's death and David's gracious response.

**FAMILY** The Bible tells of the good, the bad, and the ugly. In this program we look at David's marriage and family intrigue.

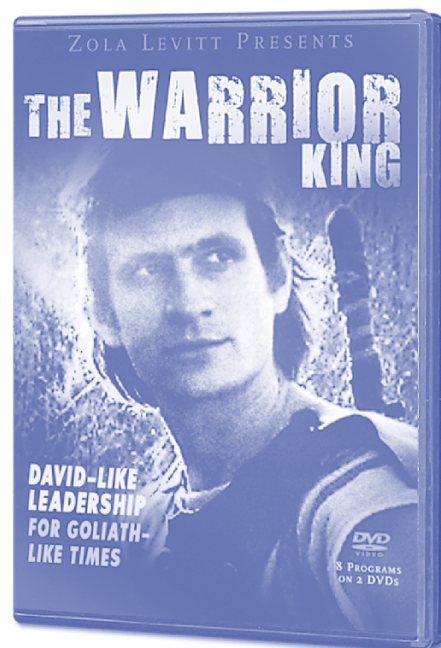
**WARS** David was a warrior — a spiritual role model for us all! Jeff discusses the Philistine, Amalekite, and Ammonite wars, along with modern-day applications.

**CELEBRATED WARRIOR KING** Though anointed by God for kingship, David spent 13 years running from Israel's first king before ascending to the throne himself. As we hear the story of David's rise to power over all Israel, Jeff provides details of its applications.

**A MESSIANIC PROTOTYPE** The New Testament refers to Jesus as the "Son of David" — with good reason. We examine how the Old Testament predicted a coming Davidic Son.

**ISRAEL'S SWEET PSALMIST** David's gift for creating poetry and music shows that he was "in touch" with something beyond the state of his armies. Viewers will benefit from this program's window into the softer side of the man.

**MESSIAH** Messianic parallels abound in the person of David. In this closing program, we consider their various applications and implications. You'll walk away saying "He lives!" and, we hope, believing that He lives in you.



### ***The Warrior King* DVD and/or book**

- \_\_\_ 1 set of DVDs – \$58
- \_\_\_ 1 *Warrior King* book – \$17
- \_\_\_ both DVDs & book – \$71

See the next page for our  
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ZLM needs to ensure that we support the  
stations and networks that you appreciate.

#### **I WATCH YOUR PROGRAM ON:**

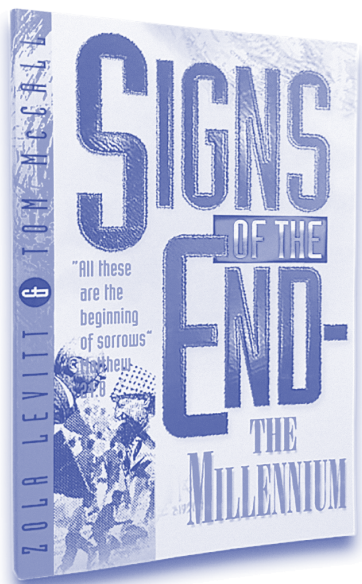
- ☐ NRB-TV, Thurs. 7:30pm ET
- ☐ GEB-TV, Thurs. 6:30pm ET
- ☐ DAYSTAR, Wed. 11:00pm ET, Fri. 6:00pm ET
- ☐ TCT, Sun. 7:00pm ET
- ☐ Online, e.g. [levitt.tv](http://levitt.tv), YouTube, Roku, etc.
- ☐ My local channel's call letters are: \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **I DON'T WATCH YOUR PROGRAM BECAUSE:**

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## **Signs of the End: The Millennium** book

by Tom McCall and Zola Levitt

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**Second**, Zola and Dr. Thomas S. McCall offer a Biblical perspective on world events.

**Third**, their update, The Millennium, makes this a prophecy book of the past, present, and future.

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- \_\_\_ 1 book      – \$13
- \_\_\_ 2 books    – \$23
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- \_\_\_ 3 Flags of Israel   – \$37

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- 1 **Warrior King** book
- 1 **Signs of the End** study booklet
- 1 **Flag of Israel**

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**2302**

Dear Sarah,

(please check appropriate boxes)

All Jews should have the right to make *aliyah* and become citizens of Israel, including those whom the Nazis would have selected for extermination.

- ☐ Agree  
☐ Disagree

☐ Here is my donation for **February**. Please use it to produce and broadcast Bible teaching like your newest television series, *God of Miracles*.

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