



FROM SARAH, OUR SABRA ON THE GROUND IN ISRAEL

June 2023



Dear Friend,

Greetings from the Holy Land. The Israel Security Agency (ISA), known as the Shin Bet or *Shabak* (שב"כ) in Hebrew, is responsible for defending Israel against espionage, subversion, and terrorism. Last year, information became public about a secret *Shabak* unit known as Tequila. This special operations team's responsibility is to stop a suicide bomber from completing an assault after the attacker is en route or close to the target.

Tequila uses intelligence from other parts of the ISA to quickly reach and stop suicide bombers. Exceptional effort goes into stopping terrorists before they cross over from the "West Bank" or Gaza. At times, however, they slip through intelligence screenings and the ISA only discovers them while they are advancing toward a target.



Special Operations

The *Shabak* recruits members of the Tequila unit following their military service, including three years in special operation groups. While the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) trains them in a variety of combat skills, they focus on counterterrorism warfare after joining the *Shabak*.

Before Passover this year, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu publicly addressed the head of the *Shabak* and commended its service: "Your performance is one of the best in the world; everyone comes here to witness it and learn."



Ronen Bar (right), director of Shin bet, meeting with team members after the shooting attack in northern Samaria in December 2021

RESPONDING TO TERRORISTS

In 2002, during the Second Intifada (Arab uprising), a wave of suicide bomber attacks washed over the streets and buses of Israel. These relentless, devastating attacks were the catalyst for creating the Tequila unit. It began with a few small teams, each made up of several people, who were trained to identify a suicide bomber in heavily populated areas. Operatives also learned how to disable an attack by separating the person's finger from the bomb's trigger. The risk for Tequila members was high, of course — they would confront terrorists who could quickly kill themselves, nearby civilians, and team members.

The unit later learned another tactic to hinder advancing attackers. Members drove vehicles through the streets, armed and ready to engage terrorists. This lowered the team's response time

(over please)

once they learned of an attacker's location.

Tequila members also used roadblocks (as they do today), and quickly had to assess whether the bomber they sought was in a passing car. They realized that if they stopped a car, the terrorist could initiate an attack. In one such incident, a taxi passed a roadblock. As the Tequila operative leaned inside the window, he identified a suspicious person wearing a coat and asked everyone in the cab for their IDs. The bomber triggered the bomb, which killed all the occupants in the vehicle. The special ops fighter suffered severe burns over much of his body and permanently lost his eyesight, but miraculously survived. Later, he explained, "After the explosion, my friends ran to the car and found the bomber still alive. They considered shooting him, but one teammate said, 'He can no longer hurt us.'"

After that incident, *Shabak* realized that reaching a bomber while he was among civilians was too late. Thus, they set traps in more remote locations by creating diversions — such as wooden crates blocking a road. When the car with the bomber reached the diversion, the driver would exit the car, leaving only the bomber inside. Then, Tequila members would call out to the terrorist, asking them to surrender by removing their clothing and exiting the vehicle. Over 90% of the time, however, the terrorists detonated their bombs and killed themselves.

Such incidents occurred almost weekly throughout 2002. During that time, Tequila teams prevented 56 bombers from reaching any target. In one case, team members crashed their car into the bombers' vehicle in order to prevent the terrorists from entering Jerusalem.

A TOUGH ASSIGNMENT

The fight against terrorism took a great toll, both physically and emotionally, as team members experienced high levels of exhaustion and stress. They constantly faced potential threats not only to innocent citizens but also to their own lives. Still, they had to remain alert, prepared to pursue the next terrorist at a moment's notice.

One of the most difficult aspects was moving from a high-intensity workday to a day off involving "normal" relationships and activities — with children, wives, friends, and such. This required immense emotional resources to switch back and forth.

Eventually, Palestinian terrorist groups stopped using the suicide bomber strategy. While they may have realized that they could not crack Israel's fortitude, they likely stopped because of the negative responses from the international community.

We continue to experience terrorist attacks in Israel, which are now primarily shootings and stabbings. Thus far in 2023, Tequila teams have prevented 14 terrorists from completing their planned attacks.



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with Ronen Bar

credit: Kobi Gideon/GPO

The Cost of Failure

Interviews with Tequila operatives have revealed their extremely low tolerance for failure — it is not an option. They know that failing at their assignment means that people — men, women, and children — will pay dearly, even with their lives. Team members speak less about their successes and more about the horrible feeling of going home after a shift when they could not stop an attack.

As I learned about the “never fail” attitude of these special ops fighters, I recalled a Biblical hero whom people remember mostly for his failures. Samson was a warrior, miraculously empowered by God to deliver Israel. Even so, Samson struggled with the special requirements of a Nazirite (Numbers 6:1–21) that lasted throughout his lifetime (Judges 13:5, 7).

I grew up learning about Samson as a man who received extraordinary gifting and favor from the Lord. Yet he threw all this away when he succumbed to temptation — he traded his divine calling for sexual gratification. Israel’s perpetual enemy, the Philistines, discovered his secret. After they shaved his head, he lost his miraculous power. Thus, the Philistines captured him, blinded him, and took him to Gaza. Samson must have been devastated at being reduced to walking in circles to grind grain in a prison. Yet his life and his mission didn’t end there.

Later, he was the designated “entertainer” in the temple of Dagon, a Philistine god. Over 3,000 Philistine men and women drank and celebrated Samson’s capture and humiliation — and the end of their struggle against Israel.



Samson bound by the Philistines, engraving by an unknown artist for *The Story of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation* (1873)

Seeking God’s Help

After he failed, instead of forsaking the God who created him, who formed him in his mother’s womb, Samson turned to the Lord again. Samson asked for God’s help: *“Sovereign Lord, remember me. Please, God, strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes”* (Judges 16:28). Positioned between the two main pillars of the temple, Samson pushed against them as he cried out: *“Let me die with the Philistines”* (Judges 16:30). Scripture indicates that he killed far more enemies of Israel in his death than during his lifetime.

When considering this turn of events, I have often considered Samson’s failure, and how he seemed to take his gifting for granted. Yet when I look closely into his story, especially at his end, I see him as a mighty warrior and an encouragement to us all.

As a prisoner, Samson remembered God’s faithfulness and presence throughout his life. This mortal understood that God never gave up on him, even though he (Samson) had forsaken God’s

Commandments and had strayed far from Him. Armed with that understanding, Samson didn't allow his shame and guilt to keep him from turning back to the Lord and seeking His help.

Like Samson, may we always remember God's goodness and faithfulness. Regardless of the circumstances we encounter — even because of our sin — may we always be willing to turn to the Lord and call upon His name!



Im tirdefu lada-at oto —

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

Sarah Liberman | *שרה ליברמן*
 ENGLISH | HEBREW

P.S. Do you have a testimonial of how our faithful God worked in and through you, despite your failure or faithlessness? Please write to me at staff@levitt.com or P.O. Box 12268, Dallas TX 75225 and share your story. I would love to hear it. Also, don't forget to share that story—it could encourage other Believers* who have failed and imagine that God cannot or will not use them in the future! ☆



Zola Tours: All Five Senses

God has gifted each of us with five primary senses — seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. Through them, we understand our world. Even so, most Christians experience the Bible through only one or two senses. Zola Tours offers you the opportunity to experience a life-changing adventure that will stimulate all of your senses.

You will *see* the beautiful land. You will *hear* Hebrew spoken and the glorious sounds of worship. The *smell* of bread baking will entice you as you walk through the Old City of Jerusalem. Every day, you will *taste* wonderful food from Israel. And you will *touch* the same stones and walk the very roads that Yeshua traversed.

All of these opportunities are within your reach. Is it your time to experience Israel? Contact Sandra, our travel manager, at **214-696-9760**, travel@levitt.com, or levitt.com/tours. Prepare to experience the Holy Land with all your senses!

Fall Tour 2023 options

Deluxe — Israel	October 16–26	\$5,788
Grand Petra — Israel & Petra	October 16–29	\$7,288

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

Spring Tour 2024 options

Deluxe — Israel	Mar. 25–Apr. 4	TBD
Grand Petra — Israel & Petra	Mar. 25–Apr. 7	TBD

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

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

A Note from David and Kirsten Hart

WE WALK IN PEACE

In our 15 years of traveling to the Holy Land, we have always felt at ease. Our sense of peace is thick. While in Israel, we see young children happily walking home from school, and women walking and jogging alone with confidence. Certainly, they have problems there, just as we do in the U.S. — crime and hate exist everywhere. Still, we're wise about where we go and what we do. Our Zola Tours' pilgrims have always felt safe in every situation.



The Eastern Gate of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS

As your tour hosts, we ensure that you are safe, pampered, and informed about what's coming. Our phenomenal Israeli bus drivers and tour guides are with us every day. They have become part of our family — and they will become part of yours, too. All of them have served in the IDF (Israel Defense Forces), and many still serve in the reserves.

Immanuel Tours, our Israeli tour company, often addresses our needs before we realize they exist. Their partnership with Zola Tours (in the U.S.) has been a wonderful team. Rest assured, you will walk safely in the land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Won't you consider joining us?

GIVE THE GIFT OF A LIFETIME

If you cannot go this year, why not join others in your church to help send your pastor and his wife as a gift? It would forever enhance their lives! I have heard many ZT pilgrims proclaim that every pastor should go to Israel at least once. The Bible from which they preach every week will have new meaning to them, which will benefit everyone in your congregation!



We hope to see you and/or your pastor in Jerusalem!

Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim! —

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

David & Kirsten
David & Kirsten

P.S. We consider each of you — readers of the *Personal Letter* and *Levitt Letter*, those who engage with us on our social media sites, and faithful viewers of *Our Jewish Roots* — to be part of our family. Please know that we are very grateful for your prayers and contributions. Thank you! This ministry could not continue without your steady giving. Currently, we are weighing favorable options about our future. We need a significant financial boost to finish this year without compromising our television production plans. With an above and beyond gift, you can help sustain ZLM through this impactful year. ☆

Our Jewish Roots TV programs in June

This month we wrap up our newest series, *The God of Miracles*. We hope you have enjoyed watching these programs as much as we did creating them for you. Most people enjoy getting a bonus, and we're giving you one this month. While each episode of *The God of Miracles* includes some powerful interviews, we couldn't include the full stories from our special guests. In the Bonus Interviews program, however, you will learn the rest of each person's story.

Also this month, we bring back a favorite series about women in the Bible! This would be the perfect mini-series to share with your Bible study group or Sunday school class. Perhaps you could invite some women to your home for snacks and watch these episodes together.

The God of Miracles

Our Greatest Need — Life's circumstances can bring us Believers to our knees in desperation. Our ultimate assurance comes from our Heavenly Father, Who loves us and desires to help us.

Dr. Jeffrey Seif teaches from the Pool of Siloam and the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem.



Jeff Seif

Bonus Interviews — You'll appreciate the extended interviews with varied individuals appearing in this series, including Israeli Believers.

She Shall be Called Woman

In this four-part television series, Jeff opens the Hebrew Scriptures to focus on God's wonderful creation of man's human complement: woman.

David and Kirsten Hart join the discussion about the varied roles of women, including wives, mothers, counselors, managers, educators, and queens.

Wives and Mothers — The series opens like Adam's eyes: with a quick peek at Eve. It was an age of discovery, and here we discover God's divine design for this marvelous creature. That lovers become mothers is the natural course. We also consider natural maternal instincts as we look at one of the Old Testament's greatest mothers: Hannah.

Counselors and Managers — A study of Abigail demonstrates that women are more than just lovers and mothers. Women have significant intuitive capabilities that contribute to humanity's potential.

The Hebrew Bible depicts the ideal woman as an entrepreneur — an enterprising business-woman who capably manages household affairs for herself and her family.



Zola Levitt Ministries is ECFA approved!



Watch Therefore and Be Ready DVD set

Eight 30-minute programs on two DVDs

This eight-part series encourages today's generation to be aware of prophetic fulfillment, live expectantly, and be ready for Messiah's return. David and Kirsten Hart present this series that features teaching from Dov Schwarz, analysis by guest Dr. Mark Hitchcock, reports from Israel with Chaim Malespin, Hebrew lessons by Sarah Liberman, and music written by Zola Levitt.

Covenant and Prophecy The New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31) was made with Israel. Gentiles have been grafted into the olive tree.

Birth Pains In Isaiah 66, we see the labor pains of Israel in the Last Days that bring the Jewish people as a nation to "new birth." In the birthing room, Yeshua — the Great Physician — attends Israel, whose labor pains shake the entire Earth.

Days of Noah The Days of Noah portend the appearance of Messiah Yeshua in the clouds to gather His people and set up His Kingdom on Earth. Three primary signs of Genesis 6 include global explosions of population, violence, and rampaging evil.

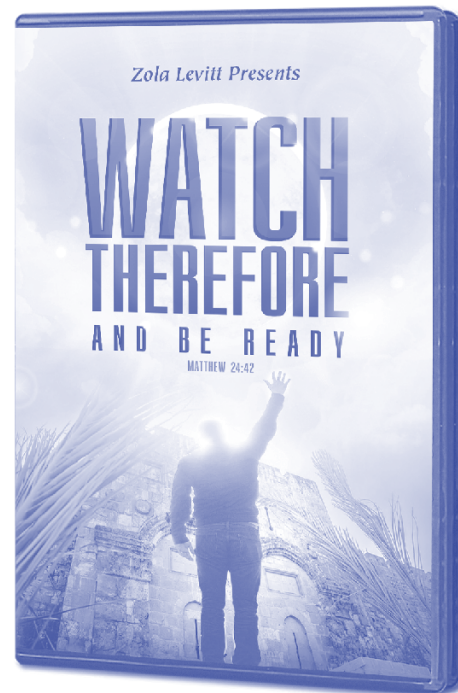
Fig Tree Generation Israel officially "put forth leaves" on May 14, 1948. Studying Abraham reveals what Yeshua meant about the final generation of this Age.

Curse-for-Curse Principle Genesis 12:3 promises both blessing and cursing in the covenant with Abraham and his descendants.

The Jewish Wedding In Matthew 25:1–13, Messiah uses Jewish wedding customs, including a midnight cry and marriage feast, and advises us to mimic the five wise virgins: Watch therefore and be ready.

Refuge in Tribulation End Times events portend a place that is prepared for the wrath of the Lamb, Messiah Yeshua. Yet, we see His hand outstretched in mercy.

Faithful and Wicked Servants Yeshua repeated the theme of faithful and wicked servants in the signs of His coming (Matthew 24:45–51; Luke 12:41–48). The faithful servant watches for the Master's arrival, obeying His commands; the wicked servant watches not and becomes ungodly, facing eternal damnation.



Watch Therefore and Be Ready DVDs

___ 1 set of DVDs – \$58

___ 2 sets of DVDs – \$98

See next page for our
Combo Value Package

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:



Card # _____

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.

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. 4:30pm ET, Mon. 7:30pm ET
- ☐ Online, e.g. levitt.tv, YouTube, Roku, etc.
- ☐ My local channel's call letters are: _____.

I DON'T WATCH YOUR PROGRAM BECAUSE:

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

**If you have given us this information previously,
it's not needed again unless your viewing station
has changed.**

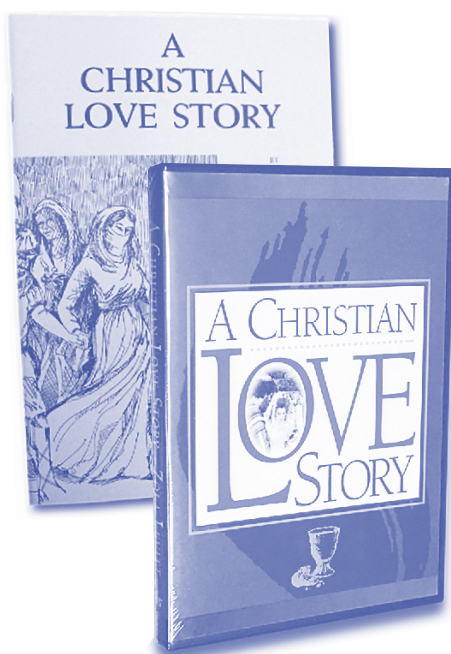
**Please
Let Us
Know!**

Zion Song music CD

During his lifetime, Zola Levitt composed over 200 Spirit-filled songs. This rich legacy revived when musicians David and Kirsten Hart became the studio hosts for *Zola Levitt Presents* (now *Our Jewish Roots*) in 2017. You have likely heard them sing on the program. To fully appreciate their gifts, tour Israel with them and hear them sing in the Upper Room ... or on the Mount of Olives ... or crossing the Sea of Galilee.

On *Zion Song* music CD, David and Kirsten sing 11 songs written by Zola and arranged and orchestrated by Sammy Davenport.

- ___ 1 *Zion Song* CD – \$17
- ___ 2 *Zion Song* CDs – \$31
- ___ 3 *Zion Song* CDs – \$45



A Christian Love Story study booklet and teaching CD by Zola Levitt

The beautiful story of Israel's wedding customs in Messiah's time and how He fulfilled these traditions in calling out His Bride, the Church. A striking and inspiring example of Scriptural logic and elegance.

- ___ 1 copy of *A Christian Love Story* study booklet – \$9
- ___ 1 copy of *A Christian Love Story* teaching CD – \$13
- ___ **Both:** 1 study booklet and 1 teaching CD – \$17

Combo Value Package:

One of Each! — **\$83**

- 1 set of *Watch Therefore* DVDs
- 1 *Zion Song* music CD
- 1 *Christian Love Story* study booklet
- 1 *Christian Love Story* teaching CD

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

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

2306

Dear Sarah,

(please check appropriate boxes)

Samson was a man who, while failing to follow many of God's commands during his lifetime, ultimately fulfilled God's will in the end.

☐ Here is my donation for **June**. Please use it to help others understand God's faithfulness and His willingness to use people despite their failures.

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

☐ Agree
☐ Disagree

\$ _____

\$ _____

Please complete the form on the reverse side.



**ZLM's
Donation &
Materials
Order Form**

Phone # _____