



FROM SARAH, OUR SABRA ON THE GROUND IN ISRAEL

July 2023



Dear Friend,

Greetings from the Holy Land. Each year in May, Israel remembers three major events in the history of our people and the establishment of our modern nation. Shortly after Passover ends, Holocaust Remembrance Day begins a momentous week that culminates in Fallen Soldiers Remembrance Day and the Independence Day celebration.

TIMES TO REMEMBER

Holocaust remembrance events begin at 8:00 p.m. with a national ceremony in Jerusalem. The next day at 10:00 a.m., **a two-minute siren** pierces the sky in every city and neighborhood. Everyone, including those driving or working, remains still for two minutes. On this day, schools hold remembrance ceremonies. Older high school students often hear Holocaust survivors share their stories of survival and what happened in the concentration camps.



A week later, the country remembers all soldiers who have been killed in the wars since the birth of the State of Israel and while on active duty in Israel's military. This commemoration begins at 8:00 p.m. with **a one-minute siren**, during which all of Israel pauses. The next morning, **a two-minute siren** sounds at 11:00 as schools and military cemeteries hold ceremonies. In preparation for this event, a small Israeli flag is placed on each soldier's grave (numbering 24,213 as of the 2022 ceremony) as a young soldier currently serving in the military salutes at the gravesite.

A DIFFICULT ASSIGNMENT

This year, the special documentary, *Knock on the door*, aired prior to Fallen Soldiers Remembrance Day. The film allowed the public to see the delicate task of informing a family about a tragedy that will forever change their lives. It included interviews with messengers who deliver the heartbreaking news of a soldier's death. Israel has compulsory military service for everyone except for ultra-Orthodox Jews, Arabs, and others receiving an exemption. Thus, after a son or daughter enters the military, no Israeli family wants to hear a knock on the door, which may indicate that their child is dead.

(over please)

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) follow a specific protocol when informing a family that their beloved child has died in battle or an attack. Messengers are reserve duty soldiers in their early 40s to late 50s who choose this assignment. The team of three men wearing civilian clothing arrives by taxi—messenger one, messenger two, and messenger three.

Upon arriving at the address, messenger three gets out of the taxi and seeks to confirm the correct address, family, and door. He does this by checking the information (including any mail in the mailbox), the door number and family name on the doorbell, and any sign posted on or near the door.

Once messenger three has verified the correct address and door, he returns to the taxi. The three messengers change clothes in the taxi and then exit in their military uniforms. They walk to the door, then messenger one knocks.

A LIFE-CHANGING VISIT

Behind the door is an unsuspecting person or family. They may be eating a meal or watching television or a movie. It could be a mother putting young children to bed or getting them ready for school. In any case, they have no idea what is soon to happen. But after the messengers knock on the door, everything changes.

Typically, someone inside looks through the peephole and sees the men in uniform. At that point, most people realize who they are and why they are there. Some people refuse to open the door, hoping that the men will leave. Others open the door and then shut it immediately. In either case, messenger one must knock again and wait for the door to open.

When the door opens, messenger one enters, followed by the others. Messenger one must deliver a carefully crafted message that will leave no doubt that the family's loved one has perished. The three men ensure that each family member hears and comprehends the message. With young children, several explanations may be necessary before they understand.

In one case, a man who opened the door saw the soldiers and said, "You are going to kill my wife." He then called his wife to the door. She refused to listen, moving from room to room, trying to get away from them so they could not speak what she did not want to hear. After four hours, she finally listened to them. The messengers would not leave until they had properly fulfilled their responsibility of delivering the message.



Nahal Brigade soldiers pay respect to fallen comrades at Mount Herzl's Military Cemetery

credit: IDF Spokesperson's Unit (Wikimedia Commons)

COMMON AND UNCOMMON MESSENGERS

The role of a messenger is unique, not only in our day but also in ancient times. The Bible presents many examples of messengers and the different responses to them.

- **Jacob** sent messengers ahead of him to his brother, fearing that Esau was coming to kill him (Genesis 32:3).
- **Joab** sent a messenger to King David, informing him of the death of Uriah (the husband of Bathsheba), the soldier that the king ordered to be sent to the battle-front (2 Samuel 11:22).
- Later, **a messenger** told King David that his people were no longer with him — instead, they were loyal to his rebellious son Absalom (2 Samuel 15:13).

Scripture also notes another kind of messenger — a heavenly messenger sent by God, often called “the angel of the LORD.” Gideon (Judges 6:11–33), Zechariah (father of John the Baptist, Luke 1:11–20), Manoah and his wife (Samson’s parents, Judges 13:2–20), and Hagar (Genesis 16:7–12) were some who met this special messenger.

Two particular encounters with a heavenly messenger are notable because of the response from the recipient.

- In **Genesis chapter 18**, Abraham received three special messengers. After a promise about fulfilling Abraham’s desire for a son, two messengers prepared to leave. One—the Lord—remained and relayed His plans to deal with the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Unlike other conversations with heavenly messengers, Abraham was not passive. Instead, he actively negotiated with the Lord about how many righteous people were required for the Lord to spare a city from destruction. Finally, perhaps thinking he had stretched God’s patience to its limit, Abraham relented and returned home.

This may be one of the most interesting and informative passages of Scripture concerning Abraham. The exchange reveals that Abraham knew the true nature of God: kind, just, patient, loving, forgiving, compassionate, and more. Abraham not only knew God’s character but also trusted and appealed to it, knowing that God would act according to His benevolent nature.

- **Luke chapter 1** describes another angelic visitation, this time to Mary the mother of Yeshua (Jesus). At first Mary was startled. Then, after hearing the angel’s message, she became bewildered, not understanding how the promise she heard could happen. After the angel explained how it would occur, Mary speaks one of the most beautiful responses in the Bible: *“I am the Lord’s servant... May your word to me be fulfilled”* (Luke 1:38).



Abraham Falls on His Knees Before the Three Angels,
engraving by William Young Ottley (1771-1836),
after Lucas van Leyden (1494-1533)

Perhaps you, too, have received a difficult message. It could have been about the death of a loved one, a painful diagnosis from a doctor, or disappointment concerning a life-altering situation. As a Believer*, do you rely on what you know of God's nature and trust Him even in the difficulty? Do you know and trust that God is good, that His mercy endures forever, and that His thoughts and plans for you are far greater than you could ever hope for or imagine (Psalm 136:1; Isaiah 55:8–9; 1 Corinthians 2:9)?



Im tirdefu lada-at oto —

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

Sarah Liberman | *שרה ליברמן*
 ENGLISH | HEBREW

P.S. How has the Lord sustained you and given you peace when you received a difficult message? How has He encouraged you after calling or challenging you with a difficult or seemingly impossible task? Please write to me at staff@levitt.com or this ministry's P.O. Box and share your story. I would love to hear it. ☆

* "Believer" is short for "believer in Yeshua/Jesus as Messiah."



Zola Tours: No Time Like Today

Through the years, many people have commented, "We should have gone to the Holy Land ten years ago. Now, we're no longer able to travel." There is no better time than the present to commit to the amazing adventure that awaits you in the land where the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, and Yeshua Himself lived and walked! There's still time for you to join our group this October. Fall is such a wonderful time to immerse yourself in all the facets of Israel.

Sandra, our travel manager, is excellent at helping passengers with every step in joining us for a Bible study pilgrimage. You can contact her at **214-696-9760**, travel@levitt.com, or levitt.com/tours. Then, pack your bags (remember your walking shoes!) and prepare for the Bible to unfold before your eyes.

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 an extended tour with more of Israel in Fall 2024!)

A Note from David and Kirsten Hart

MILITARY PARENTS

As Sarah shared the harsh realities that many IDF families experience, we are reminded of the sacrifices families make when loved ones serve in the military. Both our oldest son and our daughter-in-law served in the U.S. Army. Our Army son was deployed in Baghdad at the same time that our youngest son worked for the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) in Israel. While we prayed for God's supernatural protection on both of them, such a "knock on the door" would have devastated us.

CONTINUING OUR MESSAGE

Zola Levitt began his television ministry over 40 years ago. When he passed away in 2006, his son Mark and the ministry's board determined that Zola's Biblical message must continue, despite his physical absence. This ongoing endeavor has been both a challenge and blessing. While various spokespeople have joined us in sharing the Jewish roots of Christianity over the past 17 years, many of our longtime supporters have gone on to their heavenly reward.

Multitudes of viewers and readers still need the Biblical message that we broadcast, mail, and post at levitt.com. Thus, we continue our ministerial outreaches. That you are reading this *Personal Letter* means that you still believe in our mission and message.

Let's together spread the word about this ministry and its lessons about God's Word. Would you tell friends, family, and neighbors about our weekly television program and online archives? Will you pray for ZLM? Would you kindly invest financially in this ministry that is just as needed now as it was four decades ago?

We are committed to *"Run with endurance the race set before us, focusing on Yeshua, the initiator and perfecter of faith"* (Hebrews 12:1–2, TLV). Please join us in keeping this ministry strong for generations to come.



Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim! —

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

David & Kirsten

David & Kirsten

P.S. Unlike some Bible-teaching ministries, we don't have special fund-raising banquets or marathons throughout the year. Nor do we solicit pledges for astronomical dollar amounts. Instead, we simply share the reality that our work continues *only* through the ongoing prayers and support of you, our viewer and reader. If you value what we offer you weekly and monthly, would you prayerfully consider an above-and-beyond gift this month? Thank you in advance. ☆

Our Jewish Roots TV programs in July

You've likely heard that "variety is the spice of life." This month, you will have some spice *and* some viewing variety. During the first half of July, we finish our series, *She Shall Be Called Woman*, which illuminates some of the notable women included in Scripture.

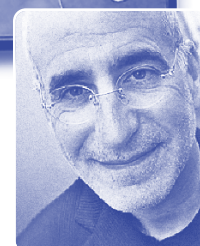
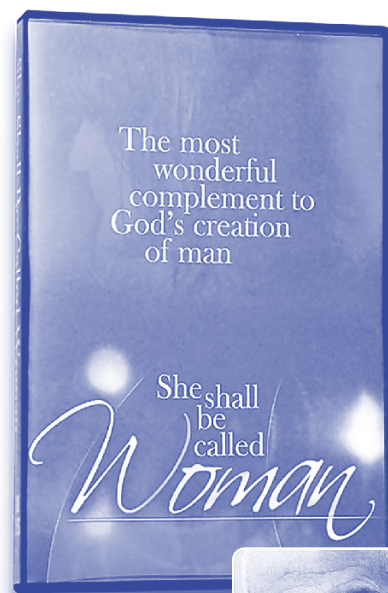
In the final weeks of July, we present two stand-alone programs from Joshua and Caleb Colson that you will appreciate. For 17 years, these brothers have acted in dramatic reenactments and worked in production roles on *OJR* and its predecessor, *Zola Levitt Presents*.

She Shall be Called Woman

In this four-part series, Dr. Jeffrey Seif 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.

Deceivers and Educators — The Hebrew Bible condemns women who use feminine wiles to entice and betray males, like Delilah did with Samson. In the segment on educators, however, we highlight women's positive imprints on male (and female) children. It is often stated, "Behind every good man is a good mother!"

Widows and Queens — Through a widow in Zarephath, we discover the Biblical imperative to care for those who are weak, especially widows. While some women encounter difficulty, others experience good times. But as Esther illustrates, God expects those who are strong to use their influence for noble purposes.



Dr. Jeffrey Seif

The Bearded Bible Brothers

Introducing the Bearded Bible Brothers — Many of our viewers who follow our Social Media outlets (YouTube, Facebook, etc.) are familiar with the Bearded Bible Brothers, who were featured in the June 2023 *Levitt Letter*. In this program, David and Kirsten Hart interview Joshua and Caleb Colson, who have taught on our online channels for over four years. In this program, you'll discover the hearts of these young men who love Yeshua and seek to spread His message to viewers everywhere.



Caleb and Joshua Colson

Mission and Messengers — We take a retrospective look at over 40 years of ZLM's television ministry. What began with our founder, Zola Levitt, did not end when God called him home in 2006. Our Gospel outreach still continues, although with new faces. In this program, you will meet the messengers who will continue Zola's mission and take us into the future.

Zola Levitt Ministries is ECFA approved and has Charity Navigator's top rating of 4 stars!



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The God of Miracles DVD set

Eight 30-minute TV programs on 2 DVDs

We can't read many pages in the Bible without encountering miracles. From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture reveals our miraculous God at work. In this nine-part series, Dr. Jeffrey Seif teaches the Bible from Israel to help us discover God's astonishing activity in His world. Jeff also talks with people who have experienced the Lord's supernatural hand in their own lives.

The Holy Spirit God's Spirit hovered over the waters at Creation. Later, His Spirit descended on humans at Pentecost, saving 3,000 people. He also indwells Believers today. Jeff teaches about God's empowering and guiding Spirit from the Western Wall and the Southern Steps in Jerusalem.

The Exodus The Bible presents the Lord as Deliverer. While teaching from the Judean wilderness and Nehemiah's Wall in the City of David, Jeff emphasizes how God is devoted to building and rebuilding lives.

Death and Life Elijah resurrected the widow's son. Jesus resurrected His friend Lazarus. Filmed at Lazarus' Tomb and Bethany Church, Jeff highlights the Lord's power over life and death — both physical and spiritual.

Exile and Return God directs circumstances to accomplish His will. For ancient Jews, God allowed the Babylonian captivity. From a busy street in Jerusalem, Jeff teaches how God brought His people home, just as He promised.

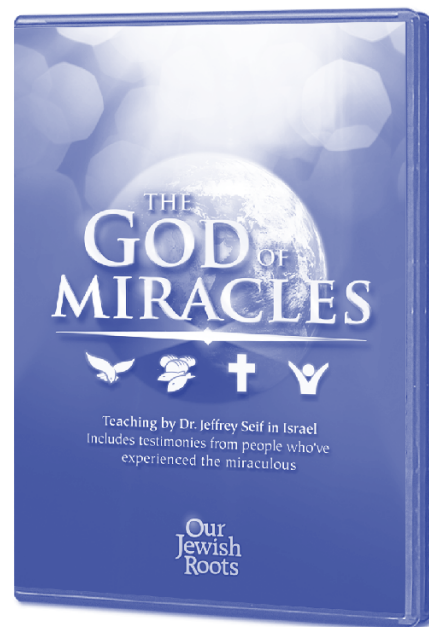
The Incarnation From locations in and around Bethlehem, Jeff teaches about one of the most magnificent miracles — the birth of the Messiah, the prophesied Child, the Prince of Peace.

Our Daily Bread Not all miracles are spectacular. Many are simply practical — from feeding a multitude to finding a coin in the mouth of a fish. The Lord is our benevolent Father who wants to give wonderful gifts to His children.

The Physical Realm Jeff defines a miracle as suspending the laws of nature. Whether changing water to wine or transforming a paralyzed man's limbs, the Lord moves in mysterious ways — both yesterday and today.

Our Greatest Need Life's circumstances can be debilitating. Our ultimate assurance comes from our Father, who loves us and desires to help us. Jeff teaches from the Pool of Siloam and the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem.

Bonus Interviews You'll appreciate the extended interviews with individuals appearing in this series as well as bonus interviews with Israeli Believers.



The God of Miracles DVDs

___ 1 set DVDs – \$58
___ 2 sets DVDs – \$98

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ZLM needs to ensure that we support the stations and networks that you appreciate.

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- ☐ 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: _____.

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Pilgrim's Map of the Holy Land

A very special map of modern Israel that also provides sites of Biblical importance. Scriptures are given right on the map so that the reader can locate the cities and towns of Biblical significance. Delivers hours of spiritual pleasure.

Maps of Jerusalem and the Holy Land

- ___ 1 Pilgrim's Map of the Holy Land – \$12
- ___ 1 Pictorial Map of Jerusalem – \$17
- ___ 1 each of the Map of the Holy Land and the Map of Jerusalem – \$26



Zola's Introduction to Hebrew book

Why is there no better book for learning the basics of Biblical Hebrew?

BECAUSE ZOLA'S ULTIMATE HEBREW PRIMER...

- Teaches both print and script, so you will be ready to read, speak, and write Hebrew in Israel and in Heaven.
- Assumes no prior knowledge and progresses gradually, so even the fainthearted will find immediate value.
- Nurtures you along a friendly course toward a unique intimacy with God's language, Land, and People.

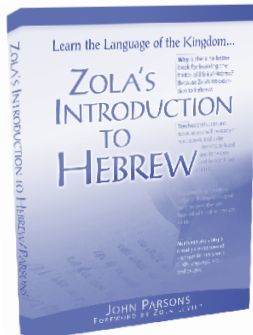
Unlike most academic books on Biblical Hebrew, this course provides a step-by-step approach that will enable you to understand the Hebraic mindset while learning the alphabet and vowel signs. Studying at your own pace, you will master the Hebrew alphabet, sound out actual Hebrew words, and begin connecting your studies with your heart by reading Hebrew prayers, blessings, and even passages from Scripture.

HAVE YOU EVER...

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Zola's Introduction to Hebrew book

- ___ 1 copy – \$48
- ___ 2 copies – \$88
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Combo Value Package:

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- 1 copy of *Zola's Intro to Hebrew* book
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- 1 *Pictorial Map of Jerusalem*

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2307

Dear Sarah,

(please check appropriate boxes)

Knowing God's Word helps us to understand His character, which enables us to stand confidently in Him despite difficult news and circumstances.

☐ Here is my donation for **July** to help more people know Messiah Yeshua and the peace He gives to those who believe in Him.

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