

# LEVITT LETTER

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.” – Romans 10:1

*And I will bless them that bless thee [Israel], and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. Genesis 12:3*



ZOLA LEVITT

in general and Israel in particular. We were treated as rabble-rousers and troublemakers, and I was thoroughly criticized for even speaking up.

The results were disheartening. While a Bible college in Lakeland, Florida, dropped the book, the president of Criswell said they were dropping it, but that never happened. Our newsletter published his very words.

We received a provocative email from a viewer recently:

*I feel as though I am an inside spy!*

*I work at Moody Bible Institute and have been keeping a close watch on their use of the Gundry book. I just checked the bookstore, and it appears that the Gundry book is a*

## Progressive Dispensationalism considers modern Israel to be the work of man and not of God.

*required text for a New Testament Survey class offered in the evening school. It is also a “recommended” text for the New Testament Survey class offered in the day school. After reading of the dangers of this book, I am very concerned of its use.*

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*I think I would like to send a letter to some of the VPs I know here, but need your help in what I should say. Can you forward me some information I could use to support my request that Moody reconsider its use of the text? I would greatly appreciate it!*

*Thank you for your wonderful ministry!*

*In Yeshua, — RSE*

### THE AWFUL UNTRUTH

Our present subject is Progressive Dispensationalism, a doctrine we discovered back at Dallas Seminary, which has now infected Moody Bible Institute, Talbot Seminary, Biola College, Dallas Baptist University and any number of other formerly fine, trustworthy Bible teaching institutions. Some of the formerly Dispensational seminaries, teaching the very logical system of spiritual economies given in the Bible, have departed into this strange teaching which takes a negative view of modern Israel, and that is our chief objection. Like Amillennialism, a doctrine which holds that there will be no future Kingdom on earth, Progressive Dispensationalism considers modern Israel to be the work of man and not of God. It rejects the concept of God’s covenant with an unsaved Israel such as we have today.

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# A proper Biblical D.I.E.T.

by Dr. Tom McCall and Zola Levitt



This article has been a long time in coming. Throughout the years, our ministry, purveyors of the most accurate Bible teaching we can do, has been watching as some seminaries have deteriorated. You will recall a few years ago our arguments with Dallas Theological Seminary over an anti-Israel professor whom they subsequently fired. That particular Arabist cursed Israel on a radio program, and enough was enough.

And you will recall our project last year was trying to get Criswell College and some other Bible schools to drop the terrible textbook, *A Survey of The New Testament* by Robert H. Gundry, from their teaching. That textbook advocated Replacement Theology and a Gentile church “in Matthew’s time,” and so forth. We came to them in a spirit of helpfulness, having special sensitivities to that subject



Despite the teachings of the Dry Bones vision and any number of other passages, Progressive Dispensationalists demand a believing Israel before they will accept it as a nation regathered by divine miracle.

In fact, these theologians have adopted the politically correct view that Israel is oppressing the Palestinians. They are apparently convinced by the media's negative reports despite the plain evidence of the eyes of any pilgrim who goes to the land.

The Progressive Dispensationalist teachers ignore the resurgence of the Messianic movement in Israel and even the heartening spread of faith in Yeshua (Jesus) among the Jews in this country. They seem not to understand how the situation in modern Israel leads to the Tribulation and the Millennium, which is very clear even to Sunday school teachers everywhere. They seem embarrassed about the idea of Israel becoming the head of the nations, and they think that an emphasis on Israel somehow diminishes the church.

They seem to de-emphasize the study of eschatology— or prophecy— entirely. There has been a decline of prophecy conferences nationwide and little teaching of Revelation going on these days in the pulpits or classrooms. There is, in particular, a reduced teaching of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture which is arguably the doctrine of prime importance to the church today. The fact that the Lord can come at any moment would have a profound influence on every Christian.

#### HOW TO CHOOSE A SEMINARY

Dr. Thomas S. McCall, our senior theologian, has proposed a four-question test in choosing a seminary or Bible school. Assuming that you want Bible teaching and doctrines that are accurate, then you must **FIRST BE ASSURED THAT THE SEMINARY HOLDS TO THE DEITY OF CHRIST.** It is amazing that there are

Bible schools operating which do not consider our Lord to be God incarnate, but they're all over the place. We call them liberal seminaries, and we gave an example in a recent newsletter of a student of one of those who didn't care if Christ even ever lived, according to what he said. Once the truth of the deity of Christ is settled, other important matters such as His virgin birth, substitutionary death and physical resurrection readily become believable.

**SECONDLY, YOU MUST INSIST ON A SEMINARY HOLDING TO THE INERRANCY OF THE BIBLE.** Obviously, if we're going to say that some Scriptures are not accurate or literal, etc., that way lies madness. Either the Bible is true or it's not true, and if we're going to have a seminary at all, it must hold to the Bible containing no error. There are some schools claiming to be conservative that are not willing to assert that the Scriptures are without error. They may use some slippery terms like, "the Bible *contains* the Word of God," or "the Bible is inerrant *in matters of faith*" (but not history). Beware these evasions.

**THIRDLY, THE FIELD OF ESCHATOLOGY IS SO CRITICAL TODAY.** Prophecy is more important than ever and, in particular, the Pre-Tribulation

Rapture, as we said above. When a school that was founded on the blessed hope of the imminent Pre-Trib Rapture begins to depart and waffle on the subject, it is a sign that both their eschatology (prophecy) and ecclesiology (knowledge of the church) are deteriorating.

**AND FINALLY, THE TRUTH ABOUT ISRAEL'S IMPORTANCE IS CRITICAL.** Does your seminary teach that God is moving in Israel today and that we are seeing prophecy fulfilled? Or does

it teach, like the Dallas Seminary professor, that Israel is merely a political entity and that "conceivably these people (the Jewish people) might be driven off the land," (his words on Christian radio!)? Such is the fruit of doctrines like Progressive Dispensationalism. Many seminaries and Bible schools used to be friends of Israel and were convinced that the regathering of the Jewish people was a harbinger of the second coming of Christ. Recently, though, some leading evangelical schools are beginning to question "the promise of His coming" and the significance of modern Israel. Beware such statements as "prophecies about Israel won't be fulfilled until Christ's return." This is misleading and ignores all the preparation of Israel that must take place before and during the Tribulation.

So there you have Dr. McCall's four questions (like the four questions in *Passover*): the *Deity* of Christ, the *Inerrancy* of the Bible, *Eschatology*, and the *Truth* about Israel—or D.I.E.T., a healthful and nutritious diet for believers!

#### TENSION IN THE BIBLE SCHOOLS AND SEMINARIES

We have noted over our experience that some Bible schools offering accredited BA degrees suffer from very tense atmospheres on certain subjects. There is stress

between theological and non-theological faculties, which is to say that virtually secular teachers are brought in to teach secular subjects as the Bible school negotiates the slippery slope of accreditation. When a Bible school or college wants to offer a Bachelor of Arts degree, then academic professors are brought in from outside who may well teach that the Old Testament is mythological as they teach their various subjects. In the seminaries,



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graduates have to go elsewhere for doctoral degrees (encouraged by accreditation committees to “broaden” their training), and they come back changed.

The seminary and Bible school tend to present themselves to supporters as godly places indeed where much prayer, sincerity and teaching truth according to the doctrinal statements is happening, but the atmosphere is quite different in the classroom. Supporters and donors of these big schools must be convinced that all is well, while there is almost a shooting war behind the scenes.

Progressive Dispensationalism, with all its confusing prophecy, is a key issue. Drs. Blaising and Bock at Dallas Theological Seminary have written two books on Progressive Dispensationalism. Dr. Saucy at Talbot Theological Seminary has written a similar book promoting Progressive Dispensationalism. Dr. Pate at Moody Bible Institute has also chimed in with a Progressive Dispensationalism book. Normative Dispensationalists like Dr. Ryrie, Dr. Walvoord, and Dr. Ice have all written books and articles vigorously exposing and refuting this aberrant teaching, but most supporters are not aware of this significant theological battle.

Administrators have become political, like CEOs of secular businesses. Dr. McCall and I are acquainted with the administrators at Dallas Seminary, Moody Bible Institute, Criswell College, Dallas Baptist University and any number of others. We cannot help but reach the conclusion that, rather than dealing with us as Christian brothers, they are more like common businessmen and, in some cases, not as trustworthy as common businessmen. Their emphasis seems to be on donations and enrollments and not on what is being taught; hence, one college fought us to the death over keeping a clearly bad textbook, and the president of another college ignored all of our correspondence and appeals.

We found disillusioned students and faculty members everywhere. Our ministry chaplain taught a college student who spent 18 months at Moody Bible Institute and came out of there totally shocked with what he had heard in the classrooms. He is now enrolled in a secular university. Faculty members likewise are under pressure to keep a smile for donors and a “don’t rock the boat” attitude where the administration is concerned. One professor at one of the leading seminaries, who continues to teach all the important Biblical truths, says he is being kept as “window dressing” so that when informed alumni ask about the current doctrinal shift, the administration can point to him as evidence that the school has not changed. But he has little or no voice in the current theology of the seminary faculty. Doctrinal statements that the new professors have signed need “reinterpretation.” Their interpretations are often broadened to include what amounts to false doctrines.

#### HARD TO CORRECT

It will be very hard to correct seminary errors because of the mindset that the administrators are great men, indeed, who utter something next to Scripture when they speak. They do not take kindly to suggestions or constructive criticism. We found most administrators in denial. The presidents of Dallas Seminary and Moody Bible Institute told us they had “no problem” with Progressive Dispensationalism, when we knew there was tremendous tension over this very doctrine behind the scenes. We have many friends at these institutions, after all. Dr. McCall is a doctoral graduate from Dallas Theological Seminary, and he and I were among Moody’s best-selling

authors over the past 25 years. We have personally both spoken in the chapels of these institutions and are well acquainted with faculty members there and elsewhere.

Criticism of any doctrinal shift is considered disloyal and divisive. Supporters are purposely confused and made to think any theological argument is mere hair-splitting when, in reality, there has been a sea change in the doctrinal teachings at the seminaries we have mentioned.

#### DOCTRINAL ISSUES

What exactly is Progressive Dispensationalism? We asked theologians as knowledgeable and seminal as Dr. John Walvoord and Dr.

Charles Ryrie, and they almost shrugged because, as it is often said, the stuff is so “slippery” that it is hard to get a handle on it. Essentially, Progressive Dispensationalism teaches that Jesus is already sitting on the throne of David. The distinctions between the church and Israel are purposely blurred, and the doctrine seems to move in the direction of Amillennialism which, of course, does away with the Pre-Tribulation Rapture, the whole Millennial Kingdom, the importance of modern Israel and virtually all of the basics of accurate eschatological teaching. They claim to be Dispensationalists, but have gutted Dispensationalism of some of its most important concepts.

With Biblical inerrancy, there are professors at leading seminaries pronouncing that some of the Scripture is mythical and that its histories are inaccurate.



**We found  
disillusioned  
students  
and faculty  
members  
everywhere.**

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# ZOLA'S BULLETIN BOARD

## **No More Yellow Alert**

Many of you readers came to our rescue in response to some of the most urgent appeals we have made in years. We had suffered a deficit in 1998, and 1999 was looking even worse. Moreover, we took quite a step of faith in committing to airing Zola's one-hour prime-time special *Is This the End... or Just the Beginning?* on New Year's Eve.

We are thankful to announce that your generosity enabled us to catch up financially and that you can give to sister ministries at this time. We must express our gratitude for your help in stabilizing us to forge ahead with God's calling.

## **Zola's Guarantee**

Some products are sold "as is" or guaranteed for thirty days. Not ours. If Zola's teaching materials should wear out or fail to satisfy you in any way at any time, we will gladly replace them or refund your purchase price — until the Rapture.

## **Striving for Excellence**

Whether you are calling our office at (214) 696-8844 during business hours Central Time or our 24-hour answering service at 1-800-WONDERS (966-3377), we want you to encounter someone who is pleasant and courteous in meeting your needs. That's why we are eager to hear from you whenever there is room for improvement. Please note your operator's name when you call, and contact Jane in our office with your comments. In doing God's work, we intend to glorify His name in how we serve you.

## **Used Magazines, Paperbacks**

Wanted: wholesome, used, recreational reading such as Louis Lamore books, bad guy turns good novels and magazines less than a year old — sports, sci-fi, automotive, Popular Mechanics, woodwork, Reader's Digest, Our Daily Bread and Bibles, but nothing hardbound. You can help to reshape some young men's outlook on life and let them know someone cares with some recreational reading that might otherwise have gone to waste.

Chaplain Keith Frances  
Collin County Justice Center  
4300 Community Blvd.  
McKinney, TX 75070

## **See It for Yourself**

Our Grand Tour, complete with a Mediterranean cruise, departs on April 19.  
Our Deluxe tour, with traditional luxury hotels, tip-top Israeli guides, drivers, restaurants, etc., leaves on April 24. Both tours will return on May 4.  
Our Kibbutz Tour, June 7 - 16, lower priced than our standard tours, will give you a chance to experience digging for archaeological treasures (tools provided).  
For your color tour folder, please call Diana at (214) 696-9760 during office hours or 1-800-WONDERS anytime.

# A Note From Zola

Dear Friends,

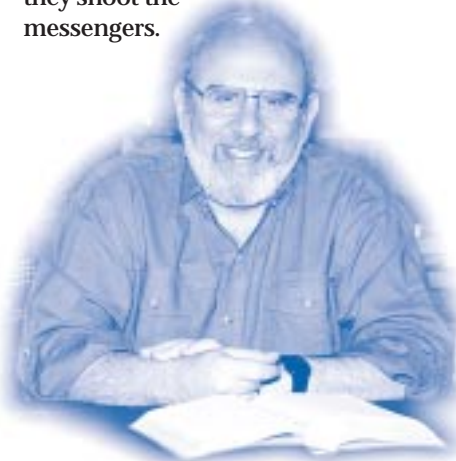
**W**ell, I'm getting ready for another battle royale. Every time we talk about seminaries or textbooks or denominations, we hope to precipitate discussion or debate. However, oftentimes we are met with resentment or worse. Why that is, I don't know.

In any complex system, constructive criticism must play a role, and we especially need the commentary of friends more expert in a given subject than the original purveyors. People contact our ministry for information about Israel on a regular basis, and we are glad to serve in that capacity. After all, we have taken 66 tours to Israel in 25 years and are very knowledgeable about that land and what is going on there.

We are also constantly consulted about Jewish subjects. Most of the questions are about the rabbinical system of Judaism and, of course, we teach the Biblical system. With all that said, when the subject comes to inadvertent criticism of Israel—or downright cursing of Israel—we feel called to rise to that challenge and inform the cursing ones that they are wrong. Genesis 12:3 says plainly, "I will bless him that blesses thee and curse him who curses thee," in regard to Israel. And beyond that, common sense should tell us that we should make every effort to love those whom God loves and whom He chose.

And so, when we have questionable textbooks or bad doctrines being taught in regard to Israel in otherwise good seminaries, we rise immediately to correct the error. In some cases, the schools take us seriously and eliminate the textbook or the offensive teaching.

On the other hand, the professors almost never listen to us, and the administrators often show us the door. Most administrators at seminaries have done little more than to ignore us, and some simply speak falsely of what's going on at their schools. In effect, they shoot the messengers.



But shooting messengers is done with utmost of Christian courtesy. (Dallas Seminary started a dossier on me, I am told by a former student there, as a guy looking for a fight, etc. Actually I'm just a guy looking for truthful Bible teaching and doing what I can to ferret out the opposite.)

I almost had to laugh at the unctuous Christian expressions in the letters sent by the president of Criswell College. Never, except in the letters of Paul, have I found such magnificent Christian prose, but the purpose was to defend the indefensible. And I remember the statements of the vice president of Criswell

College about his being not willing to "surrender" the term Palestine, as if to say, "By God, if I want to be wrong, then I insist on being wrong, and that's all there is to that!"

The most troubling case we have given in the cover article is that of Moody Bible Institute, formerly the leader of American theological schools. Dr. McCall and I are very aware of the battles going on behind the scenes in that seminary and the fact that all is kept quiet in the presence of donors and supporters. I deplore the idea that Moody accepts sacrificial gifts from rich and poor alike, but has so much money that it opened its own bank! Our ministry waits in line at the bank; we certainly never thought about owning a bank. The administrators at Moody act like Christian gentlemen, more or less, but simply do not deal fairly or truthfully, as far as I can see.

And Dallas Seminary is among the most important of other offenders where Israel is concerned. Its teaching has fallen into the mold of seminaries which hold to doctrines that make Israel irrelevant. If you write to these seminaries, be ready for return letters that either avoid talking about the problems we have enumerated or simply curse us as some kind of awful fellows who run around looking for trouble and criticizing the

totally holy ones who operate these schools.

Once again, forgive me for doing my work. If I've stepped on your toes or the toes

of a professor you like, I really am sorry, but what is going on is simply anathema, and it must be dealt with. The New Testament says that teachers will come along in the end to just tickle the ears of their students. I'm afraid we're certainly seeing that.

**...constructive criticism must play a role.**

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We can do no more as Bible teachers than to shine a very bright light in these dark corners and warn the Christian populace that schools resting on past laurels need to be examined.

Prophecy may not be properly taught these days in seminaries, churches, etc., but we're still at it, and we'll be at it until the King returns. Our next prophecy conference will be March 18-19, 2000, at the beautiful Biblical Arts Center in Dallas, where we had our last conference. This will be our "Spring Festivals Conference," and we will thoroughly teach the Passover Seder as well as celebrate Purim, the Festival of Queen Esther. The enrollment form is on page 7. I hope you can join us.

Once you've mastered the spring festivals, then join us in Israel to see them performed! **Our Spring Deluxe Tour departs April 24 for Israel and returns May 4.** You will visit all the major Biblical sites including, but not at all limited to, Mt. Carmel, Capernaum, Megiddo, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, the Mt. of Beatitudes, the Jordan River (where you may choose to be baptized as our Lord Jesus was), the Western Wall, the Mt. of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Upper Room, the Garden

Tomb (which is now empty), Masada, and the Dead Sea. You will also see the beautiful Golan Heights, where you will realize the incredible importance of this land to Israel. See the wonder of both ancient and modern Israel by joining us this spring!



**Our Spring Grand Tour departs April 19 for Athens,** from where you will depart on a breathtaking Mediterranean cruise of the Greek Islands of Patmos, Mykonos, and Rhodes. You will visit Corinth, the Acropolis, the Parthenon, Mars Hill, and Ephesus, Turkey. Follow the footsteps of Paul when you come along with us on our Grand Tour. After the cruise, you will join the Deluxe Tour group

for an enjoyable, enlightening, and spiritually enriching tour of Israel, before returning on May 4. Call Diana or Becky at 214-696-9760 for more information, or call 1-800-WONDERS for a full-color brochure.

If you can't join us for our Spring Tour, how about visiting Israel in June on our **Kibbutz Tour June 7-16?** This tour has the same itinerary as the Spring Deluxe Tour, plus an exciting archaeological dig in which you can actually participate. Our Kibbutz Tour is planned at a time when students and teachers can join us, and it is the perfect tour for the budget-minded pilgrim as it is our most economical tour of the year.

Before you see Israel for yourself, you can learn all about it and see the beauty of the Land in our new television series, "This Is Israel," beginning in March. This series will show you the true Israel, not the strife-torn, barren land the media has always presented to the public.

And remember to pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

Your messenger,

(Below) Center section of the 124' oil painting by Torger Thompson — The Miracle at Pentecost



# SPRING FESTIVALS CONFERENCE PURIM/PASSOVER MARCH 18-19, 2000

**Learn how to do a Passover Seder from Zola!** Passover is April 21, so this conference will be early enough for you to learn the Passover Seder and share it with friends and family. As an added bonus, have fun learning about Purim, which is March 20. The conference will be held at the beautiful Biblical Arts Center in Dallas. Zola will be joined by Moishe Rosen, Founder of Jews for Jesus; Dr. Tom McCall, Author and Consulting Theologian for Zola Levitt Ministries; Todd Baker, Ministry Theologian; and Tom Terry, Praise and Worship Leader. Seating is limited to 400, so make your reservations early!

We have made arrangements with a nearby hotel, the Holiday Inn Select. \$79 per night includes a continental breakfast on Sunday and bus transportation to and from the conference. The hotel is located at 10650 N. Central Expressway in Dallas, and the telephone number for reservations is 1-800-HOLIDAY. Tell them you're with Zola's conference to get the special room rate.

Your registration includes a box lunch on both Saturday and Sunday, and you will also receive free tickets (\$7 value) to the Biblical Arts Center's theatre presentation of a 124' oil painting entitled "Miracle at Pentecost," which has been updated with laser lights. Once you have enrolled, we will send you those tickets and your confirmation along with more information about the conference, hotel, and Biblical Arts Center.

Enrollment is \$39 per person. Please call 214-696-8844 with your credit card or mail us this enrollment form. Our 1-800 service will not be accepting conference reservations, but if you're using your credit card, you can fax us at 214-696-5885 or email us at levitt@metronet.com.

## CONFERENCE ENROLLMENT FORM

I wish to attend the "Spring Festivals Conference" March 18-19, 2000.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

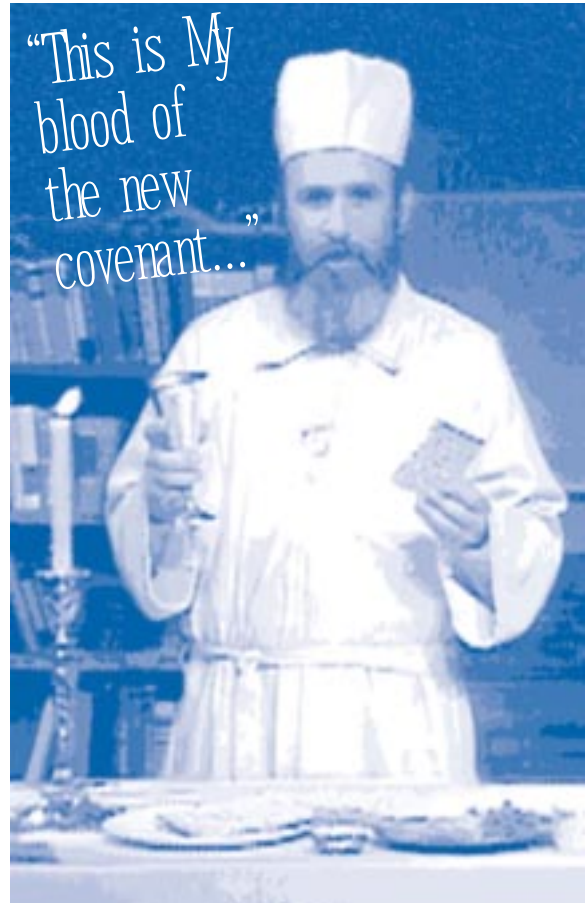
Telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: (\$39) (\$78) (\$117) (\$156) (Other) \_\_\_\_\_

Mastercard  VISA  Discover Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## HEBREW LESSON

לֹא תַחַמְדַּ

*Thou shalt not covet... (Ex 20:17a)*

מֹד	תַּחַ	לֹא
(2)	(1)	(1)
mohd	tahkh'	lo
you shall covet		Not

*Lo tahkh'•mohd*

### Hebraic Insight

The word translated *covet* usually refers to selfish desire or lust (e.g., "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart..." Prov. 6:25), and thus speaks directly to the heart's innermost intention, which, even if unacknowledged by ourselves, is always revealed before God: "Your Father who sees in secret" (Mt. 6:6). On the other hand, selfish desire can — if we are willing to be honest with ourselves — reveal to ourselves the condition of our hearts and thus mark our need for deliverance from the power of sin: "I had not known sin ...except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet'" (Rom. 7:7).

*Becky began working with our ministry last March and assisted with answering telephone questions about our tours as part of her duties. We felt that she might be more effective if she saw the land for herself. The following is her report of an adventure in life we can only do once — the first trip to the Holy Land. — Zola*

# Going Home

*By Becky Evans*

As a first-time pilgrim to the Holy Land, I didn't really know what to expect. Oh, I had done my homework studying the sites I would visit, and I was excited at the prospect of being in Israel at last. But it didn't seem real to me until I got there. The reality of God's Chosen Land is greater than you can ever imagine.

When I first arrived, I felt drained, of course, from the long flight over. That was my first transatlantic flight, and by the time the plane landed, I was focused on getting out of it more than anything. Then, standing outside the airport, the realization that I was truly in Israel began to dawn. The air truly does smell better in Israel. I had been told that, but until you're there, it isn't a knowledge you can grasp. And the novelty of seeing signs in Hebrew is a good indication you're not in Kansas any more. I saw my first Orthodox Jews in their black coats and hats with their amazing sidecurls. The fatigue from the flight was lifted by the excitement I felt.

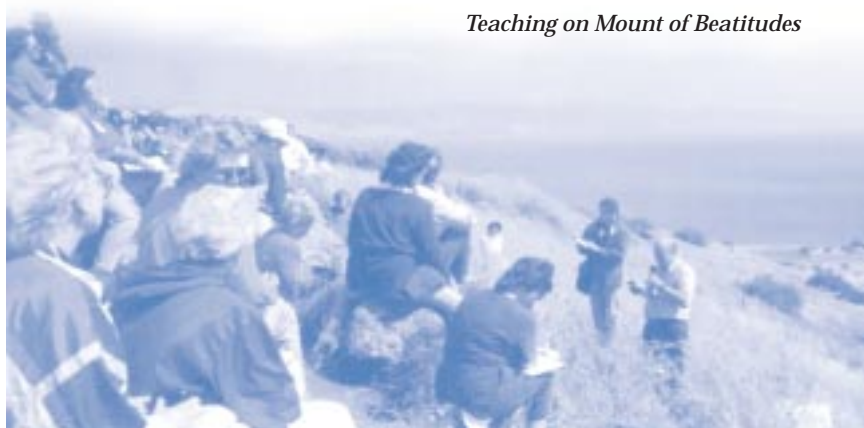
My name tag read "Tour Leader," but that was in name only. The Levitts and Diana Snell, our travel manager, had told me they wanted me to be more of a passenger than a tour leader my first trip. I was happy to oblige. Because of their generosity of spirit, I was able to soak in the wonderful teaching our guide, Zvi Rivai, gave us. Zvi is one of only ten messianic Jewish guides in all of Israel, and he is a blessing and a Christian in the truest sense of the word. Zola has hired Zvi for years as our head guide, and I can see why. I can't imagine anyone with a better knowledge of the Bible and the Holy Land.

Zvi told us our first day, "In Israel, we consider anything built after 70 AD 'new.'" We would pass a building and he would say, "That's new. It was built in 135 AD." Hmm. There's food for thought. I don't think we Americans truly realize how young our country is until

we visit a land as ancient as Israel. We're impressed by a colonial building or a home built by the pioneers. Wait until you see Masada, built fully 2,000 years ago!

Speaking of Masada, that was one of my favorite sites we visited. Everyone has their own favorites. Mine were Masada, the Mount of Beatitudes, and Capernaum. Learning the history of Masada from Zvi, I felt the anguish of the Zealots as the Romans breached the walls of the fortress. These thousand hardy people had forged a home in an abandoned fortress built by King Herod and managed a good life in a hard land for four years, only to be defeated by the invading Roman army. I wonder, though, was it truly a defeat? They chose

*Teaching on Mount of Beatitudes*



freedom through death rather than slavery to Rome. Even the Roman general who led the invasion admitted his admiration for these Jews who preferred to die strong than live defeated.

On the Mount of Beatitudes, I finally gained a full appreciation that I was actually standing where Jesus had been, where He taught the multitudes. The calm beauty of the Sea of Galilee lay before me as I contemplated the historical reality of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Seeing the hillside where 5,000 men sat and listened to His words gave me a deep acceptance of His miracle of the fish and loaves, and also of the greater gift He gave to all of us.

In Capernaum, we visited a synagogue built in 400 AD on the exact site of the ancient synagogue where Jesus taught. The graceful beauty of these worn remains struck my heart as I imagined the edifice that lay beneath the existing one. Just a short distance away are the ruins (still in remarkably good condition) of Peter's house. Capernaum is a physically as well as spiritually beautiful site on the tour.

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# How to Decipher a Seminary Letter

By Thomas S. McCall, Th.D.

It is getting increasingly difficult to get clear and simple answers from Bible schools and seminaries about current theological shifts. We encourage you to write to the addresses on page 10, but be aware of our own experience. Early in December, I wrote a letter to the Dean of Education of Moody Bible Institute asking the following questions:

1. Could you inform me if Moody Bible Institute has taken a position on Progressive Dispensationalism?
2. Are any of your professors currently teaching Progressive Dispensationalism?

After waiting a month without receiving any response, I sent a reminder to the Dean. Finally, I received a letter from the Chairman of the Bible Department. Following a friendly introduction in which he reminded me that we had worked together in Jewish evangelism in Los Angeles some thirty years ago, he stated:

The Academic Dean has asked that I respond to your letter dated December 3, 1999, regarding Moody's commitment to dispensationalism. Moody Bible Institute remains committed to a dispensational and premillennial view of the kingdom, and we require faculty members to recognize the distinction between Israel and the church—past, present and future.

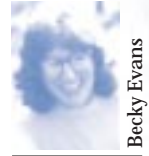
This response is designed to satisfy someone who is not aware of the issues, but it is really somewhat evasive. I asked about the school's position on Progressive Dispensationalism, which is really very different from traditional Dispensationalism. The Chairman's answers are seemingly to different questions, and he has worded them in such a way that Progressive Dispensationalists would agree with him.

Progressive Dispensationalists have departed from some of the basic tenets of Dispensationalism. They believe that Christ is already sitting on the throne of David, while traditional Dispensationalists have always maintained that Christ will ascend the throne of David when the Millennium begins. To say that He is now on the throne of David puts a Kingdom event in our own time. If we are living in the Kingdom or even some introduction to the Kingdom, then we are disappointed, to say the least. Mixing time periods leads to real confusion.

Also, Progressive Dispensationalists claim they believe in the distinction between Israel and the Church, but they are blurring those distinctions. For instance, Progressive Dispensationalists think the Church is prophesied in the Old Testament, which is a viewpoint the traditional Dispensationalists have always rejected. We believe instead that the Church was a mystery that was not revealed until New Testament times. As Paul pointed out,

...you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known...as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;...that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Eph. 3:4-6 (RYRIE STUDY BIBLE, MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE, 1976)

When writing to a seminary, demand precise answers to the exact questions you have asked. If you get the kind of answer the Chairman of the Moody Bible Department wrote, send it to us, and we'll write back.



Becky Evans

Since I first was told I would finally make my pilgrimage to the Holy Land, I had feared, in a way, my visit to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial. I've never turned my face from the nightmarish truth of the Holocaust, but experiencing the museum in Israel was something I expected to affect me far more deeply than *Schindler's List* or any book I've ever read on the subject. I should not have feared the experience. While the memorial presents the truth in an unvarnished manner, it does so with the inclusion of the strength and grace of a people who were assaulted with the worst the Nazis could give them, and who were ultimately victorious over Satan's most devilish work. The Children's

Hall, with the reading of the names of thousands of children who lost their lives to the devastation, is the most emotionally wrenching ordeal of the visit. But the memory from Yad Vashem that will most stay with me is the sight of a small woman's stylish jacket, perfectly preserved, with bullet holes perforating the back. That could be my mother, my sister, my daughter. This was real, and no amount of lies and half-truths can deny the truth of the Holocaust.

Almost everywhere we went, we were surrounded by lush greenery, profuse bougainvillea and flowers of every kind imaginable. I say everywhere we went. Actually, we were in captivatingly austere desert as well as verdant land. We saw towering cliffs etched by time, fecund farmland, seas of variant blues: azure, aqua, ultramarine. I could never have imagined that such a small space of land could hold such variety.

I pray that was not my only pilgrimage to God's Chosen Land. I ask God to one day let me return and be enriched once more by His gift to His people. But, if He chooses that I should never return in this lifetime, I know I will return when the Lord returns. Thank God for that knowledge and the blessings He has bestowed upon us with His beautiful Land.



In keeping with political correctness, there is also Egalitarianism, which has been covered extensively in the Moody Bible Institute student newspaper. This is the doctrine that teaches that women are equal in function to men in the pulpit and other ministries. This has led to the ordination of women to serve as pastors of churches. Some modern professors consider this a very good move, while those who believe the Scriptures find the idea repellant. And finally, the relative importance of prophecy, the Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church, and the significance of modern Israel are de-emphasized to a point of almost irrelevance. Israel, in particular, is criticized, as we've pointed out above, rather than heralded as a sure sign of the coming of the Tribulation and second coming of Christ.

**THE BRIGHT SIDE**

We must say that there are any number of Bible schools available which are holding to Dispensationalism and correct doctrines about Israel and prophecy. We can name some—Philadelphia College of The Bible with Dr. Ryrle, Liberty University with Dr. Falwell, Tyndale Theological Seminary with Dr. Couch, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary with Dr. Patterson, and Cedarville College with Dr. Gromaki.

Readers should know that we are open to any seminary writing in with positive answers to Dr. McCall's four questions. Simply go to your local Bible school or the one you're considering attending, and ask them if they're on a proper Biblical "DIET."

And the other good news is God is still running the world, Israel is still His heart's desire and the focus of His activity among men, and prophecy marches onward with an imminent Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the born-again Church coming to deliver us before a seven-year Tribulation and then to a thousand-year Kingdom of rejoicing on earth! Please know that in the last two weeks of February, for most of you, we will have two television programs on the subjects discussed in this article, and we encourage you very much to write to these seminaries, particularly those we have mentioned above. The addresses of the two major seminaries we have mentioned above are:

President Charles R. Swindoll  
Dallas Seminary  
3909 Swiss Avenue  
Dallas, Texas 75204

President Joseph Stowell  
Moody Bible Institute  
820 N. La Salle Boulevard  
Chicago, Illinois 60610-3284



**Correction:**  
The correct internet address for CAMERA is [www.camera.org](http://www.camera.org)

## Little peace at Shepherdstown media center

*(REUTERS)*

Peace may have been on the agenda of Israeli-Syrian talks, but it did not reign at a media center near the venue of the negotiations in West Virginia.

After a complaint from a Syrian journalist, US officials asked the Washington-based correspondent of *The Jerusalem Post* to move from her pre-assigned place at the edge of the Syrian media table.

"I have nothing personally against anybody but legally we cannot sit at the same table," said Ibrahim Hamdi, a Damascus correspondent for the London-based Arabic daily *Al-Havat*.

US officials said a mistake had been made in assigning *Jerusalem Post* correspondent Janine Zacharia to the Syrian media table at the press center, where US, Syrian and Israeli journalists sit at three separate tables designated by the hosts.

The officials said Syrian law bans Syrians from having contact with Israelis until there is peace.

The officials also said more Arab correspondents were expected at the center, making it necessary for non-Arab reporters to move.



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