

Levitt Letter

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.—Rom. 10:1



THIS JUST IN FROM GAZA

ISIS, ISIL, or Daesh? p. 34

Pointers for a Bias-Free Media

The *Christian Post* op-ed contributor **Noah Beck** offers pointers to the news media to lessen their egregious anti-Israel bias.

Your job is to report facts, not reinforce a narrative. Fact: From Sept. 11 through Oct. 31 last year, 1,315 Arab-Moslem attacks on Jews included stabbings, bombings, and rock-throwing. That's about 26 attacks per day resulting in the murder of 11 Jews.

The weaker party can be wrong. Sometimes Palestinians do indefensible things. Sometimes Israel is guilty only of trying to protect its citizens from violence. As an honest reporter, you should show this.

Properly identify the terrorist and the victim when reporting casualties, and describe *in context* the events that caused them, thereby avoiding headlines like "Jewish man uses his neck to attack the blade of Palestinian's knife."

Learn the history of this region so you don't moronically suggest that Jews have no historical connection to the Temple Mount. [Such a claim](#) supports Palestinian revisionism against basic facts and archaeological evidence.

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Irish Start-ups: Boycotts Not On Our Radar

By David Shamah
TimesOfIsrael.com



Niamh Bushnell

Among many Israelis, Ireland has the reputation—whether deserved or not—of being one of the most active countries in the movement to boycott the Jewish state over its treatment of the Palestinians. But among the members of Dublin's start-up community, according to the city's Commissioner for Start-Ups, **Niamh Bushnell**, the issue isn't even on the radar.

In fact, she said, she had never heard the term BDS—Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions. "If that term means boycotting Israeli technology and ideas about building a

[\(continued p.3\)](#)



Pointers for a Bias-Free Media *cont. from cover*

Learn the history of this conflict. Before publishing “information” from “eyewitnesses,” realize that even [Amnesty International](#) has admitted the unreliability of eyewitnesses in this conflict. [Arab-Moslems have been killing Jews](#) in this area for over a century, with shifting excuses over time.

Stop trying to use the latest of those shifting excuses to justify the unjustifiable. No grievance warrants stabbing people in the street. The average Syrian is worse off than anyone in Gaza or the West Bank, but Syrian teens aren’t out stabbing civilians.

Take note of nuances. Recently, 92 Israeli-Arab-Moslems committed terrorist attacks. They are not under occupation (and have better freedoms and living standards than most in the Arab world). So these attacks are not about a political dispute; [Islamic rejection of any state for the Jews](#) motivates them. (Please see [“Who Occupies Gaza?”](#) on p.15.)

Show cause and effect, not just effect. Showing only Israeli responses to attacks portrays Israelis as waking every morning and asking how they can hurt Arabs. Israelis actually have better things to do with their mornings—[like cure cancer](#). But they get distracted when people try to kill them. If the world could keep Israelis safer, cancer might get cured faster.



Article verbs should indicate who did what. [According to CNN](#), Joseph’s Tomb spontaneously “catches fire.” CNN changes the laws of physics rather than blame Moslems for burning a Jewish holy site. The list of non-Moslem sites that have been desecrated by Moslems is long.

Israeli lives matter. Include photos/profiles of [Israeli victims of Moslem terrorism](#) at least as often as you include photos and profiles of Moslem attackers who were killed while trying to murder Israelis. See the [TED talk](#) about surviving a knifing.

Don’t be afraid to present [Gazans as they present themselves](#)—brandishing butcher knives and calling for Jewish blood. Show the [Palestinian mother](#) who celebrates one son dead trying to murder Israelis and hopes that she and her other children all die for the same “cause.” Showing the Islamic Jew-hatred that runs from crib to coffin might help observers understand why there’s no peace.

At best, the media’s persistent anti-Israel bias poisons many millions—from voters to policy-makers—against Israel. Even worse, it can lead to anti-Semitic violence by mobs or individual thugs, as too often happens in Europe.

Journalists are key to a fair and civilized world. Start acting like it. ★

This brilliant article substantiates the need for magazines like the *Levitt Letter*. While some may reflexively assume that we Bible-believers are biased toward Israel, facts are suffering daily in the mainstream media. The above pointers should be required reading for ANYONE reporting on Israel and the Middle East! —Myles

Additional information:

The [one-minute video](#) illustrates how Islamist sympathizers would mischaracterize the perpetrators and victims of 9/11, the Boston Marathon bombing, France’s Charlie Hebdo shooting, and other terrorist tragedies.

[Kay Wilson’s TED Talk](#) explains the intricacies of surviving a machete attack and offers a reminder of what a life-affirming culture looks like, as opposed to the death cult that is trying to stamp it out.



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Irish Startups: Boycotts Not On Our Radar *(cont. from cover)*

Start-Up Nation, it's not something we are interested in."

Israel indeed holds many lessons for Ireland, a country that believes it has the means to be a tech giant but lacks the tools—tools that Israel has perfected and effectively wielded to turn Tel Aviv into the number two tech center in the world, behind California's Silicon Valley.

"For example, you have a strong angel community, which is very important for early stage investments," said Bushnell. "We have a lot of venture capital funds in Dublin," though VCs by nature look for tech that is close to being market-ready. Without early-stage investments, many worthy ideas fall by the wayside.



"We're working on implementing policy that would reward angel investments, and Israel is a model for us," she said.

Tel Aviv and its environs are reputed to have between 4,000 and 5,000 start-ups, and Dublin has 2,100—a nice start for an aspiring Start-Up Nation, said Bushnell. ★

JerUSAlem ... forever?

Myles To Go
By Myles Weiss
ZLP Host



The ties that bind ... a match made in heaven ... a covenantal past / present / future. The title above illustrates our U.S. relationship with Israel.

The very existence of the United States of America organically connects to the Bible's homeland. Moreover, the Bible played a seminal role in our nation's foundation.

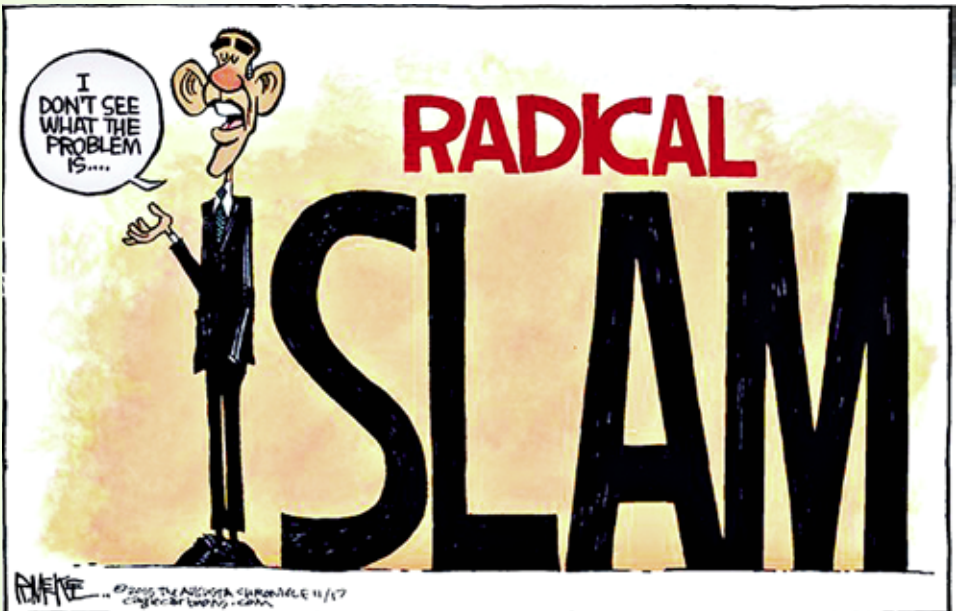
What we know as "Judeo-Christian" theology (and the worldview it produces) provides the basis for the "rule of law" and the blessings that have been historically evident in the United States. In spite of recent divisive politicking, this nation has come a long way: from widespread acceptance of slavery to our first African-American president!

Contention has been growing over the facts of history. One glaring example is what I see as President Obama's appeasement of Islamic terror, even to the point of overwriting the troubled, shared history between America and Islam. The narrative has moved from straightforward labels that make sense to bizarre euphemisms, e.g., "workplace violence" and refusal to acknowledge the identity of chosen targets of terror, e.g., Jews and Christians.

We students of the Bible should not be surprised. I believe that in his June 2009 Cairo speech, our newly elected president mapped out his plans for the future. Both overt and covert worldviews came through. In His mercy and with a divine sense of humor, God had me tuned in to the original speech, before the Western mainstream media could edit and parse and confuse the public.

Several U.S. presidents have exhibited these tendencies in the past, but I noticed Obama hint at two profound changes that we now see playing out with dire consequences: surprises and daylight. **The traditional treatment of close allies contains two elements that are supposed to be non-negotiable: No surprises, No daylight.**

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These simple phrases are shorthand for affirming that:

- We will inform our allies of important upcoming events or maneuvers before we undertake them.
- We will remain close enough that there is no gap between us. We will work together and affirm our allied status.

Sadly, I believe that these key elements between Israel and America have suffered over the last seven years. In Cairo, the new president equated current Palestinian suffering with the Nazi Holocaust, which he asserted was the primary reason for the new Israeli state, thus blotting out 4,000 years of Jewish history.

Michael Oren, Israel’s former ambassador to the U.S. and one of my favorite living witnesses to the viability of the restored State of Israel, agrees. He wrote:

The Cairo speech was revolutionary. In the past, Western leaders had addressed the followers of Islam—Napoleon in invading Egypt in 1798 and Kaiser Wilhelm II while visiting Damascus a century later—but never before had an American president. Indeed, no president had ever spoken to adherents of a world faith, whether Catholics or Buddhists, and in a city they traditionally venerated. More significantly, the Cairo speech, twice as long as his inaugural address, served as the foundational document of Obama’s policy toward Muslims.

I detected the seeds of this painful move away from Israel and toward Islam in the Cairo speech. Was anyone else listening? I write this while listening to suicide bombs and machine-gun fire in the background of news reports from the Paris theater–restaurant–soccer stadium massacre. ☆



[“Israel’s ‘Magna Carta’—The San Remo Mandate”](#) indicates that activity regarding Israel’s rebirth began in 1920. The Holocaust was a vital catalyst in gaining world understanding, but centuries of Jews had longed to re-establish their ancient homeland as promised in the Abrahamic Covenant. —Mark



2009 Cairo Speech: “The U.S. is not at war with Islam.”

Be Ye Comforted

Katharine Weiss
ZLP co-host



"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."

2 Corinthians 1:3–4

Many of us need comfort these days. God wants to comfort us, and then He wants us to be a comfort to others. All of us will go through some kind of suffering or trial in our lives, but we don't always realize that trials produce godly character that will make us better able to help others.

When we are going through a hard time, it is very important to remember that God is with us. The God of the Bible is compassionate. He comforts us when we go through trials, but His impact doesn't stop there. Through our trials we gain a testimony and a vocabulary to empathize with others who are experiencing hard times. We may think that our situation makes us unable to minister—whether it involves a wayward child or a financial setback. However, no matter the nature of our trial, the scripture above tells us that the very weight around our neck can become the launching pad for our ministry to others. Extending the comfort of God to others is one way we can spread God's love.



Where others see failure and struggle, God sees qualification to be used mightily. No wonder the Apostle Paul praised God in the midst of his many trials. Somehow Paul saw that these light afflictions help us to receive His grace:

And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

2 Corinthians 12:9

Lately, I have been thinking about and drawing on the comfort that God gave Myles and me when we were in a tight financial spot. At the time, we both worked days and weekends to make ends meet. Relief eventually arrived, but not without a struggle. For us, the key is continual belief that God is good and that He has a good plan for our lives.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah 29:11

Isaiah 40:1–2 begins: ***"Comfort, ye, comfort ye my people."*** God cares that we comfort each other, and specifically that we comfort Israel. Isaiah 51:2–3 instructs us to look to Abraham and Sarah as examples, and assures us that God will comfort Zion. Abraham and Sarah went through many trials, but God gave them comfort even though they were severely tested. Our prayer is that God will comfort you and comfort Israel; that He will make your life—and Israel—like the Garden of Eden. ★

Kiryat Yam—Town by the Sea

OUR MAN IN HAIFA By Eitan Shishkoff (r) with wife Connie



Sitting on one of the solid wood benches provided by the City of Kiryat Yam, I close my eyes. The temperature is perfect: high 70s. The sound of modest waves collapsing near the shore washes over my soul—rinsing weariness, stress, and anxiety.

When I open my eyes, sailboats and freighters dot the bay, providing a distant backdrop for beach walkers, hearty swimmers, fishermen, and paddleboard surfers. It's about as tranquil a scene as could be found in today's Israel—riven as it is by daily acts of terror. For that reason, surveying the placid blue of the Haifa Bay is timely medicine for the Israeli psyche.

Founded in 1940, Kiryat Yam (pronounced "yahm") traces its origin to the foresight of the Bayside Land Corporation, an early venture of the Palestine Economic Corporation and the Jewish National Fund. Interestingly, its purchase was related to the building of the Iraq Petroleum Company oil pipeline, which brought oil from the fields of Iraq to Haifa during the early heyday of oil production in the 1930s.

The city by the sea (the literal meaning of *Kiryat Yam*) has wisely invested in parks, public transportation, and a picturesque brick-paved promenade that borders its lengthy coastline. This town of some 50,000 is barely known, even within Israel. Yet it has been a landing point for many thousands of immigrants arriving in successive waves from Morocco, the former Soviet Union, and Ethiopia. On the one hand there is little industry, leading many residents to make the short commute to Haifa for employment. On the other hand, housing is relatively inexpensive; thus it is a popular home for retirees as well as families of new immigrants.



Chess is a spectator sport at Kiryat Yam beach



Lone fisherman on Haifa Bay

Twenty years ago we found ourselves renting a warehouse in a small, out-of-the-way industrial district of Kiryat Yam, as an initial home for our then-new Tents of Mercy congregation. What began with 30 people in a rundown warehouse has grown, by the grace of God, to include a humanitarian aid center and four daughter congregations in the Galilee. In next month's column, I'll take you inside the fascinating story of pioneering these twenty years in humble Kiryat Yam. Who'da thunk it? ☆

Reunion: Iranian Jewish Community



By **Simona Weinglass**
(r) TimesOfIsrael.com

A view of Golpayegan

In Israel's National Park in Ramat Gan, the remnant of the ancient Jewish community of Golpayegan, Iran, holds their reunion, which occurs every 5 years.



Golpayegan—the name is Persian for *fortress of flowers and land of tulips*—is a town of 50,000 in the province of Isfahan, 63 miles southeast of Iran's heavy water nuclear facility. It is a place of magnificent views and ancient monuments, including a tower that sways back and forth and rock paintings by prehistoric shepherds. The town's Jewish community, which may go back as far as 2,700 years, no longer exists. What's left of the memories of this ancient community are here, at this reunion in the park.

Farhad Moradian, a mathematics professor, says the people of Golpayegan were so devout that each extended family had its own synagogue. The town's Jewish cemetery was two kilometers long by two kilometers wide. But according to several accounts, both the synagogues and cemetery have been razed to the ground. David Menashri, a professor of Middle Eastern History at Tel Aviv University, recalls a visit to Golpayegan in 1975. "I wanted to visit the cemetery where my grandfather was buried, but they told me it had been plowed over."

In Israel, there are several hundred former Golpayegans out of a community of over 100,000 Jews of Iranian descent. "It was not one of the important communities of Iran," says Lior Sternfeld, a professor at Penn State University and expert on Iranian Jewry. "Even when Golpayegans moved to Tehran, they lived close to other Golpayegans; there was a brotherhood of Golpayegans."

"In the 1960s and '70s, there were several missions by the Jewish Agency and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to open community institutions there." It is an exceptionally beautiful place, he adds. "The Jewish community in this part of the country dates back 2,700 years. They came after the Babylonian exile."

Golpayegan, Sternfeld points out, is in the county of Iran's former capital of Isfahan, which had a large and illustrious Jewish community. "Isfahan used to be called Yehodiya, the 'city of the Jews.'"

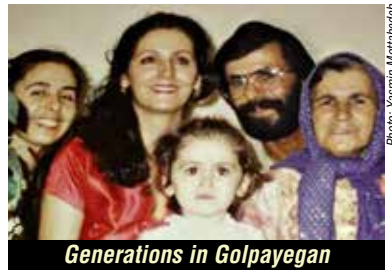


Photo: Yasmin Motaherchi

Generations in Golpayegan

The Golpayegan community boasted a proliferation of Jewish doctors, some of whom served as physicians to Iran's shahs. "That's true of all Iranian Jews," says Sternfeld. "In the 1970s, Jews accounted for less than half a percent of the population but were 10 percent of doctors in the country." "My father, grandfather and great-grandfather were all doctors," Farhad Moradian states. "But they didn't practice university medicine, it was ancient medicine." Moradian remembers studying his grandfather's medical books as a teenager; they were handwritten on deer parchment.

(continued next page)



Reunion... continues



“Do you know how they checked blood sugar?” asks **Noa Homa Shalom** (*r*) a naturopath who organized the reunion. “Someone would pee on the floor and if ants came, there was too much sugar in their urine. We didn’t have pharmaceutical medications. But it was real medicine.”

Yasmin Mottahedeh met her husband in the early 1980s; Emanuel was a young Jewish doctor. By then, only four Jewish families were left in Golpayegan. Most had left before and immediately after Iran’s 1979 Islamic Revolution. Yasmin says she did not suffer from anti-Semitism following the Islamic Revolution. “[Ayatollah] Khomeini said not to hurt the Jews, that the Jews are our brothers. Iranians were nice to Jews.” But there were other difficulties. “We had less freedom than before. Life under a religious government is not an easy life.”

When Yasmin and Emanuel made the decision to move to Israel, it was impossible for him to get a passport: he was Jewish and a doctor. Doctors were in high demand in Iran. Yasmin and the children bought round-trip tickets to Turkey, then never came back. A few months later, Emanuel made his way to the border with Pakistan and, in the middle of the night, ran across. On the other side he paid a smuggler to take him to Karachi, where the Jewish Agency put him on a flight to Switzerland, and from there to Israel. “We came with just a single suitcase of clothes,” remembers Yasmin.

For the most part, second and third generations of diaspora communities do not continue to congregate. But when it comes to communities from Iran, whose members immigrated more recently, “they’re still active and young enough to remember, so we can still document things,” says Haim Ghiuzeli, director of databases at Beit Hatfutsot, The Museum of the Jewish People at Tel Aviv University. (He is from Romania, not Golpayegan.)

Ghiuzeli explains the magnitude of the Jewish migration that occurred over the last century. “There are 14 million Jews in the world. Ninety-eight percent are living in places that are not where their ancestors lived 120 years ago.” In 1880, he adds, the Jewish people were mainly European. Today, there are fewer than a million Jews in all of Europe, including Russia. “Ninety percent of all Jews live in Israel and North America, with the rest spread around the world.” Ghiuzeli attributes these changes to three factors: first, the massive emigration of the Jewish people due to persecution, economics, and Zionism; second, the establishment of the state of Israel; and third, the Holocaust. ★



An Unholy Alliance

CLASSIC ZOLA from 1986: 30 years ago



In a recent letter to you, I alluded to some very surprising political developments involving Iran and Russia. Improving relations between these two unlikely allies are so important that we are going to make a television program devoted to that piece of news. [Since updated as [Coming: The End! Russia & Israel in Prophecy, book](#) or [CD](#).] It seems that the Iranians, the heart of modern Persia, have found some common ground with the Russians—a curious development that has been expected by anyone familiar with the Bible’s prophecy regarding the coming Russian invasion of Israel.

In setting out to make the new program, we reviewed our past report on the progress of this prophecy, a program that was several years old and mainly concerned Russian maneuvers throughout the world. It touched on Iran, Libya, and Ethiopia as allies of Russia in the future invasion (Ezekiel 38:5). But it offered little in the way of observable alliances at that time. In the case of Iran, for example, I stated that the invasion “couldn’t happen this week” because the Ayatollah’s fanatically-fundamental Islamic culture simply had nothing in common with the Communist atheists of Russia.

How times have changed!

In February, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Georgi Korniyenko made a formal visit to Iran and the two formerly antagonistic neighbors agreed to expand economic and trade relations, and to conduct joint oil exploration in the Caspian Sea. It’s time, therefore, that we update our program because what we said in 1980 no longer holds true. The Russian invasion actually could happen in the foreseeable future—perhaps not this week, but as soon as the Persian-Russian relationship develops enough to permit coordinated troop movements. Because Ezekiel indicated that the two will be allies in the end-times invasion,

those familiar with the prophecy have awaited this moment with some trepidation.

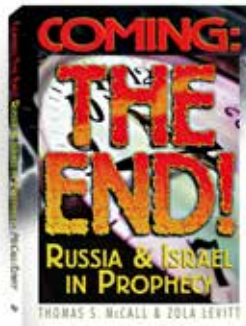
Concerning Libya, we also couldn’t say a lot in 1980 because Libya wasn’t much of a power then. Today, however, no one needs to detail the antagonism of Libya toward Israel or the warmth of its relations with Russia. Libya is now fully in place as described by Ezekiel and very ready to participate.

Ethiopia has captured world attention in the ensuing years due to its famine and because of its Marxist government’s good relations with Russia. It too stands ready to add its part to the invasion.

It should be appreciated that these alliances, formed in a few short years, have brought into sharp focus a prophecy more than 25 centuries old! Those watching for the pertinent alliances to be in place before the Russian invasion of Israel in the End Times may not have long to wait. ☆

Please see related news brief on [p. 11](#).

Coming: The End! Russia & Israel In Prophecy [book](#) & [teaching CD](#)



By Zola and Dr. Thomas S. McCall

This study of a primary end-times prophecy is vital for all who believe

the Scriptures. One chapter, *A Strategy for Unbelievers*, even tells unbelievers how to cope with the Tribulation Period! This basic book of prophecy analyzes the world situation in surprising terms. Hal Lindsey called it “a must-read for everyone who wants to know where we are on God’s timetable.”



Russia to Provide Iran with S-300 Air Defense Missiles

BBC.com

In late 2015, Russia signed a contract to supply Iran with sophisticated S-300 surface-to-air missiles. The contract got the go-ahead earlier in the year after international sanctions on Iran were lifted following a deal over its nuclear program.

Israel, the U.S., and Saudi Arabia are opposed to the missile contract, fearing the missiles could be used to protect Iranian nuclear sites from air strikes. The S-300 can also be used against multiple targets, including jets, or to shoot down other missiles.

Russian officials say the first batch

could be delivered 18 months after Iran has specified the S-300 type that it wants. Technical talks continue.

The \$800 million contract, signed in 2007, was frozen by Russia in 2010 because of the international sanctions. President Putin unfroze it in April.

Reuters news agency quoted Sergei Chemezov, head of Russia's Rostec arms firm: "If the Gulf countries are not going to attack Iran...why should they be threatened? Because this is defense equipment." ✨



S-300
Missile
Launched

Russian S-300 Air Defense Missile Launcher



Notable Quotable

"Whoever condemned the attacks in France needs to condemn the attacks in Israel. It's the same terror. Whoever does not do this is a hypocrite and blind."

— **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu**, on Palestinian attacks that killed at least five people in Tel Aviv and the West Bank. (November 19, 2015)



Ask the Chaplain

By Dr. Todd Baker
Zola Levitt Ministries
Staff Theologian



Understanding Prophecy and God's Mysterious Ways *Two questions relate to Israel's rebirth as a nation.*

Q. Is it possible that, just as the Jewish people were kept slaves in Egypt in order to build up the “great Nation” for Abraham’s covenant (Gen. 12:2), the Nazi Holocaust was a way of making the world so aghast at the atrocities that various nations began the work of making the official nation of Israel?

Q. Regarding Isaiah 66:8 — “*Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she brought forth her children.*” When is that “day”? Was it in 1948, or will it be when the Lord returns?

A. The prophecy of Isaiah 66:8 was partially fulfilled in one single day when Israel was declared to be a nation once again, on May 14, 1948.

I say “partially fulfilled” because the rest of this prophecy will be fulfilled when the Jewish nation is spiritually born-again in one day at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, when the nation will look upon Him who was pierced, mourn for Him, and finally receive Jesus for who He really is—Lord and Messiah (Zech. 12:10).

And, just as the Jews were enslaved/in travail and were delivered by God, so too the Jewish people experienced the horror/travail of the Holocaust, and it led directly to the events of May 14, 1948.

And so the rest of Isaiah 66:8 will be fulfilled after the Jewish Remnant (144,000 per Revelation 7:4–8) goes through the anguish of the seven-year Tribulation period, resulting in the nation’s spiritual rebirth at the Second Coming.



Todd accurately ties the moment of world compassion in 1948 to the age-old love story between God and the Jewish people. The Nazi genocidal horror did catch the attention of an inattentive and often anti-Semitic world, but the rebirth of Israel goes much deeper and should be seen in the context of God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. —Myles

Afterlife Destinations

Q. Please help me distinguish between Hades and purgatory. I know Heb. 9:27 says “...it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment....” So is purgatory a real place, and is Hades permanent or temporary?

A. Purgatory is a fiction created from Roman Catholic tradition and the non-canonical, apocryphal Book of Maccabees (12:40–45). The Bible emphatically teaches that there are only two places the dead will go after this life: Heaven for the believer in Christ, and hell for the unbeliever (as illustrated by the story of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus in Luke 16:19–31).

Hades was the Greek god of the underworld (hell), not the underworld itself. Hell (also called *Sheol*) currently holds the unsaved temporarily until judgment at the Great White Throne. At that time, hell will be emptied and the unbelievers cast into the lake of fire where they shall remain forever (Rev. 20:11–15). ★

Thinking for Themselves

By Kathryn Sue Hopper
Zola Levitt Ministries
TJF Outreach



My husband Robin and I joined Dr. Todd Baker and Harvey Zion on the 35th **To the Jew First** Gospel outreach in Israel last October.

We began in the central coast town of Netanya on the beautiful Mediterranean Sea. When I stopped in the mall to look for a shirt for my grandson, two attentive salesclerks helped me find the one I wanted. After my purchase, I mentioned that I had a complete Hebrew Bible (with both Testaments) and asked if they would like it. One woman hesitated, but the other said that she would like to accept the study Bible on behalf of the shop so that any employee who wanted to read it could do so. What a wonderful idea! I happily gave her the Bible and wrote an encouraging note inside.

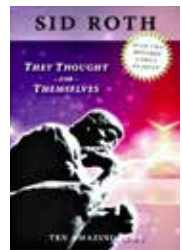
Later, at the BIG Tiberias Mall, Robin and I visited Galit, a young woman at the toy store who had accepted a complete Bible from us the previous spring. Galit lit up when we approached her. Her studies were progressing well and we answered some of her questions, including the question most asked by Jews: Does accepting Yeshua mean I stop being Jewish?



Robin (c) and Sue (r) enjoy bringing the Good News to Israelis.

We always answer: "No! Accepting the Jewish Messiah is the most Jewish thing you can do!" This insight surprises even non-Jewish (gentile) Believers.

We left Galit the book *[They Thought For Themselves](#)** in Hebrew by Messianic believer Sid Roth. It contains ten testimonies written by Jews who accepted Yeshua as their personal Messiah. We look forward to hearing Galit's thoughts when we visit her next spring.



We met Dana, a beautiful, young Moslem woman with blonde hair and blue eyes, working in the shoe store. Her striking appearance causes most people to assume that she is Jewish or Christian. She is a native Israeli fluent in Hebrew, so I offered her a complete Hebrew Bible. At first, she was hesitant because she is Moslem. But I assured her that there is no reason for her *not* to read the Hebrew Bible, because it was written first to the Jew but also to everyone else. Messiah came first to the Jew, but He died for the sins of us all, and brings salvation to us all, if we accept His Gift of all gifts.

Dana was grateful to receive a beautiful study Bible from us, and expressed surprise at our generosity to her though she is Moslem.

Along with the many divine appointments we encountered, we watched the number of Bibles that were accepted almost double from previous visits. One Ethiopian Messianic congregation in Jerusalem needed quite a few complete Bibles in Hebrew to give to new members who don't have a personal copy to study and mark up. We handed out 33 Bibles and five children's storybook Bibles, also in Hebrew. ★

*available in English at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

A NOTE FROM MARK / By Mark Levitt

Too Little Fundraising?



As this ministry approaches the end of one year and the beginning of another, we once again face the very real prospect of financially running in the red. Rather than sounding any particular alarm, I only wish to clue you that it's awfully close.

In some respects, that's an admirable state of affairs, particularly when ZLM's objective is not to accumulate massive reserves. In fact, such cutting-it-close vindicates our financial stewardship in the wake of occasional accusations that we are too focused on finances.

Such concerns typically come from readers and viewers who don't support us with either purchases or contributions. The complainers apparently think that pointing at what they see as a speck in our eye somehow causes other people to send the very dollars that the rebukers rely on to read and view our teaching.

That's okay; really, it is. Because God, of course, provides. We ask, and then we receive—all in moderation (unless you count our abundant spiritual blessings). However, **as you weigh which of your favorite ministries merit tangible support, here we are, making our needs known in abidance with Philippians 4:6**

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

If you prefer to support sister 501(c)(3) tax-exempt outreaches (in addition to or besides ours), remember that you can designate contributions for specific projects, such as planting trees in Israel. Now though, let me call your attention to Hebrew4Christians.com, a website run by the same John Parsons who for nearly 15 years has dutifully furnished our *Levitt Letter's* monthly Hebrew Lesson ([please see p. 16](#)) as a volunteer. John also authored [Zola's Introduction to Hebrew](#).

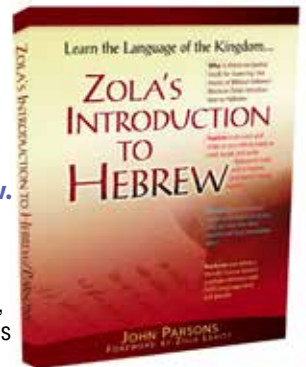
John prefers to stow rewards in Heaven rather than accept pay for his faithful, monthly lesson. Therefore, if you allocate a portion of your ZLM contribution to John's endeavors, we will relay 100% of that amount to his Hebrew for Christians outreach. Incidentally, Zola once asked me (with admiration and a little envy), "How did John become so knowledgeable about Hebrew?" Hence, John (rather than Zola) wrote the thick, user-friendly primer described below.

Our ministry could really use your help right now as we plan our budget for a new year of television production: REAL Bible-teaching on location in the Holy Land, where most of the Old Testament happened and where most of the New Testament will finish being fulfilled.

P.S. With a third child on the way, John's family is coping with flood damage that insurance won't cover and that our ministry's Good News benevolence fund is insufficient to handle. Furthermore, John's asthma has worsened, so please pray heartily for him and his ministry. Thanks in advance for helping ZLM and Hebrew4Christians.com. ★

[Zola's Introduction to Hebrew study book](#)

There is no better book for learning the basics of biblical Hebrew.



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!

ZLM Bulletin Board

From an Israeli Zionist Arab Moslem

Sarah Zoabi is an Israeli-Arab, a Moslem, who eloquently expresses her Arab-Israeli-Zionist identity. Despite the inevitability of receiving death threats, she is outspoken about the Jewish people's right to their own state. Like her son Mohammed, she believes that the State of Israel is a "paradise" for Arabs to live as citizens.

[Hear her explain that Israeli-Arabs enjoy freedoms that do not exist in any Arab country.](#)



Pray for
the peace of
Jerusalem

Who Occupies Gaza?

Not Israel. Watch [an animated video](#) that clearly refutes the misconception that Israeli soldiers ride roughshod over "Palestinians" in Gaza. In 58 seconds, you will learn that in 2007, Hamas threw out the elected Palestinian government and began terrorizing any Gazans who don't kowtow to it. Subscribers to our free *Levitt Letter Extra* received this video last year. To get the LLX, enter your email address in the right column at levitt.com/news and click "Subscribe."

ABC Family is Changing

its name to **Freeform** in January 2016 to reflect its goal of attracting viewers who are becoming adults. Our ministry welcomes this opportunity to broadcast our message to this younger audience! **Freeform** will deliver new content as well as ABC Family current favorites, such as *Zola Levitt Presents*. Though our time slot won't change, if you record *ZLP*, you will want to check your guide to be sure your recordings continue uninterrupted when ABC Family becomes **Freeform**.



Free Item

Pamphlet of the Month

Your Guide to Effective Giving begins with a reminder that "charitable gifts remain deductible for those who itemize deductions for federal tax purposes." Learn about giving the right gift at the right time in the right way. After touching on cash, securities, and other property, this guide delves into retirement funds, life insurance, and ways to donate while retaining income. The pamphlet concludes with a helpful summary of federal tax considerations for charitable giving. To receive **Your Guide to Effective Giving** at no charge, email us at staff@levitt.com or write to our P.O. Box.

"Come Home!"

Zola
Tours to
Israel



See [page 36](#)
for details



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To
Index

Hebrew Lesson

The Purging Process

John J. Parsons



קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְנִשְׁבְּרֵי לֵב וְאֶת־דַּכְּאֵי רוּחַ יוֹשִׁיעַ

“The LORD is near to the brokenhearted
and saves the crushed in spirit.” – Psalm 34:18

י	וֹשִׁיעַ	רוּחַ	רֵ	אֵי	דַכְּ	אֵי	וְ	אֶת	וְ	לֵב	רֵי	בְ	נִשְׁ	בְ	רֵי	לְ	יְהוָה	יְהוָה	קָ	רוֹב
(3)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(1)
yo-shi-a	ru-ach	dak-kei	ve-et	lev	le-nish-be-rei	Adonai	ka-rov													
he saves	the crushed of spirit	and	to the broken of heart	The LORD	near (is)															

Our Lord told us: “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He purges (καθαίρει), that it may bear more fruit” (John 15:1–2). If you are blessed to bear fruit in your life, you will experience the “purging process,” and that means suffering affliction.

This might seem to you backward: Why does the *fruitful* branch need to be cut back? Indeed, the promise of suffering is not meant for an evil person, but for the righteous soul who trusts in God. Purging is painful, but it is also purifying, yielding new growth within our hearts. Yeshua taught, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8). The Greek word translated “pure” is *katharos* (καθαρός), sometimes used to describe the cleansing of a wound (catharsis), or to describe the unalloyed quality of a substance revealed through refining fire. We can “rejoice” in testing because that is the way of real growth, sustained hope, and the revelation of God’s deep love (Rom. 5:3–4). In our afflictions we are given heavenly consolation that helps us to persevere (2 Cor. 1:3–5).

Brokenness is the means through which God performs some of His deepest work within our hearts. A.W. Tozer once said, “It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply.” The point of our brokenness is to draw us to God for healing: “The LORD heals the broken in heart and binds up their wounds” (Psalm 147:3). The Savior came to “bind up the brokenhearted (*nishberei lev*), to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound” (Isa. 61:1). Yeshua is the healer of the *lev nishbar*, the “broken heart” (Psalm 51:17).

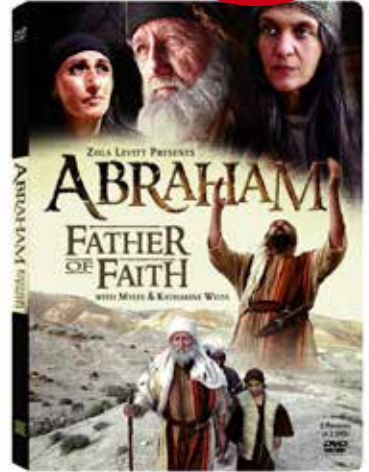
We are being weaned from this present Age to be made ready for heavenly glory, for things unimaginably wonderful, and soon to be revealed to you, friends! So “*chazak*”—stay strong in the Lord and keep looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Yeshua the Messiah (Titus 2:13).



Abraham: Father of Faith

Eight programs on two DVDs

This eight-part series tells the story of the Patriarch through drama at the actual locations in the Bible. Interviews with contemporary personalities illustrate the Jews' seamless connection with the land promised to the descendants of Abraham and Isaac.



The Calling God chooses Abram from the idol-worshipping world to walk with Him and proclaim His name through the Ages.

A Man of Altars Abram walks the land, building altars in significant places. We interview the spokesman for Samaria, one of the modern disputed lands that God promised to the seed of Abram.

God-initiated Covenant God makes a covenant with Abram. Myles interviews Itamar Marcus, whose Palestinian Media Watch translates and analyzes the message in Arabic-language media and schoolbooks.

A Domestic Conflict for the Ages Sarai and Hagar fall out, but God makes a provision for Hagar and the sons of Ishmael.

The Promised Son Isaac is prophesied; conflict separates Abraham and Lot. Katharine interviews Rachel Lipkin, an Egyptian-born Jewish interpreter of media in Arabic.

Deliverance and Increase Abraham and Sarah escape danger from Abimelech. Myles interviews Avi Lipkin, an expert on Islam and the Middle East.

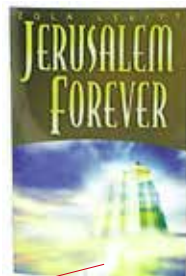
Circumcision as a Forever Sign God institutes this sign of the covenant with the descendants of Abraham. Former mayor of Shiloh David Rubin explains the contemporary conflict over the mountains of Israel.

The Sacrifice Isaac, the promised son, is a picture of the Messiah to come. We interview a civic leader near the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, one of the most hotly contested cities of Israel.



Zola's Classic Study Booklet Library

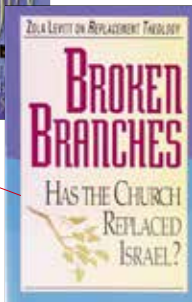
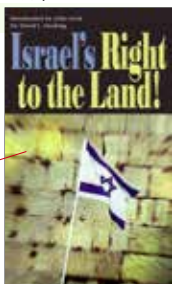
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Books

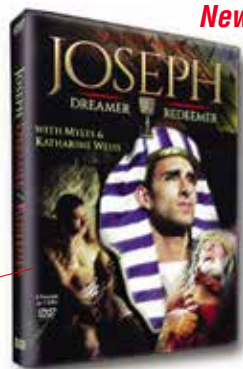
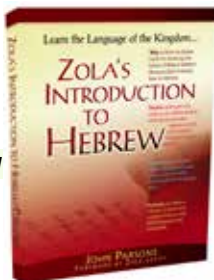
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___	Signs of The End: Millennium	\$7	___
___	Whose Land Is It?	\$6	___
___	Zola's Introduction to Hebrew	\$39	___



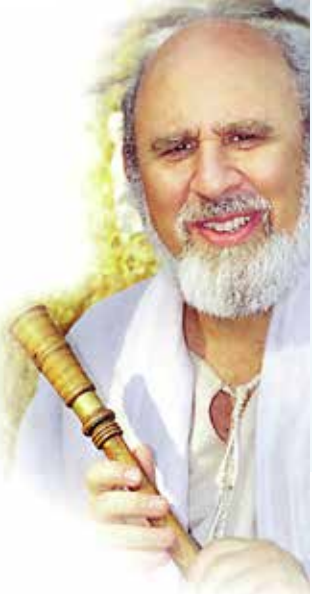
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New!



Studies, Specialty, Etc.

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___	Jerusalem Journeystone	\$8	___
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▶	Messianic Prophecy Scroll	\$35	___
___	Pictorial Map of Jerusalem	\$12	___
___	Pilgrim's Map of The Holy Land	\$6	___
___	Flag of Israel (3' x 5')	\$10	___
▶	AHAVA Mineral Body Lotion 17 oz. <i>New</i>	\$37. ⁵⁰	___
▶	AHAVA Mineral Foot Cream 3.4 oz. <i>New</i>	\$22	___
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UNIQUE WITNESSING ITEMS!



Teaching CDs by Zola

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Music CDs: Hear samples at levitt.com/music

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Ruth: Your People Shall Be My People

Eight TV programs on 2 DVDs

We follow the famous love story verse by verse and watch as Israeli actors re-enact it in Hebrew. Myles and Katharine Weiss explain the biblical characters' journey from darkness to destiny, and Messianic Israeli Arie Bar David clarifies Israelite culture at the time of Ruth. Sasha and Anya Poberejny provide the uplifting music.

THE COVERING. Naomi and Ruth's journey from Moab to Israel. God is bringing Jews and Christians together as in the first century.

ROAD TO BETHLEHEM. After ten years of famine, Naomi returns to Israel. Her faithful daughter-in-law declares, "Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God" (Ruth 1:16).

FINDING THE REDEEMER. Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem at harvest time. The romance between Boaz and Ruth begins.

BREAKING OF BREAD. Boaz asks Ruth to break bread with him. Our heavenly Father invites us into a relationship through His Son, Jesus (the Bread of Life). The story of Ruth and Boaz bears a similarity to the relationship of Myles and Katharine—Jew and gentile in the harvest field of the Lord.

VIRTUOUS WOMAN. Naomi sends Ruth to Boaz's threshing floor where he promises to take care of her.

KINSMAN REDEEMER. Boaz desires to be Ruth's husband. However, a closer relative must be consulted first.

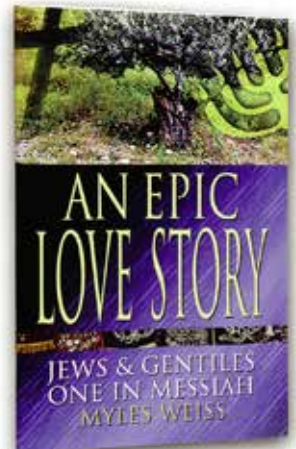
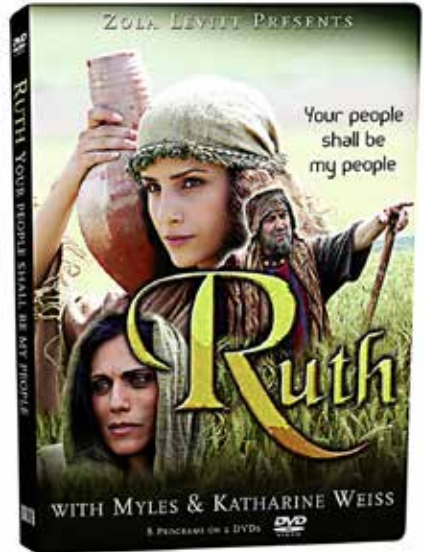
REDEMPTION. God included gentile Ruth into the family of Israel and lineage of the Messiah. Ruth's story pictures the full restoration for us due to the blood of Yeshua.

FUTURE OF HOPE. Ruth and Boaz get married and raise a family. Naomi's life changed from tragedy to restoration and hope. Yeshua wants to do the same for us.

An Epic Love Story—study booklet by Myles Weiss

The God of love is a matchmaker who desires a Bride for His Son, the Bridegroom of Heaven. This Bride, the Church, will consist of both Jews and gentiles. Yeshua's sacrifice enables gentiles to be grafted into the life of Israel and share in the promises of God. Understanding the role of Israel—God's timepiece—is crucial to preparing for the Lord's return.

This readable booklet tackles topics including 1) Is Jesus Coming Soon? 2) Why Did Judaism and Christianity Part Ways? 3) God's 9-11, 4) Turning Points in the Modern Era, and 5) The Olive Tree as a Modern Parable.



Dreaming Green in Southern Israel



BY JUNE GLAZER / JNS.org

Embodying the ongoing revitalization of Israel's southern region, the Israeli Ministry of Environment recently awarded its Environmental Prize of the Negev to Earth's Promise, a Jewish National Fund (JNF) partner organization that promotes environmental sustainability and urban agriculture in Be'er Sheva and other Israeli cities.

Once a dusty desert town, Be'er Sheva today is a sprawling, bustling city that is often referred to as the "capital of the Negev." It is the seventh-most-populous city in Israel and in recent years has become home to a large influx of Ethiopian immigrants. It is for them that Earth's Promise was started in 2007.

The Earth's Promise initiative in action

"The idea was to make our city green in a community fashion," said Ethelea Katzenell, an Earth's Promise founding board member, who recounted how a committee was formed to work with the Kalisher Absorption Center, where many Ethiopians lived. "Since their background was mostly agrarian, we thought we could help them to literally sink new roots into their new country by starting a community garden with them," she said.



"They can plant whatever they want, including the Ethiopian fruits and vegetables that they miss in Israel. It's wonderful to see families working together, using their skills, feeling proud of themselves. And when they leave the absorption center for new homes, they bequeath their plots to new families coming in," Katzenell added.

"These are people who came here with no jobs, no Hebrew, and with traditional [agrarian] knowledge that, living in an urban environment, they couldn't pass on to their children," said Moran Slakmon, co-director of Earth's Promise with her husband, Adam Ganson.

"Now they can pass it on and it's meaningful. Also, the residents of the neighborhood where the absorption center is located appreciate the garden and many have asked for plots of their own, which is a source of pride for the Ethiopians," observed Slakmon.

The community-garden model that Earth's Promise set up—urban farming attached to an institution—has been replicated in several locations in Be'er Sheva, as well as in nearby Bedouin communities and the Negev cities of Ashkelon and Arad. Today, these communal plots can be found at community centers, schools, and old-age homes. And now, they have served to bring Earth's Promise to the next stage in the organization's development—a commercial farm within city limits where organic produce is professionally grown and then marketed to local restaurants and consumers. "It supports the local sustainable economy," Ganson noted.

Other projects include working with at-risk children in an after-school program by providing them with garden education, providing garden education to high school students in Bedouin communities, and hosting events to raise awareness about local food. Recently, volunteers harvested nearly a ton of olives from a small local grove and made olive oil to sell.

"Winning the Environment Prize indicates that we're heading in the right direction, that our projects and activities are valued," Ganson added. ✨



Letters to ZLM

For ministry products and TV programs, visit the [web store](#) and [video archives](#).

Comments from www.levitt.com

From J. (TN): When the *Levitt Letter* arrives, I read it front to back immediately. I just want to thank you for making your news magazine available for the price you charge (ha-ha!). I am on a limited budget, so I could not afford to pay much. But I am very grateful for your generosity. —[Here is your note of thanks for all our contributors to see.](#) Thank you for taking the time to let them know how much you appreciate their gifts. —Ed.

From B.P.: I sent a donation today that has meaning to me. The number was 853. However, after seeing Myles and Katharine on the sixth program of your [Joseph](#) series, the Lord put in on my heart to send a double portion. If I am ever down, seeing these two together always lifts my spirit. —[A fellow Believer has expressed his gratitude \(above\) for your generous gift.](#) Thank you. —ZLM staff

From C.B.M. (Kenya): Greetings in the wonderful name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ from Return to Jesus Christ Mission, Africa. Our ministry is based in Kenya and other East African nations. Keep up the good work you are doing for the Lord.

From C.N.: In re Hellenistic-Hebraic comparison ([October Personal Letter](#)), I remember coming across an excerpt from a famous language book from the 1940s that described the Hebrew language as “dynamic” and Greek as “static.” So even the languages themselves reflect the difference! I am grateful that you transmitted this comparison. I think about it a lot, yet have not seen it being taught much. So a confirmation like yours is very heartwarming.



God is Capable

Dear brother and sister in the Lord:

All our answers are in the Word of God. The reason for so much violence towards Israel and the world is found in Genesis 16:12 — *And he (Ishmael) will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.*

Two covenants came out of Abraham: One was the flesh, representing the law of sin or the wrath of God in any who walk not in His counsel. The other was the promise that came through Isaac and foreshadows the grace and truth of our Messiah.

Unfortunately Israel repeatedly faces the physical part of the flesh: Islam. The covenants between God and Israel have not been broken; they are perpetual. So these people of the flesh will continue to break peace treaties with Israel and the world. It is prophesied in the Word and will be with us until the return of our Lord and Savior.



Israel is a small nation compared to the rest of the world. It will take God to intervene and save Israel. Then the world will know that this great Creator of Heaven and Earth is alive and Most High above the world. I think problems, persecution, and hardship in the name of our Lord keep us closer to Him. God bless, G.L.

And God bless you, Brother G.L.—

You have touched on a mystery that is often misunderstood by Christians. Jewish thinking is holistic, organic, and corporate. That's why the Disciples were looking for a national redemption, whereas the Church teaches individual salvation. **God is capable of both, which offends our tendency to put Him in a box.** While we fervently reach for individual Jewish souls to recognize our Messiah Yeshua, we also know that the time will come when "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26).

Tiny—but mighty through God—Israel has been the focus of demonic rage from time immemorial. Satan always tries to thwart the purposes of God, which are uniquely tied to Israel and the Jewish people. The Promised Seed came through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (whose name God changed to "Israel"): that Seed is the "suffering Servant" (*Mashiach Ben Yosef*) prophesied by Isaiah 53 and the "reigning King" (*Mashiach Ben David*) who will rule the world as the Lion of Judah (Revelation 5:5).

Meanwhile, it is time for the international Body of Christ to stand with Israel and prepare the way of the Lord. Shalom, shalom,

—Myles and Katharine



Bucking Tradition

Myles,

I want to say thank you! Your series [Abraham: Father of Faith](#) depicted the [binding of Isaac](#), portraying Isaac as a “youth.” Many scholars and even the *rosh kehilah* (head of congregation) at our very small shul sides with tradition saying he was an adult, age 37. I would have believed this also *except* that I read the Hebrew text and saw that the word translated as “lad” really does mean “boy” and not “adult.” So I am grateful for your accurate portrayal of HaShem’s Word! J.G. (CA)

Good eye and right doctrine J.G.—

Isaac’s portrayal as a younger boy in our series actually occurred due to limitations of budget and on-site adjustments during the shooting of the series. Isaac’s age has provided lively discussion through the Ages. (Remember our tongue-in-cheek saying, “two Jews, three opinions!”)

Isaac is often presented as a youth during the *Akedah* (binding), though **tradition** says that he was 37 years old at that time. Again, **tradition** holds that the horror of Abraham’s offering literally caused the death of Isaac’s mother Sarah at age 127 (Gen. 23:1), when Isaac would have been 37. (He was born when she was 90 per Gen. 17:17.)

As Jewish followers of Yeshua, we understand the *Akedah* as a foreshadowing of the ultimate sacrifice that the Heavenly Father would give on our behalf, and Isaac’s age doesn’t color that picture. Unlike Abraham, God the Father actually did offer His only begotten Son, Yeshua, upon Mount Moriah in order to make salvation available to all who believe (John 3:16–18; 1 John 4:9). As Abraham himself believed, *Elohim yireh-lo haseh* (“God Himself will provide a lamb”). That is the point of the story: the blood sacrifice of the Son of God for all who believe. Thanks for watching our TV program.

Blessings —Myles

Not Funny!

Dear ZLM,

My husband and I found absolutely no humor in the cartoon in the [September 2015 Levitt Letter](#). —S.W.

Dear S.W.—

The graphic in question is a cartoon-style drawing of a recruiting poster that ISIS/ISIL would never use because it exposes ISIL’s subversive tactics in luring naïve youth to do its bidding. The poster graphic accompanied an article about how ISIS recruits marginalized Western youth by preying on their desire to belong. In the article, British Prime Minister David Cameron was quoted: “The extremist ideology of ISIL must be countered to create a more cohesive nation in which young Muslims feel they have a stake.” You are correct, S.W., there was nothing funny about the graphic. —Editor

Thank the Lord, S.W., that the graphic had the intended, chilling effect on you. We are “watchmen on the wall” and will continue to boldly awaken sleeping Christians, government leaders, media outlets, and politicians. Every day the world catches up closer to what this ministry has been proclaiming for over 30 years! Soberly —Myles



Hidden Connection

Dear Mr. Weiss,

I am thankful that the Lord directed me to [Zola Levitt Presents when you interviewed Dr. Hormoz Shariat](#). I was channel surfing and stopped on your program when I heard what Dr. Shariat was saying. Although I missed the first part of the interview, what I heard was what I had been taught as an undergraduate student at university, some forty years ago, about the closeness of the Jewish and Iranian communities during Old Testament times.

Very few Christian or Jewish theologians have a clue about the history of pre-Islamic Iran and its role in the reestablishment of Israel per God's instructions. The Old Testament is full of how ancient Persia and ancient Israel were interwoven both culturally and in their monotheistic belief in God.

Pre-Islamic Persians followed Zoroastrianism, a monotheistic faith built on the belief of one god, creator of the universe. Zoroastrian kings such as Darius and Xerxes appointed Jewish men to high posts in their realms. Darius was the son of King Xerxes (a Zoroastrian) and Queen Esther (a Jewess), indicating a cultural integration between Jews and gentiles in the Persian Empire in that day.

Modern-day Iranians do not learn this part of their history. Equally unfortunate, theological seminaries don't teach it, leaving Christian theologians utterly unaware of this important history. Nor are the Jewish people, or even Messianic Jews, aware of these vital facts.

The Old Testament flows into the New with the New Covenant of Grace by our precious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It shouldn't come as a surprise, as Dr. Shariat pointed out, that Moslems in Iran are currently embracing Christ in droves.

I pray that many Christians, Jews, and Iranians will watch your interview with Dr. Shariat, as it will provide eye-opening information.

Sincerely in Christ, J.A.

Thanks, J.A., for your cogent analysis of the "hidden" history and future of Israel and Iran. May I point you and other readers to Jeremiah 49 for a treasure-trove of prophetic verses about Iran's dramatic role in future events?

God loves the Persian people, and we thank Him for Dr. Shariat's ministry. Following that pro-

gram, Katharine and I appeared on his "Iran Alive" broadcast. For one hour, we appealed to the Iranians through the Scriptures, explaining the importance of Israel and the historical connection between us. That experience was awesome! What an honor for me to call forth the Bride of Christ, the "Esther" of Iran. (My Hebrew name is Mordechai.) We bless the Shariats in the Name above all names, Yeshua! —Myles

P.S. You can catch [Dr. Shariat's whole interview](#), archived at [levitt.tv](#). ★



Dr. Hormoz Shariat on the Iran Alive TV set

Screening Out Potential Terrorists



SCIENCE: BY MAAYAN JAFFE (r) JNS.org

You may be surprised to learn that part of the solution to the American school-shooting epidemic might be found in Israel. School shooters present a challenge to both forensic psychiatry and law enforcement agencies. But new research by **Prof. Yair Neuman** (*shown below*), a member of the Homeland Security Institute at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU), is showing promise.

Together with James L. Knoll, a forensic psychiatrist at State University of New York, Neuman says he has developed a personality profiling technique that automates the identification of potential school shooters by **analyzing personality traits that appear in their writings**. The tool uses “vector semantics.” This involves constructing a number of vectors representing personality dimensions and disorders. Texts written by the human subject are then analyzed by a computer to measure their similarity with the vectors.

Neuman explains that the tool helps identify key diagnoses that can lead to violence and can identify youths who suffer from exclusion, bullying, or other challenges and get them help before something tragic happens. Neuman selected writings from six shooters involved in high-profile scenarios, including the 2007 Virginia Tech massacre. He analyzed and compared those shooters’ writings to 6,000 bloggers’ writings and tasked the computer to identify the shooter. He was able to narrow the pool of suspects to 3 percent of the original list; the short group included all six shooters.

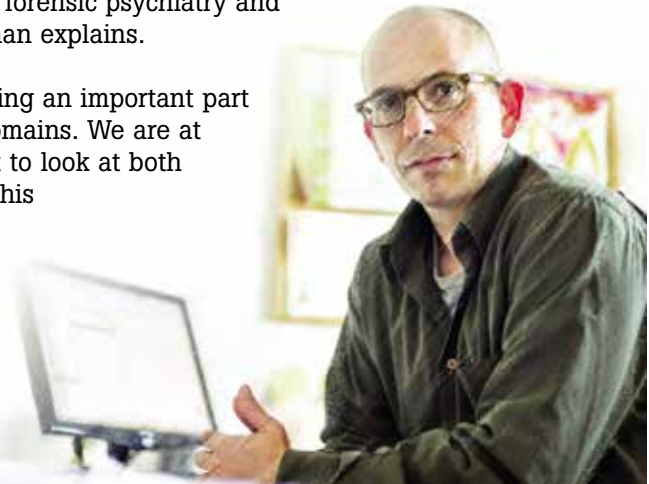
The same or similar technique can be employed to screen solo terrorists (so-called “lone wolf” shooters). “These people have personalities similar to school shooters,” Neuman says.

Dr. Nancy Zarse, a licensed clinical psychologist and full professor in the Forensic Department at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, urges caution.

“I have a fundamental concern about the methodology... and suggesting you can diagnose someone without even speaking to him.” Further, Zarse suggests, one should be mindful of distinguishing “hunters and howlers.” Hunters are more likely to act. Howlers express grievances in an effort to scare someone, but are unlikely to do anything about this anger.

Neuman adds that if his methodology is picked up, there would be several inevitable ethical considerations. “The proposed methodology does not pretend to solve the enormous difficulties in profiling and identifying school shooters, but modestly adds another tool to the toolkit of forensic psychiatry and law enforcement agencies,” Neuman explains.

“Information technology is becoming an important part of our psychological and social domains. We are at a tipping point and it is important to look at both the potential and the dangers of this emerging IT.”



New Thinking on Alzheimer's

MEDICINE: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem / HUJI.ac.il



Deciphering the mechanism that underlies the development of Alzheimer's disease in certain families but not in others, researchers at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Faculty of Medicine have proposed that **Alzheimer's is a collection of diseases** that probably should be treated with a variety of different approaches.

Neuro-degenerative diseases are incurable and debilitating conditions that result in degeneration or death of cells in the nervous system. Conditions such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and prion disorders (transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, the most famous of which is "Mad Cow Disease") share two key features: they emerge as a result of aberrant protein folding and aggregation, and their onset is late in life. These maladies emerge either sporadically or as familial, mutation-linked illnesses.

Researchers asked why people who carry the mutation show no clinical signs until their fifth or sixth decade of life? And, why do apparently distinct disorders share a common temporal emergence pattern?



Photo: Hebrew University



An international research team led by Prof. **Ehud Cohen** (l) and Dr. **Tziona Ben-Gedalya** at The Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada in the Hebrew University's Faculty of Medicine postulated that an aging-associated decline in the activity of proteins may be one mechanism that exposes the elderly to neuro-degeneration.

Their research showed that the development of Alzheimer's disease in certain families, and of a familial prion disorder in other families, originate from very similar mutational patterns.

Based on this discovery, they found that the mechanism that underlies the development of Alzheimer's disease in some patients has no relevance to the emergence of the disease in patients who carry other Alzheimer's-linked mutations.



According to Prof. Cohen: "This study provides important new insights: It shows that the development of distinct neurodegenerative disorders stems from a similar mechanism. More importantly, it indicates that Alzheimer's disease can emanate from more than one mechanism, suggesting that it is actually a collection of diseases that should be classified."

The new insights derived from this study may reinforce the efforts to develop novel therapies to the different subtypes of Alzheimer's disease, providing new hope to those who suffer from this incurable disorder and to their families.

Prof. Cohen added: "Our study proposes that the failure to develop efficient Alzheimer's therapy results when clinical experiments pool patients who suffer from distinct disorders that eventually lead to Alzheimer's symptoms. Therefore it is essential to characterize and classify the mechanisms that underlie Alzheimer's disease in order to develop novel therapies specific to the disease subtype." ✨

Iran Offers Abedini Release “In Exchange For...”



President Rouhani

BY STOYAN ZAIMOV / ChristianPost.com

Naghmeh Abedini, the wife of imprisoned American pastor **Saeed Abedini**, (*below left*) has slammed the apparent offer by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to free her husband in exchange for releasing Iranian prisoners being held in the United States. Naghmeh argued that her husband is not “collateral” to be treated as such.

“Iran is treating him like a pawn in a game of chess. President Rouhani’s demand that America release 19 criminals in exchange for his consideration of releasing individuals like my husband, imprisoned solely for his faith, demonstrates that the Iran of today is no different from the Iran who took Americans hostage during the Iranian revolution,” Naghmeh Abedini said.

“The environment is ripe for Iran to demonstrate it is ready to re-enter the global market and international scene of diplomats; it is time to show its good will, to change its image from one of a pariah to a member of the global society who will protect fundamental rights,” she added.

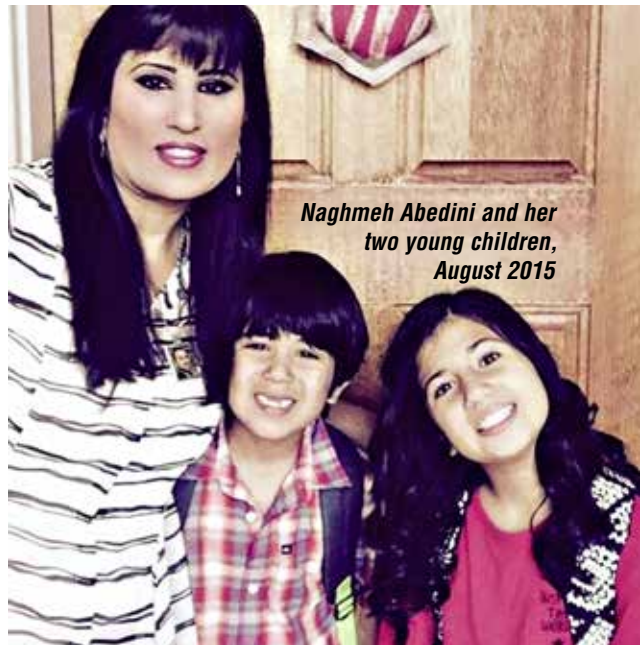
Rouhani has been pressured by leaders around the world to free the American pastor. When asked about the issue, he suggested that the only way Abedini and other imprisoned Americans are going to be set free is if the U.S. agrees to reach out with the same gesture to imprisoned Iranians.

“If the Americans take the appropriate actions vis-à-vis Iranian citizens who are being imprisoned [in the U.S.], then the right atmosphere and environment will be created for reciprocal action perhaps,” he added.

The American Center for Law and Justice, which represents Naghmeh and the couple’s two children in the U.S., called the demand “absurd and insulting,” and said that Iran is treating Abedini as a “hostage for ransom.”



Abedini has been in prison for three years, serving an eight-year sentence. He has faced beatings and threats behind bars, and been denied the medical attention that he needs.



Naghmeh Abedini and her two young children, August 2015

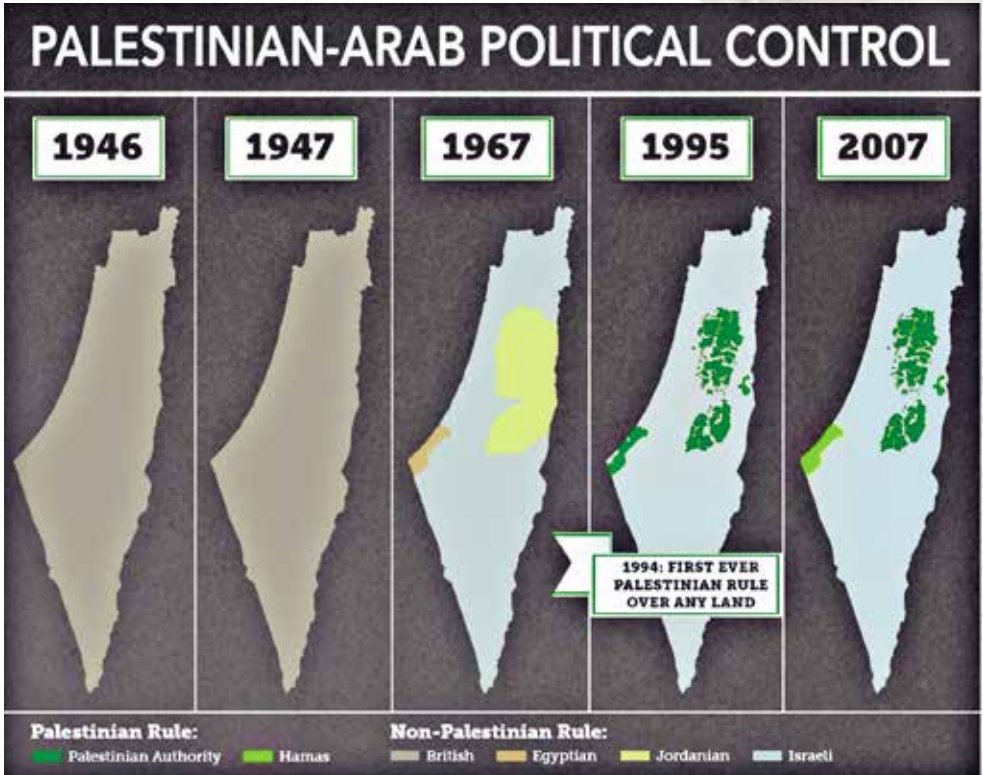




Palestinian Control of Land

BY SHANY MOR / TheTower.org

The categories of political control and international partition mapped out:



In the chart above, 1946 has exactly zero land under Palestinian control—not autonomous, not sovereign, not anything—as it was all under British authority. Going further back in time—to the Ottoman era, for example—wouldn't change the map in the slightest. 1947 sees no changes to the map, as Palestine was still under British control.

Before the war in June 1967, control was divided between three states, none of them Palestinian. The map from 1995 illustrates Israel's withdrawals during the first two years of the Oslo process, just up to but not including the 1997 Hebron Protocol.

In fact, **the peace process of the 1990s resulted in the first time a Palestinian regime ruled over any piece of land.** This occurred in 1994 with the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in Gaza and Jericho. That control steadily expanded over more and more land during the years leading up to the failed final status talks. Much of it was then lost during the second intifada, but eventually regained as violence died down, and the 2005 Gaza disengagement even expanded it slightly.

All of these Palestinian land gains have taken place in the last 20 years, and every square meter of it came not from Turkey or Britain or Jordan or Egypt, but from Israel alone; and nearly all of it through peace negotiations. ★

SELECT MEDIA BRIEFS



Hummus Peace Plan

By Rosa Doherty / TheJC.com
(The Jewish Chronicle Online)

An Israeli restaurant is offering 50% off for Jews and Arabs/Moslems who eat together.

In an attempt to quell tension amid a series of violent attacks against Jews, one hummus cafe is doing what it can to promote reconciliation.

In a Facebook post, the owner of the Hummus Bar in Kfar Vitkin wrote: "Scared of Arabs? Scared of Jews? With us there are no Arabs, but also no Jews. With us there are people. And excellent genuine Arabic hummus, and excellent praiseworthy Jewish falafel, with free refill on every hummus ... whether you're Arabs, Jews, Christians, or Indians.

"Special bargain, 50% discount on hummus to a table where Arabs [Moslems] and Jews sit together."

The offer (valid Sunday through to Thursday) has been shared hundreds of times online, and attracted comments in a range of languages.

Owner Kobi Tzafrir said he was surprised to hear that news of the offer had reached far and wide, but added that it had been received warmly by locals, many of whom had already made use of it. Speaking to *The Times of Israel*, he said: "If there's anything that can bring together these peoples, it's hummus."

Nutella Won't Personalize Jar for Girl Named Isis

By Michael Koziol / SMH.com.au
The Sydney Morning Herald

A 5-year-old girl in Australia has been told she can't have her name printed on a Nutella jar because it's too provocative. The name of that little girl—Isis—is now sparking a new battle over reclaiming the word, which until recent years was tied only to a revered Egyptian goddess. It is now an acronym commonly used to denote Islamic State.



Isis's aunt had tried to buy her niece the personalized jars of the hazelnut spread, as advertised, only to be told that the name was too controversial to be printed. The CEO of Nutella's parent company, Ferrero Australia, even contacted Isis's mother personally to stand by the decision.

"You are making my daughter's name dirty," said the girl's mother. She named her daughter before the rise of Islamic State, she said, and has no intention of changing her daughter's name. She argues that the name Isis needs to be reclaimed.

This acronym is being used incorrectly by the media," the mother said. "We need to be calling the Daesh death cult by their name, Daesh." (Defined on p.34)



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Helen Mirren: “I Love Israel”

TheJC.com / (The Jewish Chronicle Online)

Helen Mirren described Israel as “a great, great country” when she was awarded a Career Achievement Award last fall at the 29th Israeli Film Festival.

Upon receiving the award at the event in Beverly Hills, she spoke about her “love [for] Israel” and the impact it had on her career.

“I was thinking about the building blocks that lead you to becoming the person you will become,” Mirren said. “I was thinking that my visit to Israel in those days was a part, not a direct connection, but it’s absolutely a part of the building blocks that have made me the actress I am and doing the kind of work that I do.” She added: “These building blocks make personal lives and also these building blocks make countries.

“I love Israel, I think it is a great, great country. I think through all the difficulties and all the pains that Israel has suffered and will in the future, the great thing that Israel has is Israelis. They will guide you through.”

Aaron Sorkin, producer and playwright (*The West Wing*, *The Newsroom*), was also honored at the event, winning the IFF Achievement in Film & Television Award. He said he wanted to see more films made and set in the Middle East.

“My friends who are screenwriters tell me that successfully pitching a movie that takes place in the Middle East is somewhere between very difficult and impossible,” he said.

“The reaction from the studio is usually “That’s a good story, but who wants to see a movie set in that part of the world?” I do. I want to see a lot of them.”



Helen Mirren receives her award at the 29th Israeli Film Festival



Straining to Mock God

Pastafarians (with a “P”) belong to the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster. The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) allows religious exceptions to its policy against head coverings, and Pastafarians sued (and won) the right to wear spaghetti strainers in their driver’s license photos. Such irreverent “church” members would do well to review Gal. 6:7—*Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked.* ★



Which Altar Was Right in Ancient Israel?

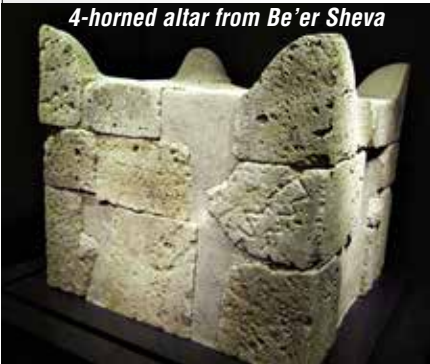


ARCHAEOLOGY: WHAT DO IRON AGE ALTARS REVEAL ABOUT BIBLICAL SACRIFICES AND WORSHIP? / BiblicalArchaeology.org

The Bible contains many detailed sections regarding worship and the proper ways in which to conduct worship. These pronouncements go beyond instructions on how to worship both in spirit and in content, but also how to design the physical space for worship. In ancient Israelite religion, what kind of altar was used to make Biblical sacrifices?

Archaeological excavations throughout Israel have uncovered **two types of altars for Biblical sacrifices in the Iron Age (roughly 1200–500 B.C.)**: the four-horned altar and the simple earthen altar. The four-horned altars are made of carved stones with a flat top and a pointed “horn” at each of the corners (*see picture*). The earthen altars are formed of uncut stones and packed earth. Which was the “correct” altar in the ancient Israelite religion?

Remnants of the four-horned altar have been found in excavations conducted at Iron Age temples and religious spaces at Tel Dan, Gezer, Shiloh, Shechem, Dothan, Kedesh, and Megiddo in northern Israel. Four-horned altars were also found in Philistia/Peleshet (SW Israel) around the 7th century A.D., the period following the Assyrian conquest and destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel. These intriguing structures for Biblical sacrifices seem to find parallels in the Books of Kings and Chronicles as well as in Exodus 27:1–8.



Excavations at Iron Age sites located in the southern kingdom of Judah, however, have revealed a different picture of ritual sacrifice and worship in ancient Israel. In the Iron Age temple at Arad in the Negev and in a sacred area at Tel Motza outside Jerusalem, archaeologists discovered earthen altars. This type of altar is attested in Exodus 20:24–26 and Deuteronomy 27:1–8.

What do these altars reveal about religious practice in ancient Israel?

“[The] descriptions [of four-horned altars and earthen altars] in the Bible do match the archaeological remains,” says archaeologist **Casey Sharp**. “The altars uncovered in this archaeological context reveal religious differences between the northern and southern kingdoms in Israel (and Philistia). They also show us a point of tension between the sources of the Bible and their respective visions for ancient Israelite religious practices.”



How the material remains from the ground match the descriptions in the Biblical texts is at the heart of Biblical archaeology. The existence of Iron Age altars, however, seems to conflict with the Bible’s mandate that centralized worship and sacrifice take place only at the Jerusalem Temple (e.g., Deuteronomy 12:2–27).

“We should remember that the Bible’s laws present the ideal practices of ancient Israelite religion,” observes Sharp. “Actual practice may have been very different.” ☆

A Little-Known Story: Israel's Aces

KATAHDIN PRODUCTIONS / Katahdin.org

They were Czech versions of the Me-109, but were called Avia S-199. Pilots nicknamed them *Mezec* for “mule.” Because the Czech Daimler-Benz engine factory burned down in 1945, Junkers Jumo engines were used with a large paddle prop. Many were lost to accidents (due to the torque) on takeoff and landing.

The only four (4) airplanes Israel had when the War of Independence (May 1948) began were smuggled in from the Republic of Czechoslovakia. They were German Messerschmitt Me-109's. They were assembled overnight in Tel Aviv and never flight-tested. This is a [short video about their pilots](#). Watch it. You will definitely not be disappointed.

Sample quotes from the upcoming documentary feature *Above and Beyond* by Playmount Productions:

“In 1948, a group of former WWII pilots, mostly from America, volunteered to fight for Israel in the War of Independence. They were members of Machal—volunteers from abroad.”

Leon Frankel (U.S. Navy): “I got a call from New York. A fellow identified himself as Steve Swartz, apprising me of the fact that Israel was going to declare itself a state. They were going to be attacked by at least five Arab armies, and they had no way to defend themselves ... except that they had purchased some airplanes, but they had no one to fly them. Would I be in a position to help?”

“The pilots trained in secret. They evaded the FBI and an international blockade. They arrived in a new nation under attack.”

“The Machal pilots turned the tide of the war and laid the groundwork for the Israeli Air Force.”

The Machal forces were the Diaspora's most important contribution to the State of Israel. —David Ben-Gurion

They were all we had. —Yitzhak Rabin ★



Is it ISIS, ISIL—or possibly Daesh?

BY IAN BLACK / TheGuardian.com



The Islamic State—aka ISIS or ISIL—is a homicidal al-Qaeda breakaway that is erasing borders, conquering vast areas of Iraq and Syria, massacring its enemies, and beheading hostages in slick snuff and propaganda videos. Washington and London call it ISIL; others refer to ISIS or IS. In September 2014, French president Francois Hollande referred to it as Daesh, and the term is catching on.

This terminology-soup has deep historical and cultural roots. The group originated in 1999 as Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad—quite a mouthful. It got simpler in 2004 when its founder, Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, pledged an oath to al-Qaeda, run then by Osama bin Laden. Its Arabic name became Tanzim Qaidat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn (don't ask!)—shortened in English to al-Qaeda in Iraq.

Then it got more complicated. In 2006, under Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, it morphed into the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). In April 2013, two years into the uprising against Syria's Bashar al-Assad, ISI puffed itself up as the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (Al Dawla al-Islamyia fil Iraq wa'al Sham) and declared a caliphate—a state for all Moslems. Al-Sham is the historic Arabic name for Syria, Lebanon, and (often) Jordan and "Palestine." This area is known in English as the Levant (the antiquated French phrase for "lands of the rising sun"). ISIS means the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. ISIL means the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

Daesh, the term used by the French government, is the Arabic acronym for Al Dawla al-Islamyia fil Iraq wa'al Sham, (though it should really be spelled "Da'ish"). But why the change? Suggested one French blogger, it may have been chosen for its "sonorité péjorative" (derogatory sound), e.g. *dèche*, *douche*, *tache*—to be broke, shower, stain. Hollande said he would use the phrase "Daesh cutthroats."

IS supporters dislike the term Daesh as it does not spell out the crucial geographic components. In the words of British Ambassador to Iraq Simon Collis: "Arabic speakers spit out the name Daesh with different mixtures of contempt, ridicule, and hostility. Daesh is always negative." It certainly entered the Arabic language big time: in its plural form—"daw'aish"—it means "bigots who impose their views on others." ☆



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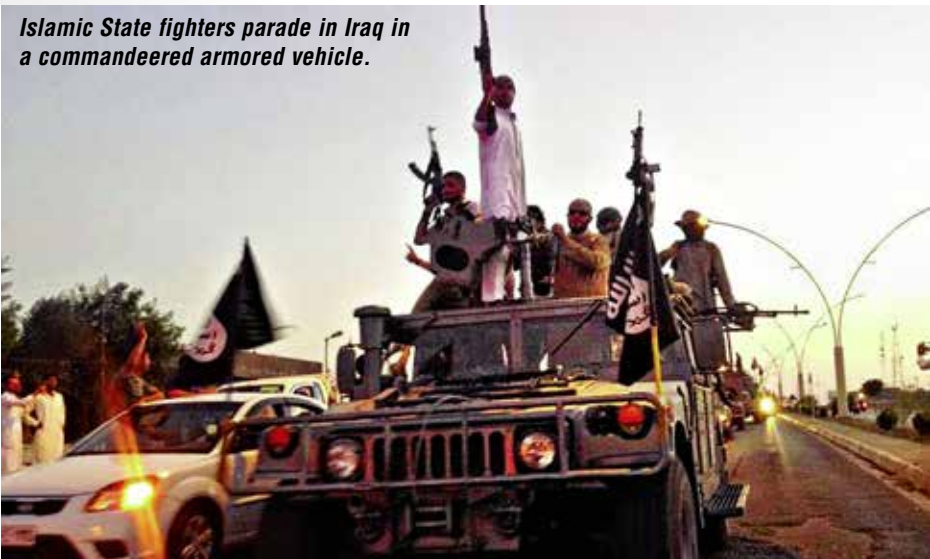


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Islamic State fighters parade in Iraq in a commandeered armored vehicle.



Jewish Humor, etc.

Reverse Anti-Semitism

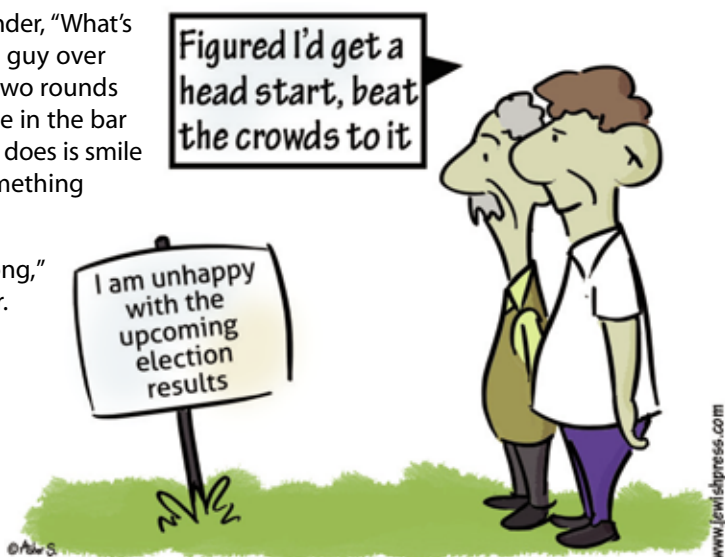
Butch, a well-known anti-Semite, walks into a bar and is about to order a drink when he sees a guy close by with *kippa* (yarmulke), *tzitzit* (fringes), and *payot* (sidelocks). He doesn't have to be an Einstein to know that this guy is Jewish.

So Butch shouts to the bartender so everyone can hear, "Drinks for everyone in here, bartender, but not for that over there," pointing to the Jewish guy.

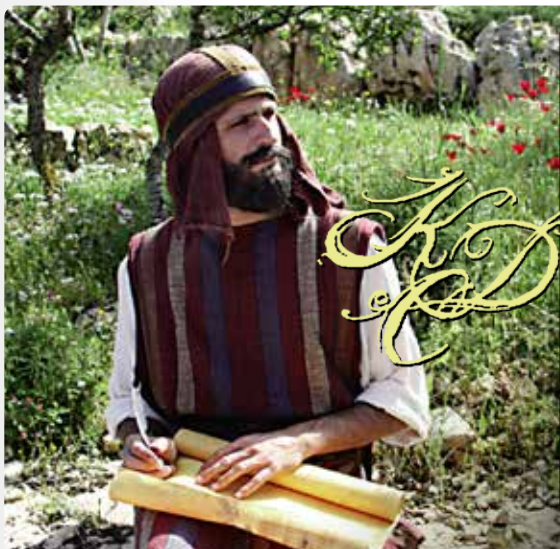
Soon after the drinks have been handed out, the Jewish guy smiles at Butch and says, "Thank you." This infuriates Butch, and in a loud voice, he once again orders drinks for everyone except the Jewish guy. But as before, this does not seem to concern the Jewish guy who just smiles and says, "Thank you."

Butch asks the bartender, "What's the matter with that guy over there? I've ordered two rounds of drinks for everyone in the bar except him, yet all he does is smile and thank me. Is something wrong with him?"

"Nope, nothing's wrong," replies the bartender. "He's the owner."



A cheerful heart is good medicine —
Proverbs 17:22



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