

Levitt Letter

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

Pentecost 2016—Sunday, May 15

We interrupt our series that discusses who's who of the nation-players in the End Times to bring you this greeting:

Happy Birthday to You, International Church!

Sole Survivor of WWII Ship p.6



Classic Zola 1980 — 36 years ago



Sunday, May 15, is Pentecost this year [2016], the birthday of the Christian Church. So, Happy Birthday to all you Believers!

Sometimes churches tend to overlook the deeply significant festival of Pentecost—explained in Acts 2. But in a very real way, if it weren't for Pentecost, presumably everyone would have to go to Israel to the Temple to be saved!

It was at Pentecost that God presented His ingenious method for taking the Gospel outside of Israel to the gentile (non-Jewish) nations. Though the Messiah had come “only unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 10:5–6), the Disciples were now required “to make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19).

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Notable Quotable

“There is no need to fire missiles to destroy the Zionist regime, as it will gradually collapse. Our main enemy is the U.S.”

— **General Amir Ali Hajizadeh** (r) head of the aerospace wing of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, justifying his nation's long-range ballistic missile tests. (Agence France-Presse, 3 / 9 / 2016)



(continued p.3)

Happy Birthday, International Church *cont. from cover*

And so the miracle of speaking with other tongues occurred on that remarkable day (Acts 2:4) when 3,000 were brought to salvation by the testimony of the few Galileans. Those 3,000 had come from many nations to celebrate the Feast of Weeks given in Leviticus 23:15–22, and now they would be returning as new creatures in Christ, ready to witness to their countrymen.

Significant also is the number of people that were saved. When the law originally came to Israel (Ex. 32:15–16), the people in the valley below Mount Sinai had built a golden calf and were involved in idol worship. Moses was infuriated and the Levites slew 3,000 souls on that difficult day (Ex. 32:28). Now God, at Pentecost, returned to Israel exactly 3,000 souls to start the Christian Church. Indeed, “the letter kills, the Spirit gives life” (2 Corinthians 3:6). ★

(See Spirit of Pentecost booklet & CD on p.24)



Our Affectionate Fig Tree *By Ludwig Schneider / Israel Today*

Cats and dogs are affectionate animals. But so are ravens. For 25 years, the same two ravens have come knocking at our window three times a day, always at the same time, seeking food, which they eat nicely out of our hands. On one occasion, one of the two placed a flower on my hand to say thank you.

Plants can also be affectionate. My wife and I have a very personal relationship with a fig tree, which after all, is a symbol of Israel (Matthew 24:32–34).

We were already living in Israel 50 years ago but later returned to Germany where I founded the “Jesus House” in Düsseldorf. Yet our hearts were still in Zion, which is why we planted a fig tree in our garden. When we returned to Israel in 1978, we brought a leaf from this tree, which I encased in glass.

This keepsake slipped out of our minds until my wife discovered a fig tree sapling on our roof terrace that looks out over Jerusalem’s Mount Zion. Neither of us had planted it ... so it must have been sown by the Good Lord Himself! In the same way, God has taken us from the Diaspora and planted us in Israel.

My parents, on the other hand, were unable to immigrate to Israel, so they were buried in Germany. When I went back later on to visit their grave, I was completely astonished to see a fig tree next to it, with lots of branches. I asked the cemetery gardener whether he had planted the tree, but no, he hadn’t! So who did?

The story of Nathanael came to my mind —Nathanael, whom Jesus called “an Israelite indeed,” because he was sitting under a fig tree and waiting for the Messiah (John 1:47–48). So, too, my parents are resting under a fig tree. Their children and children’s children, however, have put their roots down in Zion. There are some things that we cannot explain; they are simply there to build up and shape our faith. ★



Fig tree sapling



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Notable Quotable *continued from pg.1 sidebar*

Iran test-launched two ballistic missiles in February emblazoned with the phrase in Hebrew "Israel must be wiped out," Iranian media reported, in a show of power by the Shiite nation as U.S. Vice President Joe Biden visited Jerusalem. *J. Gambrell, APorg*

As Iran mocks the West, Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations are joining alliances, which they hope will withstand the Persian threat to rule the Middle East and, ultimately, the world. To properly interpret the headlines, Believers need to read our Bibles!
—Myles



A Tale of Two Sittings

Myles To Go
By Myles Weiss
ZLP Host



"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness..."

—Charles Dickens

Katharine and I are strolling along the new French Riviera. French Jews, fleeing growing persecution in Europe, are populating Israel's gorgeous Mediterranean coast in such numbers that one hears French as often as Hebrew in the town square and along the shore of Netanya. We are here a day before the tour arrives, preparing to host a bus full of eager pilgrims. The newspapers are full of the good, the bad, and the ugly—the usual here in the Middle East.

The Dickensian contrasts are everywhere and very frustrating to those of us who love Israel and the Jewish people. It is doubly difficult if one also loves our Arab "cousins" and desires to see them blessed and able to live in peace and prosperity.

There's the tough part: **in the Middle East, only in Israel can Jews and Muslims live together in relative peace.** There is no other country here in the Middle East that serves as a friendly host to both sides of Abraham's family. Here in Netanya, we are witnessing a living example of that fact.



Young Muslim couple enjoys the Israeli seashore

Katharine and I walked behind a young Muslim couple, watching them enjoy the beautiful, sun-soaked promenade, with the azure "Great" Sea rolling into the shore below. The crisp air was filled with birds singing praises to God. The young couple looked like they had stepped out of a Dubai Rolex ad. He wore a name brand tracksuit; her hijab tastefully matched her designer clothes. They walked close together, obviously

(continued next page)

Myles *continued*



enjoying a stroll by the seashore in the land of milk and honey. They stopped at a park that was set up for kids, with swings and climbing structures.

She sat on a high-tech swing as he gently pushed her, both of them relaxed in the re-born nation of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

We walked farther on and happened upon another familiar sight: an Orthodox Jewish twenty-something suitor and his potential wife, in the very public ritual of courtship. Although I could not see the watchful chaperone, no doubt there were sets of eyes other than Katharine's and mine aware of their park bench chat. They were smiling, and we could feel them "putting their best foot forward" as they attempted to determine whether he or she was "the one."

Where in this neighborhood of nations could both a Muslim and a Jewish couple enjoy freedom, seek love, and not fear for their lives, simply for being who they are?

Only in Israel. ★



Young Jewish couple courting in the seaside town of Netanya

Sole Survivor of WWII Torpedoed Ship

By Robert D. McFadden /NYTimes.com



*(The death of **David Stoliar** (shown right) in 2014 received little attention outside Oregon, where he lived. The New York Times, which had prepared an obituary, learned of his death only recently.)*

For more than a half-century, David Stoliar remained a silent witness to the worst civilian maritime disaster of World War II, the only survivor among nearly 800 Jews fleeing the Holocaust in Romania aboard a refugee ship that was barred from then-Palestine, interned by Turkey for months, set adrift without power, and torpedoed by a Soviet submarine in the Black Sea in 1942.

The doomed voyage of the *Struma* might have been a forgotten footnote to Holocaust history had it not been for Stoliar's survival and his willingness years later to attest to the indifference and brutal decisions that put Palestine out of reach and led to the deaths of hundreds at the hands of nominal allies against Hitler. Stoliar died on May 1, 2014, at his home in Bend, Oregon at the age of 91.

The war in Europe had been underway for two years and Romanian Jews and refugees from Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Hungary, were perishing under the nation's fascist Iron Guard. Thousands hoped for passage out of Constanța, Romania's port on the Black Sea, and through the Bosphorus to Palestine.

In the Bosphorus, neutral Turkey, whose leaders feared angering either Britain or Germany, interned the *Struma* offshore while its fate was considered. Istanbul's Jews donated food, but conditions on board deteriorated as talks dragged on.

Britain, which had control of Palestine, limited Jewish immigration to avoid antagonizing the Arabs, and refused to let the passengers continue. Finally, the Turks cut the *Struma's* anchor, towed the ship back into the Black Sea, and set it adrift. It was spotted the next day, February 24, 1942, by a Soviet sub, whose commander had orders from Stalin to sink all neutral ships in the Black Sea to prevent supplies from reaching Germany.

Most of the passengers and crew went down with the ship in 250 feet of water. But others, including Stoliar, 19, who had been asleep in a deckhouse, were hurled into the sea with a rain of debris, mostly planking from the shattered deck.

[\(continued next page\)](#)

The refugee ship *Struma* in the Istanbul harbor in February 1942.

Turkey held the ship for 71 days before towing it out to sea.

Credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum



Sole Survivor *continued*

ID card of David Stoliar, the sole survivor of the *Struma*. (U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum)



"I was one of the lucky ones who ... fell into the sea," Stoliar said. "When I came to the surface, there was a tremendous amount of debris and many people swimming in the water. It was very cold, and we had a hard time moving our feet and our hands."

He swam to a group clinging to a section of the wooden deck, grabbed the railing, and looked about at the terrified faces, shivering and sobbing in the cold. There was nothing to do but hang on. Hours passed and the cries gradually faded as people succumbed to hypothermia and exhaustion. Some floated off, others slipped into the deep.

Alone now, Stoliar thought of giving up. He took out a jackknife to slit his wrists, but his fingers were too numb to open the blade. A short while later, about 24 hours after the *Struma* had sunk, a large ship appeared in the distance.

He was pulled aboard, wrapped in blankets and taken to a Turkish fishing village. His hands and feet were frost-bitten. He was hospitalized in Istanbul, then jailed for six weeks, apparently to keep him from the news media. Referring to the Turks, he recalled, "I was the only witness to their inhumanity."

David Stoliar was born in Romania, on October 31, 1922, the son of Jacob Stoliar, a Jewish textile manufacturer in Bucharest. David wanted to become an engineer, but the war intervened. As brutality against Jews spread, his father tried to save him by arranging his passage aboard the *Struma*.

After his rescue, Stoliar reached Palestine and joined the British Army's Jewish Brigade in 1943, serving in Egypt and Libya. He also fought with the Israeli Army in the 1948 War of Independence. He became an oil executive in the early 1950s, lived in Japan for 18 years and moved to Oregon in 1971 where he retired.

Stoliar spoke to newspapers and magazines and appeared in a 2001 documentary, *The Struma*, by Canadian director Simcha Jacobovici. "For 58 years, no one asked me about the *Struma*," he said, "and I felt that no one cared. I carried the memories in my head as if it happened yesterday."

See the [full article](#) and [video](#) directed by Lyudmil Kolev (with English subtitles).



Snapshots of Mr. Stoliar that appeared in the Sunday New York Times: at his office in Cairo, and after his wedding in Cairo.
Credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Return to the Galilee

Our Man in Haifa
Eitan Shishkoff
and wife Connie



On a drive across northern Israel from the Mediterranean coast to the Sea of Galilee, one views layer after layer of rolling hills. The region receives its name from this gently flowing landscape: Galilee. “Galilee” sounds much like the Hebrew word for “rolling.”

Before descending to Lake Kinneret (at 686 feet *below* sea level, the lake, also called Sea of Galilee, is the Earth’s lowest fresh-water lake), the traveler is rewarded with a glimpse of the sun-studded water. The lake, cradled by a bowl-like depression, looks incongruous against the dry terrain around it.

References to the Galilee fill the narrative surrounding Yeshua and provide much of the backdrop for His ministry and teachings. Place names like Nazareth, Capernaum, Chorazin, and Cana are familiar to readers of the New Testament. I remember my first journey boating across the waters fished millennia before by Yeshua’s Disciples. I wept. It didn’t seem possible that I was actually sailing on the same lake where my Messiah displayed His miracle-working power.

Both at the onset of Yeshua’s ministry, after overcoming Satan’s temptations (Luke 4:14), and at the conclusion of His ministry, after overcoming death, Yeshua “returned to the Galilee” (John 21:1). Why the Galilee? Is there a message here — a lesson to guide us — that relates to this unique region in Israel far from the city centers of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa?

Nathanael’s question was: “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46). This critique seems to reflect the simplicity of the Galileans: primarily fishermen and farmers — not a sophisticated bunch. Yet multitudes were open to Yeshua’s compassionate miracles and embraced His matchless teachings.

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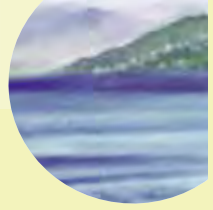


Sea of Galilee
by Connie Shishkoff



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Galilee...continued



I love the Galilee. The natural beauty and sheer variety of topography captivates me. I imagine the Disciples walking its trails, resting in the shade of abundant olive trees, breaking bread with the Master. Kingdom workers need to escape the drone of big-town life, to get away for a day, to inhale the scent of pine and ingest the forest wind's song.

This was Yeshua's home. He returned after battling *HaSatan* (the devil) in order to unveil His "program" of redeeming mankind ... in the Galilee, among the common people of its towns and villages. This was the beginning of His ministry.

At the conclusion of His ministry, Yeshua returned to the Galilee (Mark 16:7). This time, He appeared to His Disciples, victorious over the ultimate enemy—death. They had begun their journey with Him in the Galilee. Now, again in the Galilee, they were to receive the Master's Great Commission (Matthew 28:16–20).

Perhaps it's time for all Believers to "return to the Galilee." Today, we are in even greater need of simplification and renewed dedication to the Rabbi from Nazareth. For us local Believers, the call of "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" still reverberates from the shores of the Sea. Come visit. See if you don't hear it too. ★

Amen! Our pilgrims often proclaim the personal touch they experience in the Galilee: Worshipping on the lake, meditating with the Word on the Mount of Beatitudes, or rededicating their hearts at the Jordan River, the Galilee still provides an encounter with the risen Lord. —Myles



*Galilean Hills and Fields
by Connie Shishkoff*

Science Again Supports Bible's Creation Account

BY ADAM ELIAHU BERKOWITZ / BreakingIsraelNews.com



Scientists have struggled for years trying to understand the source of Earth's oceans and the planet's water. A discovery last year by geologists seems to prove that the real source of Earth's water is deep underground, amazingly similar to the Bible's account of Creation, which described waters below and waters above.

*"Then God said, 'Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.' God made the expanse, and separated the **waters below the expanse from the waters above the expanse**; and it was so. God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day."* (Genesis 1:6-8)

The first clue came in the form of a battered diamond found in Brazil.

Graham Pearson, lead study author and a geochemist at the University of Alberta in Canada, discovered the diamond while searching for a means of dating diamonds. Diamonds that come from deep in the earth are usually discarded because their scars and discoloring make them of little commercial value. Pearson's diamond contained a rare mineral called ringwoodite, which has never been found on the planet's surface before. It forms under extreme pressure and is found only in meteor fragments or when artificially made in laboratories.

The diamond surfaced by volcanic activity from the earth's mantle region, the hot rock layer (from 254 to 410 miles deep) between the crust and the core, which makes up most of the earth's volume. Geothermal energy at that depth would melt any drill bit.

The ringwoodite found in the diamond was 1.5% water, not a liquid but hydroxide ions (oxygen and hydrogen molecules bound together), suggesting

there could be a vast store of water in the mantle transition zone.

Brandon Schmandt, a seismologist at the University of New Mexico, set out to test the theory. Using the Earthscope USArray, a network of portable seismometers across the U.S., he found that the waves slowed down upon reaching the layer of ringwoodite, indicating that they were passing through water as well as rock and confirming that the transition zone is an enormous water reservoir.

"The surface water we have now came from degassing of molten rock. It came from the original rock ingredients of Earth," Schmandt concluded.

A colleague of Schmandt said that if the water was not stored underground, "it would be on the surface of the Earth, and mountaintops would be the only land poking out."

While critics of the Bible claim biblical stories lack factual basis, scientists and archaeologists continue to confirm the Bible as an accurate guide for their investigations. ★



Ancient Treasure Yields Present Truth



BY KATHARINE WEISS (r) ZLP co-host

A continuing discovery of hidden treasures in Israel helps us look into the past and find the true history of the land and the people. A recent discovery contains powerful implications for anyone who wonders about the role of women in everyday life and ministry.

One of our family's favorite sites is the City of David, the very existence of which substantiates the reality of David's kingship *and* Jewish history in the land.



City of David

Archaeologists with Israel Antiquities Authority recently discovered two rare and ancient seals in the City of David in Jerusalem. Inside a 2,500-year-old building, "as a result of very gentle work that included also sifting of the finds, sifting of the air in order to find all the tiny artifacts, we discovered among other stuff two Hebrew seals; one with the name of a man, *Sa'aryahu ben Shabenyahu* and another one with the name of a woman, *Elihana bat Gaelm*," IAA archaeologist Yana Tchekhanovetes said.

Many Christians think that women should not have prominence or even a visible role in ministry. However, Jesus always elevated the role of women by giving them value and significance. **When I read the Word, I see women who made a difference in their day: Deborah, Esther, Ruth, Jael, Hannah, Lydia, Priscilla, Mary of Magdala, and, of course Mary,** the mother of Yeshua! They all had to take their stand for the Lord and His plan of the hour.

Archaeologist **Tchekhanovetes** said it's extremely rare to find the name of a woman on a seal. "It's very exciting to know that in ancient times were strong women in Jerusalem living here. Even though we don't have any idea who was this lady and why she deserved such a special right in this society," she added.



The "universal woman of faith" in Proverbs 31 is a role model for all female Believers. I, personally, am forever grateful to the Lord for adding meaning and value to my life. When I was newly saved, the Lord spoke to my heart: "Do not let anyone define you as of a lesser value, for you are fearfully and wonderfully made."

How kind of God to bring me together with a Jewish man who celebrates God's value of each person in His family! The "Proverbs 31" woman is commemorated every Shabbat in Jewish homes as the husband recites verse 10 and onward over his bride, the "*eshet chayil*" (virtuous woman).

Myles and I never tire of the Shabbat tradition. He blesses me with that Proverbs passage, and I read Psalm 1 to him: exhorting him to walk closely with the Lord. These scriptures remind us of Woman coming from Adam's rib—from his side, close to his heart; not under his feet... or over his head! ★

Ask the Chaplain

By Dr. Todd Baker
Zola Levitt Ministries
Staff Theologian



Pentecost: Upper Room or Temple?

Q. Zola's Bible teaching strengthened my faith. Now I help others learn to look at the Word as it is written: with a Jewish perspective. I have been teaching that the Disciples would have been at the Temple when the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost morning because Luke 24:53 gives their location after the Ascension: "... and were continually in the Temple praising and blessing God. Amen."

A Greek scholar, whom I highly respect, believes that according to the Greek text, the Disciples were in the Upper Room.

I would not want to mishandle the Word of God. Though I study hermeneutically, I have never studied Greek or Hebrew, so I spend a lot of time in prayer and study before putting a lesson together. This has weighed on my heart.

On page 6 of Zola's *The Spirit of Pentecost* [description on [page 24](#)], he wrote: "The huge crowd at the Temple by 8:00 or 9:00 a.m. probably expected nothing unusual." Was he right?

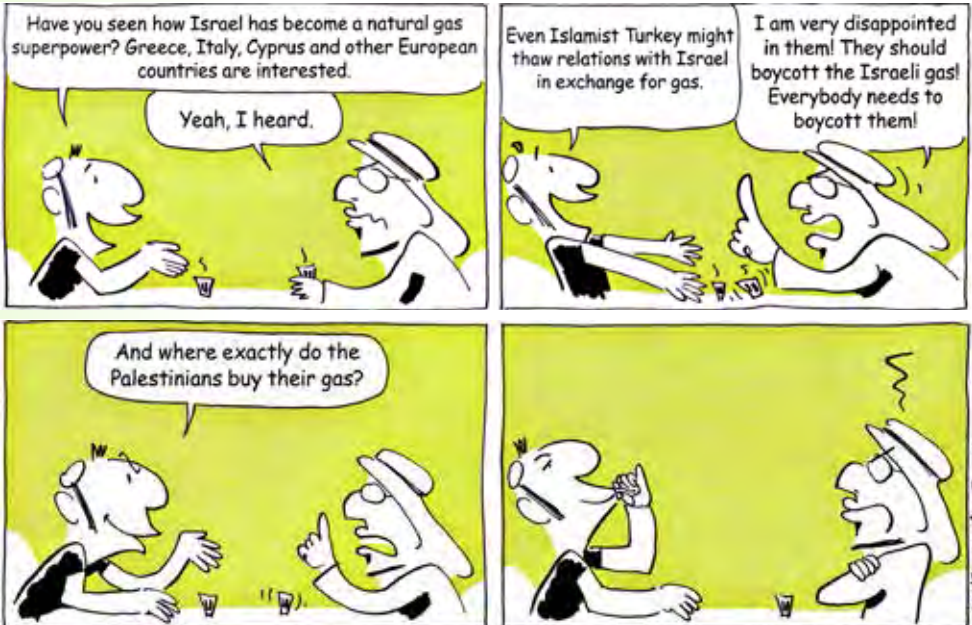
A. If I understand your question correctly, you ask if the events in Acts 2 occurred in the Temple or in the Upper Room. Though the text does not explicitly say so, one can safely infer that this event happened within the environs of the Temple for two reasons: In the first place, there was a large crowd of Jews attending the Feast of Shavuot. They came from all the countries of the Diaspora because they were required by the Torah (Deuteronomy 16:16) to attend this Feast. Therefore, the Temple was the place to meet, congregate, and worship the Lord.

Secondly, where else would there be enough water for the large number—3,000—to be baptized? Again, the only place would be the Temple with its many *mikvehot* (ritual baths for purification) to baptize all the people who were saved that day. And, indeed, archaeologists have unearthed these ritual baths surrounding the Temple Mount. I have seen them. From these two reasons, the events in Acts 2 happened within the Temple area on the day of Pentecost. Zola had it right. (For additional information on Pentecost, please see [Classic Zola on cover](#).) ★



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Index

When Yossi and Ahmed meet....



Taking the Gospel Home to Israel

By Sue Hopper
TJF Outreach
Team Member



When the **To The Jew First** team ministered in Jerusalem on last fall's mission trip, we prayed with tears at the *kotel*, the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, for all of Israel to be saved. Our prayers included friends and family, the needs of our local congregations in the States, and Messianic Believers and congregations in Yeshua's homeland. As we ventured into Jerusalem's Old City and modern malls, we proclaimed Yeshua while handing out Bibles and praying with people we met.

In the southern resort town of Eilat on the shores of the Red Sea, **Eleanor**, a young waitress at a restaurant we like to frequent, not only accepted a Hebrew Bible, complete with both Testaments, but also, with Todd's instruction and guidance, accepted Yeshua as her personal Messiah... Hallelujah! We will help Eleanor find a local Messianic congregation that can help nurture her faith journey.

In one of the shops, salesclerk **Dafna** (*r*) was very excited to meet Americans visiting Eilat. She had lived in Hawaii several months after completing her IDF (Israel Defense Forces) service and serves as a reserve officer now. My husband and fellow team member, Robin, is a U.S. Navy veteran and a born-again Jew, so he and Dafna got involved in an intense and interesting discussion, during which he shared his testimony of how he came to the saving knowledge of Yeshua as the Messiah thirteen years ago. Dafna wanted a Bible, as did another employee and also the store manager. We were pleased to supply each with her own complete Bible in Hebrew.



Robin presents Dafna with Hebrew Bible

I met a native Israeli woman, **Efrat**, in a gift and watch shop in Akko, across the bay from Haifa, during the last leg of the outreach. As Robin stayed outside the shop praying, I asked Efrat if she had a watch with Hebrew numerals. She produced a man's pocket watch with Hebrew numbers and I called Robin into the store to see it and to meet the friendly clerk. Robin joined us and chatted with her cordially as he admired the watch. He's very good at working into the conversation his testimony of Yeshua in his life, and by the end of their time together, she had accepted a complete Hebrew Bible and [The Promised Messiah](#) pamphlet to study and learn about Messiah Yeshua. (Robin loves his new watch.)

Thank you, Dear Readers, Supporters, and Prayer Partners for helping us spread the Word of Yeshua—for “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel 2:32). Paul's letter to the Romans explains your importance: ¹⁴How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵*And how shall they preach unless they are sent?* (Romans 10:14–15) ★

WISE AS A SERPENT / By Mark Levitt

First World Stewardship



“My job is boring; the mall is ugly; my in-laws are impossible.” Not life-or-death issues, such complaints are labeled *First World problems*. Our planet has 25 First World countries in which people don’t starve, life expectancy is high, and child mortality is low. Per the School of Life’s [“First World Problems” video](#), human nature leads us to worry—to our detriment—about whether we have sufficient possessions based on examining people around us, especially on television.

The 11-minute video (described above) explains that such materialism leads our perception of happiness to become comparative and relative; this tendency instigates discontentment. Advertising exhibits what more we *should* have and leads us to envy others. First World citizens are productive, stressed, and too tired to read or exercise enough. Loneliness is a side effect of wealth creation. Too often we forget the importance of kindness, forgiveness, and wisdom.

Harvard graduate and *Wall Street Journal* reporter Charlie Wells recently examined “The Hidden Reasons People Spend Too Much” and concluded: “The answers seem to lie in psychological impulses and blind spots that are tough to recognize, let alone overcome.” An explicit budget, he advises, makes us more likely to resist desirable but unaffordable expenses. His article’s takeaway points include:

- **Stop spending to reward yourself, particularly for exhibiting will power.**
- **Mind your mood when spending. “When people are sad, their habits are worse.”**
- **Don’t let your home equity tempt you. It’s a place to live rather than a financial asset.**

Imagine a thin green line, above which everyone is wealthy, from pensioners to billionaires. Thanks to their moderate lifestyles (relative to their means), they

live in financial comfort regardless of their net worth. *New York Times* columnist Paul Sullivan (“Wealth Matters”) explains: “Rich is a number” that “has nothing to do with the security wealth brings someone.” His grandfather, a postman, was the first person he knew who lived above the thin green line.

Financial advisor John T. Reed’s sensible [shopping list “for the rich”](#) includes do’s and don’ts that inspired my wife and me to leave our 1979 kitchen as is. Don’t buy a bigger house than you need (2,500–3,000 square feet maximum). If you have no waterfront and dock, then renting a boat is smarter than buying. Own a horse only if you live on horse property with a stable and ride each week. His numerous guidelines echo the wisdom of a classic camping adage: “Less is more.”

Closely examining this article’s source material in light of biblical wisdom reveals that even secular reasoning leads to the value of seeking first the Kingdom of God rather than earthly treasures. (Matt. 6:33) This secular-meets-biblical path reminds me of how science corroborates the Creation, Noah’s flood, and the day the Earth stood still. (Josh. 10:13) ★



ZLM Bulletin Board

Who Is Stealing Palestinian Land?

The Israeli government in 2005 forced Jewish settlements in Gaza to shut down in an effort to create a Middle Eastern Singapore. Instead, Hamas seized control over the Gaza Strip in 2007 and transformed it into a base for various Islamist groups who launch terror attacks. It is Hamas and Fatah who undermine the supposed Palestinian dream of founding a democracy. [Also see p.28](#)

Source: gatestoneinstitute.org.



Free Levitt Letter Overages

Would you like 12, 24, or 36 recent *Levitt Letters* to give away at your church, health club, or doctor's office? We've been printing a few extra for people who want to serve as Newsletter Ambassadors. Imagine delivering this ministry's teaching to those who don't know it even exists—**FREE**. Please help us reach more people by periodically letting us know how many newsletters you can put to good use.



Free Item

Pamphlet of the Month

An effective estate plan addresses four common financial challenges: 1) dying too soon, 2) outliving one's resources, 3) emergencies, and 4) mental/physical disability.

The booklet entitled **Better Estate Planning** presents a practical overview of a number of planning tools.

Topics include: The will as cornerstone, Placing property in trust, Power of attorney, Joint ownership, Living will, Income and asset management, Welcome tax savings, and Income for life. The Technical Advisory Section discusses federal gift and estate tax considerations. To receive this booklet at no charge,

email us at staff@levitt.com or write to our P.O. Box.

From the Land Whar...

... the grass grows Blue: "Never Give the Devil a Ride." Soulful singer **Brad Davis** rhythmically beseeches: "When you're on the road to nowhere, with a million miles to go, and you're lookin' for someONE to share the ride; and you see 'him' in your headlights, waitin' for some weary soul. And he's standin' with temptation by his side, Never give the devil a ride. He'll be in that driver's seat, as soon as he's inside." Enjoy the [video](#): "When the devil says 'Let's make a deal,'... let the hands of Jesus take the wheel!"



"Come Home!"

Zola
Tours to
Israel



See [page 36](#)
for details



Hebrew Lesson

Returning to God

John J. Parsons



תּוֹרַת יְהוָה תְּמִימָה מְשִׁיבַת נַפֶּשׁ

“The Torah of the LORD is perfect, returning the soul.” – Psalm 19:7

פֶּשׁ	נָ	בֵּת	שִׁי	מְ	מָה	תְּ	מִי	מָה	יְהוָה	רַת	תּוֹ
(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(1)
na-fesh		me-shi-vat			te-mi-mah			Adonai		to-rat	
the soul		returning			is perfect			the instruction		of the LORD	

Perhaps you once learned Psalm 19:7 as, “The law of the LORD is perfect, *converting* the soul” (Psalm 19:7). The Hebrew text, however, is better translated as, “The instruction of the LORD is perfect, *returning* the soul.” Giving heed to the words of Torah instructs our souls to turn back to God, which is the very theme of salvation (Mark 1:15).

In this connection some of the ancient sages understood the very first word of the Bible, namely, the Hebrew word “beresheet,” to be an *acronym* for meaningful spiritual life. The first letter, Bet, stands for “bittachon,” a word that means complete *trust* in God’s love for your life; the next letter, Resh, stands for “ratzon,” or the *desire* to live according to God’s will; the central letter Aleph stands for “ahavah,” which is the Hebrew word for the *love* of God and our fellow man (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18); and the letter Shin is for “shetikah,” or *keeping silent*, which is the cardinal virtue of godly self-control and wisdom (James 1:26; 3:1-18; Psalm 34:13; Prov. 13:3). The letter Yod is for “yirah,” or *reverence* for God’s authority and dignity; and finally, the letter Tav is for “Torah,” the study of which brings transformation and sanctity to our lives (Psalm 19:7; Psalm 119:105; Prov. 6:23; Matt. 5:17-19; 2 Tim. 2:15-16).

Every year we read the Torah from beginning to end ... We do this *every* year because *Talmud Torah*—the study of Torah—is an ongoing venture in the life of a Jew. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the very first letter of the Torah is the Bet in the word beresheet (as mentioned above), and the very last letter of the Torah is the Lamed in the word “Israel.” Putting these letters together we get the word “lev,” a word that means “heart,” which suggests that the entire Torah—from the first letter to the last—reveals the love of God for us ... Indeed, the last letter of the New Testament is a Nun in the word “Amen” (Rev. 22:21), so the whole Bible—from “beginning to end”—reveals “ben,” or the Son of God for us.

The inspired Hebrew Scriptures are “temimut,” a word that means “perfect,” “complete,” or “entirely sufficient.” For those of us who are sinful, broken, and incomplete, the Torah of the LORD provides all we need to have our souls turned back to the way of righteousness, wholeness, healing, and life. ★



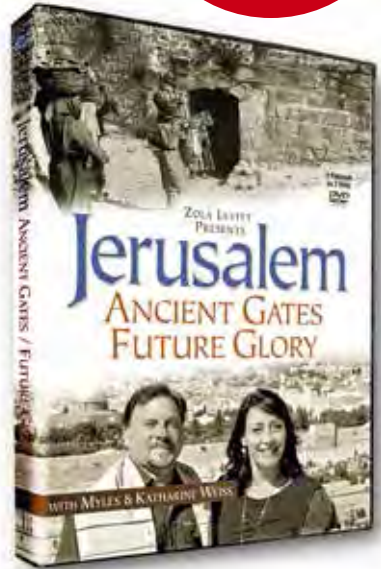
[Jerusalem: Ancient Gates / Future Glory](#)

Eight 30-minute TV programs (2 DVDs)

Myles and Katharine delve into the historical and spiritual significance of each Gate in the Old City wall of Jerusalem. Enjoy the music of [Marty Goetz](#) during this eight-part series.



The Dung Gate. Besides serving as a passage for carrying refuse out of the city, the Dung Gate leads to the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, Judaism's holiest site. Guests include archaeologist Shimon Gibson and Rabbi Marty Waldman.



The Zion Gate, leading to the Jewish and Armenian Quarter of the Old City, has seen its share of military action and was a focal point in the history of the modern Zionist movement. Guests include Shimon Gibson and Gate expert Tamar Hayardeni. David Parsons, from the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ), explains the eschatological (End Times) connection between Jews and Christians.

The Jaffa Gate. Repeatedly destroyed and rebuilt, the Jaffa Gate opens to the West and symbolizes the Gospel going out to the gentiles. Guests include Tom Hess, director of Jerusalem House of Prayer for All Nations; and faith-filled Holocaust survivor Phillip Meyers, founder of Immanuel Tours.

The New Gate, as its name implies, is the most recent gate and gives access to the Christian Quarter of the Old City. It provides a picture of God's heart for unity. Guests include David Parsons, with the ICEJ; and fiery supporter of Israel Jan Willem van der Hoeven, director of the International Christian Zionist Center (ICZC).

The Damascus Gate. Pointing toward Syria's capital, the busy Damascus Gate is a window to the North and to the Moslem world. Guests include archaeologist Shimon Gibson and Jan Willem van der Hoeven, director of the ICZC.

Herod's Gate dates back to the time of Herod the Great. The historical site of many attacks, it represents today's ongoing spiritual battles. Guests include Tamar Hayardeni and our friend Rosemary Schindler, a lover of Israel and the Jewish people.

Lions Gate, also known as "Saint Stephen's Gate," is where the Israeli army entered to re-take possession of the Old City in 1967. Let us pray for the Lion of Judah, Yeshua HaMashiach, to return as the King of Glory. Guests include Tamar Hayardeni, and David Dolan with Colonel Shimon Cahaner.

The Eastern Gate has been closed since Byzantine times in a Moslem attempt to thwart the Jewish Messiah's Second Coming. The Eastern or Golden Gate will open again when the King of Kings returns. Guests include Shimon Gibson and Tommy Waller of HaYovel.



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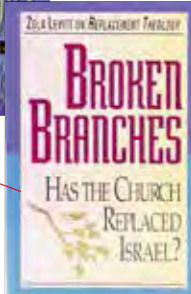
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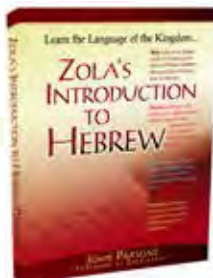
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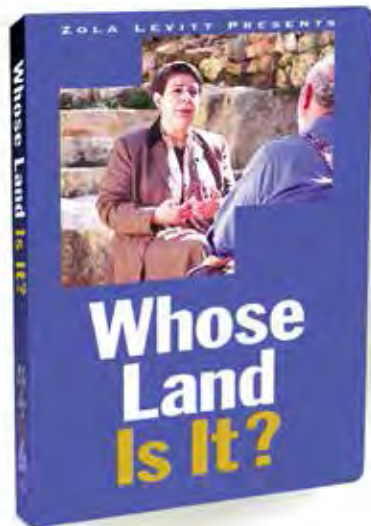
[Whose Land Is It?](#) DVD & transcript study booklet

Three 30-minute TV programs on one DVD

Whose Land Is It? Does Israel belong to the Jews, and if so, Who says so? In the first 30-minute television program, Zola offers irrefutable reasons why only the Jews are the Holy Land's rightful owners. He also defeats key arguments that attempt to undermine the Abrahamic Covenant, etc. Merely watching and reviewing this lesson will arm Believer and unbeliever alike to defend Israel's right to its land.

The View from "Palestine" What a blessing such controversial programs weren't censored by our more sensitive TV stations! Zola visited Ramallah and interviewed Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi.

In part 1, Ashrawi eloquently articulates the Palestinians' best arguments for being the true owners of Israel. **In part 2**, subsequent review sessions with two scholarly Christians—Arab-American journalist Joseph Farah and Professor Ergun Caner (a former Moslem)—unveil the fallacies in her assertions. These two 30-minute TV programs could be the ultimate crash course on credibly and diplomatically asserting Israel's right to its land. ([See related article p.28](#))



New life for your skin—Hands, Feet, and Body—AHAVA from the Dead Sea

[AHAVA – Mineral Hand Cream](#) 3.4 oz This mineral-rich cream is specially formulated to protect hands and safeguard them from environmental and household damage. It instantly improves the skin's moisture level, smoothes rough, dry skin, and restores suppleness. Witch Hazel extracts sanitize and smooth the skin, providing a refreshing, revitalizing effect. Allantoin heals dry, cracked skin and blemishes.

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[AHAVA – Mineral Body Lotion](#) 17 oz

The Dead Sea Minerals and soothing Aloe Vera in this quickly absorbing body lotion protect the skin while they stimulate and elevate the natural hydration processes for a smooth, refined skin texture. Aloe Vera extracts soothe and provide natural moisture. Witch Hazel extracts smooth the skin, providing a refreshing, revitalizing effect.



Survey: Messianic Soldiers in the IDF

Source: KehilaNews.com



All Israelis, men 18–21 and women 18–20, are required to perform some form of military or community service. This means that thousands of Messianic Israelis—Jewish and non-Jewish, men and women—share in the Israeli army experience at one time or another.

The survey results show that openness about Yeshua in the Israeli army is the new “normal.” Remarkably, 96% of respondents say that their fellow soldiers know of their belief in Yeshua as the Messiah, and 78% say their commanders or officers know of their faith. This generation is bold in sharing and living its faith!

Equally encouraging: the supportive reaction from fellow soldiers and officers ([see chart p. 34](#)). Contrary to the experience of older Believers in the IDF, very few Messianic soldiers today face discrimination or persecution. Furthermore, many (30%) have a fellow Believer in their unit. As recently as fifteen years ago, it was rare for two Messianic soldiers to serve together.

A statistic that has not changed over the years is the high percentage of Messianic IDF soldiers serving in combat: 57% serve in combat units, many in volatile areas (see chart). Believers in Israel, young and old, are Zionist, law abiding, with high motivation to serve God and country. In a long history, albeit unknown to many, Messianic Believers have served in combat units and elite special forces, like *Sayeret Matkal* (General Staff Reconnaissance Unit) and *Shayetet 13* (Navy Seals). Today’s Messianic IDF are no exception.

Recently, Israel has faced a new type of terror in which lone attackers try to stab, shoot, or run over unsuspecting Israelis. Their preferred targets are IDF soldiers. In the midst of these attacks, hundreds of Messianic IDF soldiers serve the State of Israel, defend its citizens, and importantly, bring tremendous blessing and testimony to their fellow soldiers.

[\(continued page 34\)](#)





Letters to ZIM

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

Comments from www.levitt.com

From N.F. (WV): I want you to know how great a blessing the teachings of Zola have been to me. You do not know me, but know that I am lifting your ministry in prayer. If you pray for me here in prison, I only ask you to pray that our Lord will send me to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Rom. 1:16)

From J.B.D. (OR): The news and humor in the *Levitt Letter* give me much happiness. Do not change the size or paper of the *Levitt Letter*. When you get so rich that you use slick, magazine-size paper with oodles of color, I'll know my donation isn't being used for missions. Thank you for noticing our stewardship. This ministry has been blessed over the years to have donors such as you who value substance over gloss. A couple of years ago, our printer had a mishap with a *Levitt Letter* issue and gifted our readers the following month with a glossy cover for the news magazine. It was so very pretty... the colors popped! We knew that we couldn't afford such high-quality paper on a regular basis, but it was nice to see just once. —Editor

From G.L.W. (FL): I thoroughly enjoyed your interview with Ron Cantor. We need to see more testimonies like his and also Muslims coming to faith. We agree. You can see both parts of his interview with Myles in our program archives: levitt.tv/media/watch/1303 and [1304](http://levitt.tv/media/watch/1304).

From J.E.H. (OH): In the [February 2016 Levitt Letter](#), [John Parsons](#) reassured me that the grace of God that saved me is the same grace that will ultimately change me. Though I have failed in the past, I know that God is changing me and I'm going to keep following Jesus. I thank you for the help your ministry has given me. I will keep you in my prayers.

From G.P. (CA): Can someone please answer two questions? 1) Why and when did Jews stop being referred to as Israelites? "Israelite" is an ethnic term for a descendant of the 12 Tribes, or the 12 sons of Jacob. "Israeli" is a legal term for a citizen of Israel. A person can be an Israeli and not be a Jew (Israelite). Likewise, a person can be a Jew (Israelite) and not be an Israeli. 2) What is the name of

Israel's beautiful red state flower? The *Anemone coronaria* (*calanit*; *pl. calaniot* in Hebrew) is Israel's national flower. (see [Feb. 2014 Levitt Letter on p. 30](#))
—Editor



Carpet of red anemone, state flower



Known by our Fruit—Matt. 7:16

Dear Myles and Katharine,

When we discovered Zola in 1988, we could not afford pay TV, so we were grateful for your newsletters and study booklet offers. Now we can enjoy your informative programs any time via our computer. Praise the Lord for creative inventors!

Many religions preach that people who don't join their religion will go to Hell. We are glad your ministry teaches unity and mercy, not conflict and threats.

Your February 2016 *Levitt Letter*, particularly the article "[Hate Islam but Love the Moslems](#)," shows why you teach Old and New Testaments as the Word for Jews and gentiles. I hope those in conflict will learn the message: The One God is merciful and forgiving.

Myles and Katharine, your marriage demonstrates the union of Messianic and Christian beliefs better than what words can say. God bless your union.
—S.B. (SD)

Shalom S.B.—

Thank you for your kind words about our ministry's message and specifically about our marriage. Last year, we hosted [Dr. Hormoz Shariat on our program](#). In return, he had us on *Iran Alive*, the program by which he broadcasts the Gospel into Iran every evening. Hormoz said something fascinating just before we went on the air: "Myles, they will be listening to your words, but they will be watching your marriage!"

This took me by surprise for a moment. And then I realized that *the people viewing the program were either pre-Believers or VERY recent converts from Islam to Yeshua*. Imagine: After years, perhaps decades, experiencing Islamic views of women and their role in marriage, these precious Persian people had a chance to hear the Good News and also learn about the way in which God wants us to treat each other in our homes. What a unique opportunity for Katharine and me to BE witnesses! What a giant step forward for this generation of Muslims—from the historical treatment of women as chattel, to living as co-heirs with mutual respect and love.

Please remember to pray for us and our family and, of course, for Hormoz and Donnell Shariat as they forge ahead, bringing many sons and daughters to *Yeshua HaMashiach!* What an honor to know them and to connect the ZLM community with their work in Iran. Many blessings,

—Myles and Katharine



After his brother was executed in Iran, Hormoz Shariat says that the Lord told him: "The clergy and the leaders of Iran are not your enemy. You have only one enemy: Satan. If you want to hurt Satan, evangelize. It hurts him when you bring people to Christ."



Thank You

Dear ZLM,

Thank you for continuing to send the *Levitt Letter*. I used to be a contributor, but at age 81 and with limited funds, I am no longer able.

I appreciate the work you do—ministry to the Jewish people in Israel, lovely tours, and teaching through the TV and newsletters. My husband always wanted to go to Israel and we had planned to go, but he passed away before we could make the trip. I went by myself and walking where Jesus walked has blessed my life in ways too glorious to express.

Zola was alive then and led our tour. We enjoyed his humor and laughed a lot on the bus. When the *Levitt Letter* arrives, I turn to the back and read all the humor and illustrations first. It brightens my day, and I learn much truth.

Thank you for your work, your wise budgeting, your truth and wisdom in your articles, and the humor. I love it all! P.H. (CO)

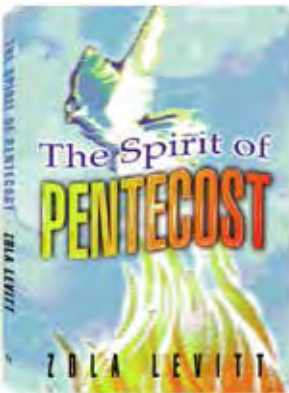
Dear P.H.—

We are sorry for the loss of your husband, but since we do not mourn as those who have no hope (1 Thes. 4:13), we add the sweet to the bitter, assured that you will see him again someday. Isn't that incredible? The gift of eternal life through *Yeshua HaMashiach* is a pearl of great price. HE is such a treasure as our Messiah ... words fail. The eternity-focused comic at right is just for you, P.H. Our God is a very good God!
—Katharine & Myles



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To
Index



The Spirit of Pentecost study booklet by Zola Levitt ([see related cover story](#))

Also available as a [teaching CD](#)

An insightful look at Peter's stunning sermon based on Scripture from the Psalms and the Book of Joel.

Pentecost marks the inception of the universal Church and, so far, the last of the fulfilled prophetic feasts. The "birthday of the Church" is explained as it happened on that dramatic day when the Holy Spirit came.

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Updating the “pagan” origin of Easter

Dear Myles and Katharine,

Your March 2016 *Levitt Letter* article stating that “Easter” and eggs are not pagan is absurd and far from the teachings of Christ. The early Church did many things that were not “KOSHER,” including persecuting the Jews. That doesn’t make it OK. Incorporating pagan symbolism into the worship of Jesus Christ is not acceptable. Paul and the Apostles and disciples never practiced such things. Paul taught Christ and Him crucified. —J.S.

Shalom J.S.—

We printed “[Easter’ and Eggs Not Pagan?](#)” because it updated and corrected previous information, a message you apparently missed.

Perhaps you also overlooked my comment at the end of that article. I reiterated that regarding egg symbolism, we even eschew it in our Passover *Seders* (dinners). Many traditional Jewish families include a roasted egg on their Seder plate, a centuries-old tradition said to represent the burnt Temple of Jewish history. We use the LACK of its appearance on the plate to remind those in attendance that:

- 1) Regarding new life, the *karpas* (leafy green veggie) represents the new life in Messiah and our gratitude to our Creator for spring’s rebirth in nature.
- 2) **The Easter bunny does not save!** The whole ceremony is about the blood of the lamb and its efficacy for salvation.

I continue to marvel that some of our readers and viewers cling to a humorless version of life and the Gospel, sometimes rejecting our entire message because we didn’t cross one “t” or dot one “i” in the exact manner they like. I would caution all Believers, myself included, to measure using the totality of faithfulness to the calling before us. In other words: Are we keeping the “main thing the main thing?”

- Do we lift up salvation in Yeshua? (Yes!)
- Do we stand with Israel? (Yes!)
- Do we warn about *jihad*? (Yes!)

Based on these criteria, this ministry does our best to teach the Word in print and on the air. I would ask our community to pray for Katharine, the film crew, and me as we plunge into the upcoming series on the Holocaust and the miracle of Israel’s rebirth following the Nazi era. These profound programs come at a very significant time: Remaining Holocaust survivors are ready to tell their stories, and there are STILL those in the world who deny or diminish the significance of the Nazi genocide. With your prayers and support we can proclaim: “Never Again!”
—Myles



'Robot Locust' Could Help Rescues, Cleanups



SCIENCE: BY ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN (r) Israel21c.org

Inspired by the common locust, a tiny high-jumping robot developed in Israel could be used for sending lifesaving reconnaissance data to human rescue teams in disaster situations, or for cleaning up oil spills, or for gathering intelligence—and many other difficult missions unsuited to large robots and living beings.

The five-inch-long featherweight robot is dubbed “TAUB” (for Tel Aviv University and ORT Braude College), the two Israeli academic institutions involved in the inventive collaboration.

The zoologists and mechanical engineers involved in the project say TAUB can jump 11' high—more than twice the height of similar-sized robots—and cover a horizontal distance of 4.5' in one leap.

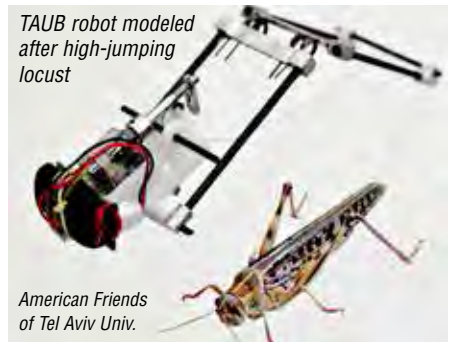
“How our prototype could be used is a matter of imagination,” says Prof. Amir Ayali, a TAU zoologist on the multidisciplinary team whose aim was “to build the best jumping robotic system that we could.”

Ayali explains that small, inexpensive robots are widely viewed as the wave of the future. They could be grouped to accomplish tasks more efficiently and cheaply than can today’s larger robots. Or they can be used singly in environments where small size is an advantage, such as searching under rubble.

TAUB boasts an extra dimension of capability. “Jumping is better for rough terrain,” explains Ayali. “Today you have drones and quadrupeds, but they are extremely demanding, energy-wise. **Our robot is extremely efficient and is a beautiful example of bio-inspired technological innovation.** It could be used anywhere you don’t want to, or cannot, send humans or huge expensive robots.”

Three-stage jump mechanism

The scientists used a 3D printer to make two prototypes of the 23-gram (0.8 oz.) robot from ABS plastic (the same material LEGOs are made of). The robot’s legs are made of stiff carbon rods and steel wire springs. It is powered by a small on-board battery and is remotely controlled through an on-board microcontroller.



Though not an exact replica of a locust, TAUB possesses the specific biomechanical features of the locust’s unparalleled three-stage jump mechanism. In the first stage, the legs are bent in preparation. Then the legs are locked in place at the joint. Finally, a sudden release of the flexor muscle (TAUB’s torsion springs) on the upper leg unlocks the joint and causes a rapid release of energy. This creates a fast-kicking movement of the legs that propels the locust into the air.

The team is working on a gliding mechanism that will enable the robot to extend its jumping range, lower its landing impact, execute multiple steered jumps, and stabilize while airborne. These features would expand the possible field applications for TAUB in search-and-rescue missions and in reconnaissance operations in rough terrain. ★

Processed Food Lets Toxins ‘Leak’ Into Gut

MEDICINE: By David Shamah / TimesOfIsrael.com



Feeling tired, lethargic, or depressed? Can't lose weight, suffer from stomach aches, psoriasis, or rheumatoid arthritis? You could be a victim of “leaky gut syndrome.” According to a new study led by a Technion professor and his German colleague, the processed food you're eating could be making your gut even leakier.

“The use of ingredients like emulsifiers, high levels of salt and sugar, and transglutaminase (meat glue) has become common in processed foods in the past two or three decades, and during that time we have seen a sharp rise in a wide variety of conditions that could definitely be attributed to leaky gut syndrome, such as autoimmune diseases,” said Professor **Aaron Lerner** (*below*).

Lerner, of the Technion's Faculty of Medicine and Carmel Medical Center, and Dr. Torsten Matthias of the Aesku-Kipp Institute (in Wendelsheim, Germany), have published findings on the health damage caused by processed food.



Although their recent paper in the journal *Auto-immune Disease* does not establish definitive causality between an increase in processed ingredients and the prevalence of diseases attributed to leaky gut syndrome, Lerner stresses that the correlation “is just too strong to be dismissed. Scientific evidence for the negative effects of these ingredients is well-known and well-established.”

In the body's physical defense system, the “tight junction” structure keeps undesired elements out of the intestines. The human body can process certain types of proteins, and the digestive system breaks down the food we eat into its nutritional components, including proteins—which are the right size to fit through the small “holes” in the intestinal lining, where it undergoes further digestion. When the system is working properly, larger, undigested food particles—proteins that the body cannot use, yeasts, toxins, waste products, etc.—are kept out, and end up being excreted.



But if the tight junction structures become less tight, all sorts of junk can find its way into the digestive system. The now “leaky gut” allows toxins to enter, forcing the immune system to work overtime to fight them. As the body expends energy on this task, it has less energy for other activities (resulting in lethargy), and if all toxins aren't banished by the immune system, it can result in other complications, such as autoimmune diseases, say Lerner and Matthias.

Food additives are breaking down the tight-junctions, the researchers say. “This is a scientific fact,” said Lerner. For example, gluten, to which increasing numbers of people seem to be sensitive, has a role in reducing the tight-junction structure. Salt—a known cause of hypertension—also causes inflammation throughout the body. “In inflammation, the sky is the limit,” with the entire body at risk, said Lerner.

Many of the common ingredients in food production—emulsifiers (used to keep naturally-separating oil and water together), surfactants (natural or manufactured components that keep processed food smooth), solvents (used to extract active ingredients for food processing, and often identical to the ones used in manufacturing, dry cleaning, etc.), microbial transglutaminase (which maintains proper food texture), salt, sugar, and other ingredients—**conspire to break down our digestive system's tight-junction structure**, according to the report. ★

Why Israeli Settlements Are Not Illegal Under International Law



BY SANDRA TEPLINSKY (above) LightOfZion.org

Legal issues regarding Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) are complex. As a Messianic Jewish attorney, I've tried to demystify Israel's case for settlements under international law. Customary international law presumes the last nation to historically and legally own and occupy land retains legal title deed or ownership of that land. Concerning Judea and Samaria, that nation is indisputably Israel.

Historically, Israeli settlements are located in Judea and Samaria, territories belonging to the Jewish people for thousands of years. The Jews were illegally forced off the land by the Romans during the first century. Through the millennia, however, Jews maintained a territorial presence. Acknowledging these key historical facts, the 1922 League of Nations Mandate for a Jewish National Home explicitly included Judea, Samaria ... and Jordan. The mandate was to be administered by Great Britain.

Arabs of the Palestine region reacted to the prospect of a Jewish state with murderous terror. Hoping to appease them, Britain illegally created a Palestinian state, now called Jordan, from 70% of the land mandated for the Jews. Meanwhile, Arab terror persisted.

When the UN was established in 1945, by law it inherited the British Mandate. Still trying to appease terror, the UN (wrongly and probably illegally) offered Judea and Samaria to the Arabs to create a second Palestinian state. The Arabs, wanting all of Israel, refused the offer. When a Jewish state was declared in 1948, Jordan and other Arab nations attacked it. Jordan then illegally conquered and occupied Judea and Samaria, which had been "no-man's land." But Jordan did not create from it a second Palestinian state. Nor did it absorb the Arab population, refusing instead to grant most of them citizenship. *Please see related information on pages [15](#) and [20](#).* *(continued next page)*



The settlement of Eli in the "West Bank"



Israeli Settlements ... *continued*



In 1967, defending itself in another Arab-initiated war against Israel, the Jewish state acquired (some say, liberated) Judea and Samaria. Under customary international law, at that time Israel had the legal right to incorporate these historical regions of the Jewish National Home into the Jewish state. In a decision many now regret, Israel generously applied the international laws of war instead.

Those who argue settlements are illegal usually claim they violate the laws of war under the Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 49 or 2. But sustaining such an argument takes the provisions of the Convention extremely out of context and applies them to circumstances for which they were never intended. Article 49 states that an "occupying power" may not "deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies." The term "occupied territory" was conceived to prevent another Nazi-like, genocidal military conquest and occupation of any sovereign, recognized state.

But Israel has not embarked on a genocide campaign. It has not forced Jewish civilians to relocate into the West Bank. Nor has it forced a population of Palestinian civilians to relocate out of the West Bank. In isolated instances, Palestinians have been forced to relocate, but within the territories and strictly for security-related defensive, not offensive, reasons. Usually Israel compensates those civilians, which fulfills its obligations under the Geneva Convention.

Second, **the West Bank has never been a sovereign state.** Before 1967, it was illegally occupied and neglected by Jordan. **Only Israel has ever historically, lawfully owned it.**

Third, Article 2 of the Geneva Convention, which some say extends the law of armed conflict to Israeli settlements, applies only to conflicts that "arise between two or more high Contracting Parties." Israel and Jordan had no contractual relations regarding the West Bank in 1967. The law should not be made to apply here. ★



"Now the darn Israelis won't let us into their country to enjoy an honest day's work!"

ISIS Terrorist



SELECT MEDIA BRIEFS

rency speculation, and the possession of oilfields providing an estimated \$2.5 million per day

How much territory does ISIL control?

An area of the Middle East that is roughly the size of Belgium

FAQ: Islamic State (ISIL, ISIS, DAESH)

By Colin Freeman / Telegraph.co.uk

What is ISIL?

An Islamic extremist group controlling territory in Syria and Iraq

What is it called?

In the West, the group is usually known as ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) or ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). In June, the militants said they wanted to simply be called Islamic State in recognition of the self-declared caliphate.

What about 'Daesh'?

Daesh is an abbreviation *Dawlat al-Islamiyah f'al-Iraq wa al-Sham*, and is the derogatory name used by many Muslims for ISIL. Following the Paris attacks, the French government now uses this term.

What are its aims?

A worldwide Islamic caliphate—a religious government—without borders

What terror attacks has it carried out?

ISIL has claimed responsibility for the Paris attacks of 13 November 2015, the explosion of a plane travelling from Egypt to Russia, the individual killings of Western hostages, including James Foley and Alan Henning; and the Brussels airport and metro bombings.

How is the group funded?

Looting, extortion, international cur-

Where is it based?

ISIL's HQ is understood to be in the city of Raqqa, Syria

Israel Seizes Drones to Gaza

By Yaakov Lappin /JPost.com

Crossing Authority inspectors together with the Shin Bet intelligence agency recently foiled an attempt to smuggle commercial multicopter drones into Gaza, authorities announced recently.

The drones were earmarked for use by "terrorist elements in Gaza" to gather intelligence on IDF movements, the Authority said.

The inspectors stopped an Israeli truck carrying toys at the Kerem Shalom Crossing, where drones of various types and sizes carrying high-quality cameras were found. Shin Bet had intercepted previous attempts to smuggle commercial drones in recent weeks.



Confiscated drone
(additional pic next page)



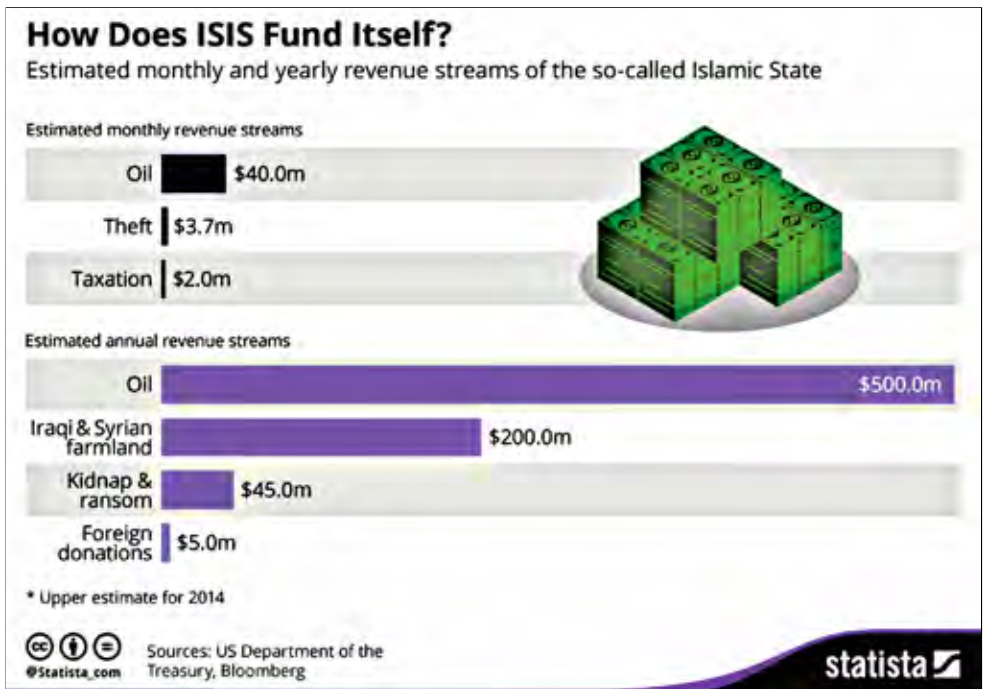
Funding ISIS By Colin Freeman / Telegraph.co.uk

ISIS is making millions of dollars for its war chest by playing foreign currency markets under the noses of bank chiefs, it was revealed recently.

The terror group is earning up to \$20 million a month by funneling dollars looted from banks during its takeover of the Iraqi city of Mosul into legitimate currency markets in the Middle East. It then makes huge returns on currency speculation, which are subsequently wired back via unsuspecting financial authorities in Iraq and Jordan.

ISIS's extraordinary venture into white collar crime is now a major source of income, along with oil smuggling and extortion from people living in ISIS-controlled areas.

Details of the scam emerged during a hearing of a specially-convened Foreign Affairs sub-committee set up to examine Britain's role in ISIS financing. ISIS also siphoned off money from pension payments that are still made by the Iraqi government to civil servants living in the city. ★



Commercial drones with high-quality cameras were found by Israelis on a truck carrying a shipment of toys into Gaza.

(photo: Defense Ministry/Overland Crossing Authority)

Where Was Jesus Buried? A Bible Study



ARCHAEOLOGY: By Pastor Jack Wellman (r) Patheos.com

Buried in a Rich Man's Grave

There is a prophecy about Jesus' burial place. Isaiah 53:8–9 states: "He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked—But with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth." We see the fulfillment when "there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him" (Matt. 27:57–58). Then Joseph of Arimathea "took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock" (Matt. 27:59–60). If the Disciples had not come and taken Jesus' body away to be buried, His body would have ended up where the other dead bodies of those crucified were taken: thrown onto a garbage heap outside the city walls of Jerusalem. Where exactly was Joseph of Arimathea's tomb? Read on.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre

In the fourth century, Emperor Constantine's mother identified the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as Jesus' burial place, but no conclusive evidence proves this location. For one thing, there was never a body left in Jesus' grave. And the Bible never gives a precise geographical location, so all we can do is make educated guesses. I believe that the Scriptures may be silent on the exact location of Jesus' burial place because, human nature being what it is, the place might have become a shrine and the location itself worshipped. However, support comes from tradition and the presence of other first-century tombs.

The Garden Tomb (or Gordon's Calvary)

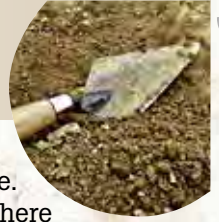
The Garden Tomb, located just outside of the walls of Jerusalem, is very old; its typological features suggest that it was originally hewn in Old Testament times

[\(continued next page\)](#)



Holy Sepulchre first-century tombs

Archaeology... continued



and, therefore, not a “new tomb” as specifically stated in Scripture. Yet, John 19:41 says: “Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.” We see then that Jesus’ burial tomb could not have been old, for Joseph of Arimathea had prepared it for his own death. Apostle John’s description “in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid” might seem to fit the location of the Garden Tomb, but the tomb is too old to have been the precise place where Jesus was laid.

The Talpiot Tomb or Talpiyot Tomb

This tomb is a rock-cut tomb discovered in 1980 in East Talpiot, in southern East Jerusalem. Ossuaries were found with the inscription “Yeshua bar Yehosef” (Jesus, son of Joseph), but both names, Jesus/Yeshua (Joshua in the Old Testament) and Joseph, were extremely common first-century names. However, ossuaries were not mentioned in the narrative of Jesus’ burial because He was not there long enough to have His remains placed within containers. And since He was resurrected, there would have been no bones in the tomb. Talpiot Tomb could not have been Jesus’ burial tomb.

The Toza Bal

According to the local Sunni caretakers of this shrine, it is blasphemous to Islam to believe that Jesus could have been buried anywhere else but here in Kashmir. The shrine sits in front of a Muslim cemetery and is probably the least likely of all places where Jesus would have been buried. No hint of such a possibility exists by Church historians, Church tradition, or biblical evidence.

Conclusion

Does it really matter where Jesus was buried? His tomb was found empty! The stone was rolled away so that people could enter to see the empty tomb, not so Jesus could get out. When the two Marys came to the tomb early on the first day of the week, “they saw that the stone had been rolled back; it was very large. Upon entering the tomb, they were alarmed to see a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe. He said to them: “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; He is not here. See the place where they laid Him” (Mark 16:4–6). Looking for Jesus’ tomb is not the point: He is risen... and that is precisely the point! ★



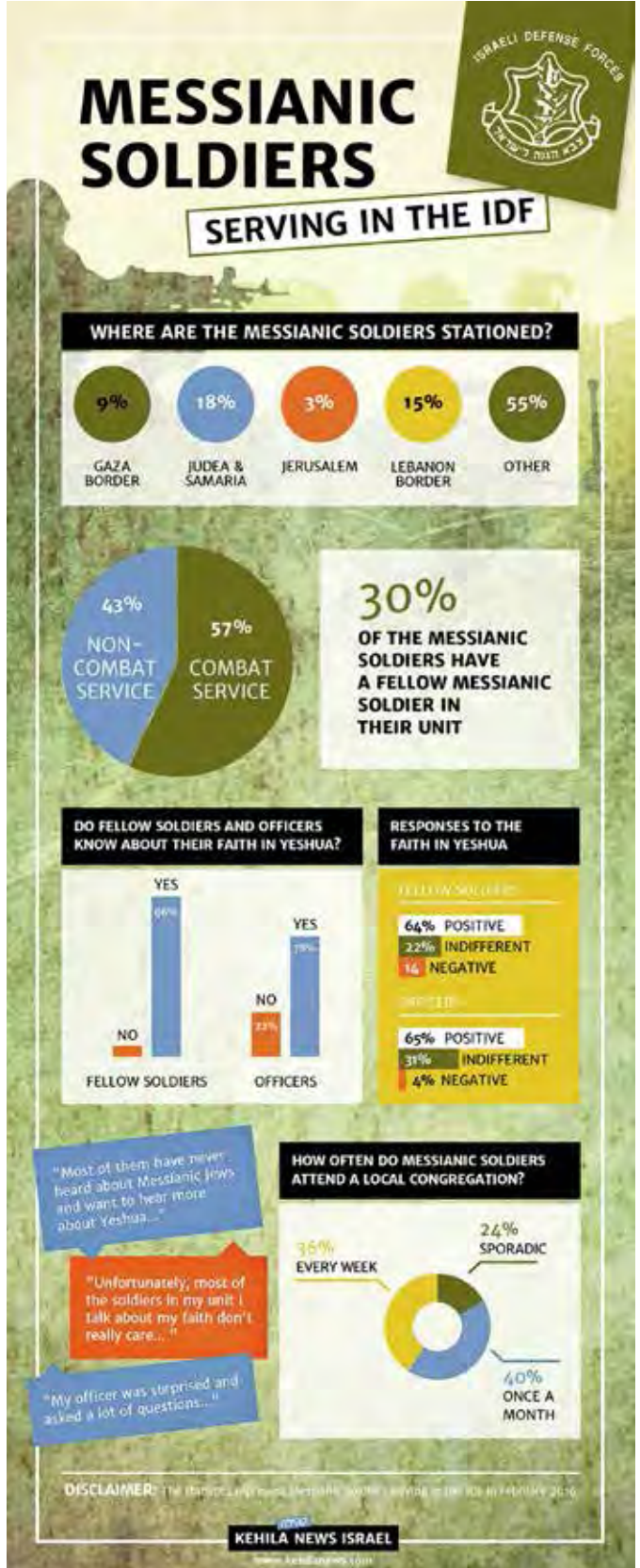
*“See the place
where they laid
Him.”
Mark 16:6*



Survey: Messianic Soldiers in IDF continued from p.21



Israeli citizens are not questioned on faith matters by the IDF: Recruits are drafted and evaluated for their potential skill. However, Messianic Jews wanting to immigrate to Israel can face difficulties because of their faith. Even during the years when Messianic soldiers sought equal opportunities, a 1988 poll published in *The Jerusalem Post* found that 78% of Israelis favored Messianic Jews immigrating to Israel under the Law of Return as long as they could prove Jewish lineage *and were willing to serve in the IDF*. For three decades, Messianic soldiers have demonstrated that they can and do serve their country, not in spite of but because of their faith in Yeshua. The result: more openness to accepting our service, and more willingness to hear our testimony about Israel's Messiah.



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JEWISH HUMOR, ETC.

Shrewd Shopping

All week long, Chaim works in the city; then on Fridays, he drives up to the bungalow in the Catskills for the weekend. Every Friday, he drives past a tomato farm by the side of the road with a sign saying: "Pick Your Own Tomatoes!" After passing by for a few weeks, he decides to pull over and have a look.

"How much are the tomatoes?" asks Chaim.

"It depends," says the farmer.

"How about that one there?" asks Chaim, pointing to a beautiful, large, ripe fruit hanging heavily on the vine.

"A beauty like that? Two dollars."

"How much for that one?" asks Chaim, pointing to a tiny, green tomato.

"It's not ripe."

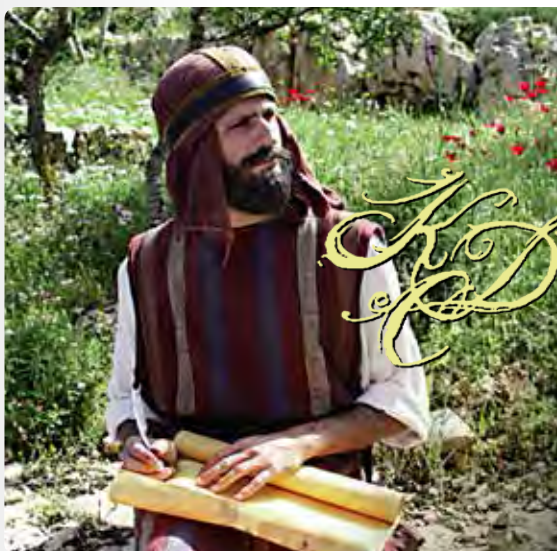
"But that's the one I want," says Chaim. "How much is it?"

"Five cents," shrugs the farmer.

"Deal!" says Chaim, shaking the farmer's hand. "I'll pick it up at the end of the summer." ★



A cheerful heart is good medicine —
Proverbs 17:22



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