



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

inside: Gog & Magog
vs. Armageddon p.4



The Sermon on the Mount by Carl Heinrich Bloch, 1877

Yeshua's Hanukkah Message

By Sam Nadler / WordOfMessiah.org

The only mention of Hanukkah in the Bible: *"Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the Temple, in Solomon's porch"* (John 10:22–23). Hanukkah commemorates events that took place during the inter-Testamental period, that gap between the Old and New Testaments. (See [December 2016 Levitt Letter, p. 24](#))

During the festival of Hanukkah that year, Yeshua was teaching in Jerusalem in the Temple in the "portico of Solomon." According to Flavius Josephus, first-century Jewish historian, this was the eastern section of the walkway that surrounded the outer court of Herod's Temple. It served as a shelter from the heat of summer and from the cold rain of winter. As people were always present for worship in this part of the Temple, Yeshua used this area for informal teaching and

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REMEMBER:

**Hanukkah begins at sunset Tuesday, December 12th
and ends at sunset Wednesday, December 20th**

Holocaust Hanukkah Miracle

By Rabbi Shimon
Apsidorf / Aish.com



December 25, 1938 was a day for celebration around the world. For many it was Christmas, for some it was Hanukkah. For the Geier family, it was the day they would escape the murderous clutches of the Germans. Shortly after *Kristallnacht*, the Geiers had received their passports and visas to leave for the United States.

The day was sunny but cold as their Holland-bound train pulled out of the Berlin station. The Geiers shared their second-class compartment with two stern-looking Germans. Arnold Geier, 12, and

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Yeshua's Hanukkah Message *continued from cover*

preaching. This setting forms the backdrop of Yeshua's "Hanukkah Message."

The Savior from God

Each Hanukkah, the Jews remember the victory God gave the Maccabees in throwing off the Syrians to restore true worship in the Temple. As each era brought new countries to rule over Israel, each Hanukkah the Jewish people



The Maccabees (1830-1842) by Wojciech Stattler, National Museum in Kraków

would desire Messiah to come and free them from yet another enemy. In Yeshua's day, this enemy was the Romans. When the Jews approached Yeshua in the Temple, notice the question they raised: *"How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly"* (John 10:24). This would be a timely question, for at Hanukkah people wondered, "Where is the Messiah, the greater Maccabee who can free us from our oppressors?"

Yeshua's answer did little to satisfy their fleshly expectations: *"I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's Name, these testify of Me. But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep"* (John 10:25-26).

Why didn't Yeshua just say, "Yes, I'm the Messiah?" Understanding the context in which Yeshua spoke helps us understand His answer. The people wanted a political warrior to lead them in throwing off the Romans. With a mere, "yes," Yeshua would have accommodated Himself to the people's narrow expectation that was heightened during this festival. Yet a "no" would have been untrue. So Yeshua wisely responded, *"I've already told you."* In both word and deed, He had already repeatedly answered their question (John 8:58; 10:25).

God provides the eternal salvation that we need, not merely the temporary solution that we desire. At this time of year, let us Believers ask ourselves, "Is my faith in God's Word, or in my own expectations and experiences?" As Job recognized, true faith sees beyond the immediate and trusts God's wisdom and care: *"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him"* (Job 13:15).

In following the Maccabees, short-term faith was required. They pointed to a Temple desecrated by an oppressive regime and said, "Let us defeat our enemies and rededicate the Temple!" However, Yeshua goes deeper. He points to us and states that we are the "desecrated temple," and that we need to be cleansed and rededicated in order to walk with our God. The problem, O Israel, is not found outside of you, but within you. Our need is not for a quick fix of short-term problems, but for an eternal relationship with God.

The Shepherd to God

Messiah's sheep have faith in Him: *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me"* (John 10:27). The Shepherd knows His sheep, and the sheep respond in obedience. Yeshua alone can relate us rightly to the eternal God. Through Yeshua, the fullness of God dwells within us. Messiah demands a greater loyalty than the Maccabees, because He provides greater security and eternal victory. ★





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Christmas Connection to Hanukkah

BY DAVID BRICKNER, Executive Director, Jews for Jesus

Jewish historian Flavius Josephus referred to Hanukkah as the Festival of Light, but light was historically connected to the Feast of Tabernacles. Four giant candelabras were lit in the Temple's Court of the Women. The blaze could be seen all around Jerusalem. How appropriate that Jesus chose this area of the Temple to declare: "I am the light of the world. He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Jesus, like the servant candle on the *Hanukkiyah*, lights our way and sends His Spirit to ignite us so that we can shine His light in a dark world. We do not have enough "oil" to live a life dedicated to God, but Jesus miraculously provides for us.

The Hanukkah miracle of preserving the Jewish people made Christ's birth (and

Christmas) possible, and Hanukkah's miracle of the lasting light foreshadows Jesus, whose advent Isaiah predicted would be "a light to the gentiles" (Isaiah 49:6).

The common theme: God with us ("Immanuel" Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23) links Hanukkah and Christmas. A traditional Hanukkah hymn declares to God:

*"Rock of Ages, let our song
 praise thy saving power;
 thou amidst the raging foes
 wast our sheltering tower;
 furious they assailed us
 but thine arm availed us;
 and thy word broke their sword
 when our own strength failed us."*

Jesus—Immanuel—the Hope of Hanukkah and the Christ of Christmas. ✨

Gog & Magog vs. Armageddon

Tony Derrick, M.Div.
Zola Tours Leader
ZLM Consulting Theologian



Detail of *Destruction* from *The Course of Empire* (1836) by Thomas Cole, New-York Historical Society

This month we focus on the last great battles in history: Armageddon and Gog & Magog. I prefer to enter the New Year in the Kingdom. ***I'm ready!***

Please connect [last month's study](#) by reading Matthew 24 and 25, where Yeshua/Jesus indicated the timing of His coming. Each parable teaches how unprepared people will be when He returns, as in the "*days of Noah*" (Matt. 24:37) when God flooded the Earth, saving only Noah's family and pairs of animals. What a tragedy! Let's read Matthew 24:34, Yeshua's lesson about the Fig Tree: "*Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.*"

A good interpretation of "generation" is "Period of Grace." Yeshua/Jesus is teaching that God's grace will not end until all the signs have been fulfilled, and we know that grace will extend into the Tribulation because people will be saved. We find convincing evidence in Revelation 7 where John sees the 144,000 sealed from the tribes of Israel and a "*great multitude which no one could number*" from the Tribulation saying, "*Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!*"

The Battle of Gog & Magog

Before turning to Armageddon, let's look at the less mentioned battle of Gog and Magog. Armageddon gets the headlines, but the Gog & Magog battle is significant.

How can we Biblically determine the difference between Gog & Magog and Armageddon? Gog can be identified as a "prince" of Magog. Ezekiel 38:2 tells us, "*Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him.*"

Genesis 10:2 records a connection with the sons of Japheth (Noah's sons were Shem, Ham, and Japheth): "*The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.*" Ezekiel 38:15 notes the location of this army: "*Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army.*"

Allies of Magog will be Persia/Iran (including Iraq), Cush (Ham's 1st son, modern Sudan), Put (Ham's 3rd son, Libya), and Gomer. American theologian Dr. Charles Ryrie (1925–2016) placed Gomer in eastern Turkey and Ukraine, and Togamah (Gomer's son) in the area of Turkey bordering Syria. These armies will be decimated on the mountains of Israel, and their weapons will burn for seven years!

"... and I will turn you around and lead you on, bringing you up from

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the far north... You shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples who are with you; I will give you to the birds of prey of every sort and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Then those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and set on fire and burn the weapons... and they will make fires with them for seven years." (Ezekiel 39:2, 4, 9)

Revelation 20:7–8 also mentions Gog and Magog: *"Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea."*

This gathering occurs just prior to the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11–15) as a last ditch effort by Satan to destroy Jerusalem. Is this the same Gog and Magog of Ezekiel 38? Opinions vary, and I'll let you decide as you study the Scriptures. Considering all the nuances of End Time events can get complicated.

In Revelation 16:16, we read, *"And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon."* The Hebrew text reads "Har Megiddo" ("Har" meaning hill or mountain) — overlooking the Plain of Esdraelon (Valley of Jezreel in Hebrew). Satan knows Messiah is coming soon, and he is busy convincing the world powers to join him. The world powers think his alliance is about political clout, but Satan has other plans: to stop Messiah from planting His feet on the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4).

Since the days of Nebuchadnezzar, this valley has seen Persians, Turks, Crusaders, and the great (in his mind) Napoleon, who reportedly said while standing on the hill of Megiddo, "All the armies of the world could maneuver their forces on this vast plain." Did Napoleon know Bible prophecy? Regardless, he knew battle strategy!



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How does Armageddon compare with Gog & Magog?

1. Gog's allies are identified as areas from the north of Israel. In contrast, the armies of Armageddon involve all the nations of the world: *"For they are spirits of demons ... which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."* (Revelation 16:14)
2. Gog (the "prince") is the head of the armies of Magog (Ezekiel 38:2). In contrast, the beast heads the great army in Armageddon: *"And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army."* (Revelation 19:19)
3. Gog is defeated by unusual events in nature: *"And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone"* (Ezekiel 38:22). In Armageddon, defeat comes from the mouth of the Lord: *"Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations... He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."* (Revelation 19:15)
4. The Lord calls for assistance in the judgment on Gog: *"I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains" says the Lord God. 'Every man's sword will be against his brother'"* (Ezekiel 38:21). In Armageddon, He alone is viewed as treading the winepress: *"I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger; and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes."* (Isaiah 63:3)

Mark it down. The God of the universe is in control now and forevermore! ★

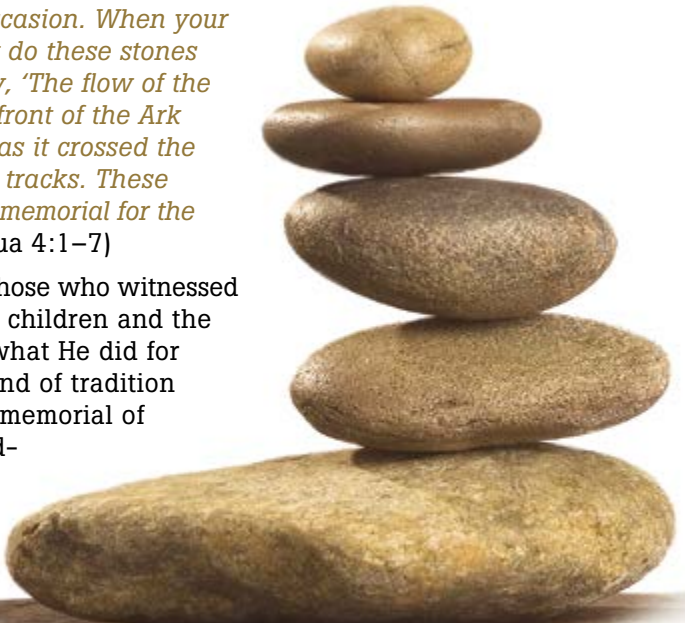


I love studying traditions, particularly the ones that Jewish families keep. One of my all-time favorite Scriptures is found in Joshua. When the Israelites finally crossed over the Jordan River and into the Promised Land, God spoke to Joshua: "Select twelve men from the people, a man from each tribe, and tell them, 'From right here, in the middle of the Jordan where the feet of the priests stood on dry ground, take twelve stones. Carry them across with you and set them down in the place where you camp tonight.'"

They did as God commanded, and then set up a stone monument on the western bank of the Jordan. *"Each of you heft a stone to your shoulder, a stone for each of the tribes of the children of Israel, to mark the occasion. When your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean to you?' you'll say, 'The flow of the Jordan was stopped in front of the Ark of the Covenant of God as it crossed the Jordan — stopped in its tracks. These stones are a permanent memorial for the people of Israel.'" (Joshua 4:1–7)*

I love that God wanted those who witnessed this miracle to tell their children and the following generations what He did for them. Now that's the kind of tradition I want in my home — a memorial of sorts, a physical reminder of what God has done for us, for the life of our family.

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Imagine little Israelite children playing in the Jordan and one asking, “Mother, what’s that big pile of rocks for?” I can see the mother cuddling her child on her lap and relating the amazing story of how God swept away the mighty waters, and the whole nation of Israel walked across without getting wet. Every time they came to that spot, some child probably asked, “Mommy, tell me about those rocks again, please!”

Recall God’s Miracles

A tradition in which you verbally recall God’s power and miracles would be worth keeping. The weekly *Shabbat* dinner begins with lighting candles to celebrate God’s first creation: light. Blessing the children comes next. Starting with the oldest, the parents put their hands on the child’s head and bless the child. For sons and daughters, the final part of the blessing is:

May God Bless you and guard you. May the light of God shine upon you, and may God be gracious to you. May the presence of God be with you and give you peace.

Parents speak this beautiful *Shabbat* blessing every Friday night in the weekly tradition of blessing their children. Your family tradition of eating Christmas Chex Mix while watching *White Christmas* may seem trivial in comparison. However, my point is that we need to balance the fun, we-do-this-every-year activities with some symbolic celebrations of what God’s power has done in our lives.

Perhaps certain Christmas tree ornaments remind you of times when God has interceded or blessed you. For example: “Our First Year” or “Baby’s First Christmas” ornaments. When you hang those particular ornaments, take a few moments to verbally recall how God worked to bring the two of you together. Share with your child on those occasions what a miracle it was to have him or her come into your life. What a blessing, as you hang those memorable ornaments, to share with your family those times of God’s intercessions and miracles.

Psalm 34:8 tells us to *“taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him.”* This Scripture reminds us — in this season when we tend to gorge ourselves on turkey, stuffing, and pies — that the Lord’s goodness in our lives makes it possible for us to feast and enjoy special times with our loved ones.

Remember God’s Faithfulness

This Hanukkah and Christmas season, may you indeed *“taste and see that the LORD is good.”* As you keep established traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation and instill new ones, may they be beautiful reminders of God’s goodness and faithfulness.

Have a blessed Christmas and *Chag Urim Sameach* — a happy Festival of Lights! ★

Dry Bones



Simchat Torah: Rejoicing in God's Word

Our Man in Haifa
Eitan Shishkoff
and wife Connie



*"Turn it and turn it, for everything is in it.
Reflect on it and grow old and gray with it.
Don't turn from it, for nothing is better than it."*

The above quote from the traditional Jewish guide *Pirkei Avot* (Ethics of the Fathers) poetically captures the wonder of God's Word. We can read it and read it, and read it again. And still, added layers and messages reach us through God's personal communiqué to us — no matter how many times we reach the last page.

One of my favorite celebrations occurs on the final day of *Sukkot* (Feast of Tabernacles). It's called *Simchat Torah* (Joy of Torah). During this festive annual event, Torah scrolls are removed from their cabinet at the front of the synagogue and danced through the congregation, which rejoices that God has bestowed His eternal, saving Word upon us. At this time of year, the Torah reading cycle arrives at the end of Deuteronomy and swings back around to the beginning of Genesis.

The Gift of God Speaking

What a special day! Think of it — a day that highlights the gift of God speaking to His people. As a New Covenant synagogue, our congregation also completes the cycle of reading from Genesis to Revelation. We pause to consider the miracle of having a personal message from the Lord of Life — eternity's truth brought into time ... and it's available 24/7, 365!

After the dancing parade of scrolls, we open them. One is opened to the last chapter of Deuteronomy, at the end of the Torah, and the other is opened to the first chapter of the Bible, Genesis. The Jewish people have been reading God's Word on scrolls for thousands of years. Moses would have used scrolls in his Egyptian education. Though we have no record of Moses writing the Torah on a scroll and carrying it through the desert, we have evidence of the Torah — the Five Books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) — in written form dating from



photo: Eitan Shishkoff



photo: Eitan Shishkoff

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at least the 7th century B.C., thus creating a tangible connection with the history of my people.

We can hear Ezra reading the Torah (instruction) of God before all the people (Nehemiah 8:5–8). We can identify with Josiah mourning when the Book of the Law was rediscovered and he heard God’s Words read again (2 Chronicles 34:14–21). We imagine the day when Yeshua was handed the scroll in the Nazareth synagogue and declared Isaiah’s prophecy about His Messiahship fulfilled (Luke 4:16–21).

Likewise, when our congregation’s children, youth, young families, and grandparents all rejoice together — carrying the Torah scrolls through the assembly — my heart swells with pleasure that God’s truth is being carried from generation to generation.

It’s been special for me to bring you these reports from Haifa and the Galilee. I’ll be on a modified sabbatical during 2018, so this is my last column for a while. Thanks for your faithful readership — and more than that — for your earnest prayers. —Eitan ★



Holocaust Hanukkah Miracle *continued from cover sidebar*

his sister, 15, sat quietly with their parents. In a whisper, Arnold overheard his mother reassure his father that God would forgive him for not lighting the menorah that night. Mr. Geier — a cantor and devout Jew — had packed a small menorah and some candles.

“Not long after darkness,” recalls Arnold, “the train slowed and puffed its way into a special railway station at the German-Dutch border. We braced ourselves for our final encounter with the German police, Nazis, and Gestapo. Just a few more miles and our old lives would be behind us.”

The train sat in the station and the Geiers watched as the border police and Gestapo carefully compared lists and prepared to check everyone’s passports and papers.

“Finally, small groups of officers boarded the train to begin their inspection. Papa looked tense and broke out in a sweat. I was afraid. Suddenly, without any warning, all the lights in the station and on the train went out. A number of people lit matches for light, and the glow on their faces was an eerie sight. I felt like screaming.”

In the confusion, Mr. Geier stood up, managed to find his overcoat, and pulled

eight small candles out of his coat pocket. He struck a match and lit one. Using that candle, he warmed the bottoms of the other candles and lined up all eight candles on the window sill of the compartment. He quietly recited the Hanukkah blessings and lit the candles.

“For the first time in a long time, I saw a smile appear on Papa’s face. Then someone shouted, ‘There’s light over there!’ The border police and the Gestapo came to our compartment and used the light of the candles to conduct their checking of passports and papers. One of the officers commended Papa on his resourcefulness for thinking ahead and packing ‘travel candles.’

“About a half hour passed and then, as suddenly as they had gone off, the lights flickered on again. The officers thanked Papa and left our compartment to finish their work throughout the train.

“‘Remember this moment,’ Papa said to me, ‘like in the time of the Maccabees, a great miracle happened here.’”

God is still a miracle-performing God! *“For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways”* (Psalm 91:11). —Tony ★



On Giving

Classic Zola
from 1982
35 years ago



According to Maimonides (medieval Jewish rabbinical scholar and philosopher), there are eight levels of giving, each higher than the last.

- Giving grudgingly, reluctantly, or with regret;
- Giving less than one should, but with grace;
- Giving what one should, but only after being asked;
- Giving before one is asked;
- Giving without knowing who will receive it, although the recipient knows the identity of the giver;
- Giving without making known one's identity;
- Giving so that neither giver nor receiver knows the identity of the other;
- Helping another become self-supporting, by means of a gift, a loan, or by finding employment for the one in need.

HANUKKAH PRAYER

(from the *New Union Prayer Book*)

With grateful hearts we remember Your protection, when tyrants sought to destroy Your people and to uproot the religion of Israel. We take pride in the valor of the Maccabees,

their faith in You, and their devotion to Your Law that inspired them to deeds of heroism. We commemorate the rededication of Your sanctuary, the consecration of its altar to Your worship, and we celebrate the rekindling of the eternal light whose rays shone forth out of the encircling darkness as the symbol of Your presence and the beacon light of Your truth for all the world.

Be with us now, with us and our children. Make us strong to do Your will. Help us to understand and proclaim the truth: that not by might and not by power but by Your spirit alone can we prevail. Grant to each person and every nation the blessings of liberty, justice, and peace. Let injustice and oppression cease, and hatred, cruelty, and wrong pass away so that all human beings may unite to worship You in love and devotion.

Bless, O Lord, the Hanukkah lights, that they may shed their radiance into our homes and our lives. May they kindle within us the flame of faith and zeal, that like the Maccabees of old, we may battle bravely for Your cause. Then shall we be worthy of Your love and Your blessing, O LORD, our Shield and our Protector. Amen. ★



"If God loves a cheerful giver, why are you supposed to give 'til it hurts?"



Keeping the Israel Connection

BY CHARLES GARDNER / IsraelToday.co.il

I love Christmas, partly because it draws my faith back to its roots in Israel. Tragically, many in the Western Church seem to divorce themselves, for the rest of the year, from the Jewish state, as if it were unrelated to the ongoing story of the Church.

But there is no getting away from the Messiah's birth [whatever time of year it occurred] being linked inextricably with Bethlehem and Jerusalem, as carols clearly reflect: *Once in royal David's city, O little town of Bethlehem; O come, O come, Emmanuel... shall come to thee O Israel.* And in the First Nowell ("Noel," an archaic word for "Christmas"), the chorus keeps repeating the line "*born is the King of Israel!*"

The Bible clearly teaches that the Messiah will come first as the "suffering servant" (Isaiah 53) and then, in the fullness of time, as the King of kings and Lord of lords, ruling and reigning from Jerusalem as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Revelation 5:5) after finally defeating God's enemies on the mountains of Israel.

As with His first coming, the focus returns to Israel for His second advent. Shouldn't we Christians more adequately prepare ourselves for this great event by re-aligning our hearts with the hopes and aspirations of God's Chosen People? We are in this together.

The anti-Semitic hatred currently shown by Islamic State and related terrorist groups (and in past generations through Haman,

Hitler, and others) is directed at those who look to the God of Israel: first the Jews, then the Christians. Encouraged by growing co-operation among God's children, we anticipate that more will come to realize that the child born to a virgin (Isaiah 7:14) is the true Messiah — *Emmanuel* (God with us) — who fulfilled all the Jewish Scriptures. It's an awesome truth. Yeshua is the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6) promised first to the Jews and also to the gentiles (Romans 1:16).

When Jews read Isaiah 53 (written around 700 B.C.) and realize that the description of the Servant of the Lord killed as atonement for our sins sounds like Jesus, they ask, "Why don't the rabbis teach this?"

Just a few chapters later, Isaiah wrote, "Arise, shine, for your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. Behold, darkness covers the Earth and thick darkness is over the people; but the LORD rises upon you and His glory will be seen upon you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn" (Isaiah 60:1–3).

Today we rejoice that increasing numbers of Israelis, along with Jews across the diaspora, are putting their trust in Yeshua who, at Christmastime, came to dwell (or tabernacle) among us (John 1:14).

Have a happy Hanukkah and a blessed Christmas! ★



Called Together — *Jew & Gentile, One in Messiah* DVD

Gentile Christians are recognizing Jewish believers in Jesus/Yeshua as the natural olive branch of Romans 11. The Lord calls us together to bring the Messiah especially to the lost sheep of Israel.

Studio hosts David and Kirsten Hart present eight programs of Bible teaching that feature Eitan Shishkoff joining a host of guests in Israel. Guest analyst Dr. Jeffrey Seif applies the lessons to our lives.



Ask the Chaplain

Dr. Todd Baker
Zola Levitt Ministries
Staff Theologian



Q. Does 1 Corinthians 15:29 teach baptism for the dead? “Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them?”

A. Whenever you come across a difficult passage like 1 Corinthians 15:29, a sure rule is to compare it with other passages in order to clarify its meaning. **When compared with other Scripture passages, the Corinthian passage cannot be interpreted to mean that a dead person can be saved through any proxy baptism by the living** (as the Mormon Church falsely teaches and practices) or that we should baptize the dead.

Scripture repeatedly teaches that baptism is not a means for salvation, since we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone and apart from our works:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith... it is the gift of God, not of works...” (Ephesians 2:8–9)

“... man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ ...” (Galatians 2:16)

“... not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us...” (Titus 3:5)

Two possible conditions may have given rise to Paul’s words to the Corinthians.

1. In Paul’s time, living Believers were coming to faith in Christ and were being baptized because they were drawn to the faith by the example and faith of other Believers who subsequently died. Paul says that if they believe that there is no resurrection of the dead or life after death, what is the point of following in baptism those who died?

2. Paul had already indicated existing heretical teachings among the Corinthians (11:19, their behavior at the Lord’s Supper). Now he points out another disagreement and uses it against those who were denying the Resurrection: Why baptize the dead if they will not be raised from death? Paul shows the absurdity of their actions in the face of their claims.

The practice of baptism for the dead was a heresy plaguing the Corinthian church. The fact it is mentioned only once (in 1 Corinthians 15:29) excludes it from being considered a normal activity that the Apostles approved or even practiced. Proxy baptism or baptizing the dead is mentioned nowhere else in the New Testament, and none of the Apostles practiced it or mentioned it in their writings. It was, however, practiced by heretics in the early second century of the Church. ★

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Cafés & Car Rentals

Dr. Todd Baker
ZLM Staff Theologian
TJF Team Leader



Fellow **To The Jew First** ambassador August Rosado and I met **Yafit**, a young Israeli woman with a sweet disposition, at the airport's rental car counter. I felt the *Ruach HaKodesh* (the Holy Spirit) telling me that she was open to hearing about what Yeshua did for her salvation. August and I shared some of the Messianic prophecies from the Hebrew Bible and then showed Yafit that Yeshua,

the Jewish Messiah, had fulfilled them. She was extremely attentive to what we shared from God's Word. We gave her a complete Jewish Bible and some prophecies and fulfillments pamphlets to encourage her study. Yafit expressed sincere gratitude to our TJF outreach team for returning these spiritual riches to the Chosen People, who originally gave them to the world from the God of Israel's bountiful hand.

We try to stop by Mount Hermon each trip to interact with Israel Defense Forces (IDF) there. On this visit, we ministered to an IDF soldier and also to some Druze Arabs work-



ing there. At the local Café Café, our waitress **Ella** listened courteously but distantly as we made our case for Yeshua as the Hebrew Bible's Messiah. She initially declined our offer of a complete Bible (with both Testaments) in Hebrew, but then turned 180° and said that she would like a Bible. As she explained, reason showed her the human need for the Word of God. We plan to follow up with Ella in Kiryat Shmona during the spring Gospel outreach to Israel.



August and I concluded our successful ministry in the beautiful Galilee and decided to head for Jerusalem. Before we left, we both felt led by the Holy Spirit to thank the Ron Beach Hotel's food manager, **Israel**, for his thoughtful service at each breakfast and dinner, when he prepared us dishes that aren't included on the buffet menu. When we told Israel that we wanted to give him the gift of God's Word in Hebrew so that he could read and learn about Yeshua the Messiah to find hope and salvation in Him, Israel was visibly touched and accepted our evangelical gesture without hesitation. Our ministry in Jerusalem proved equally fruitful. ★

Surviving Equifax

Wise as a Serpent
by **Mark Levitt**
ZLM Director



Thieves recently infiltrated Equifax databases and stole personal credit information for 60% of U.S. adults — names, birthdates, social security numbers, addresses, etc. of as many as 143 million Americans. Reviewing dozens of Equifax breach articles led me to commend the most helpful two:

1. **[“Everything You Need to Know to Survive the Equifax Data Theft,”](#)** by Dave Lieber of *The Dallas Morning News*.
2. **[“Two-Factor, Explained,”](#)** by Wilson Rothman, a *Wall Street Journal* tech editor.

Clicking on “Am I Impacted?” at equifaxsecurity2017.com lets consumers enter a last name and the last six digits of a Social Security number. You would prefer not to get this response: “... we believe that your personal information may have been impacted by this incident.” Despite the outcome, Lieber advises against enrolling in Equifax’s [Dis]TrustedID Premier program.

Lieber suggests three actions for guarding against consequences of the recent Equifax breach.

1. **Do nothing** beyond regularly inspecting bank and credit card statements for suspicious activity and reporting it immediately.
2. **Freeze your credit** with all three (3) bureaus online, by telephone, or in writing for both spouses. A freeze lasts until you cancel it altogether or temporarily “thaw” it and involves fees of ~\$11 per person per bureau.

Equifax, 800-685-1111

freeze.equifax.com

Equifax Security Freeze, P.O. Box 105788, Atlanta, GA 30348

Experian, 888-397-3742

experian.com/freeze/center.html

Experian Security Freeze, P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013

TransUnion, 888-909-8872

transunion.com/securityfreeze

TransUnion LLC, P.O. Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016

3. **Settle for the middle ground: put a fraud alert on your identity** with any one (1) of the three bureaus. With fraud alerts, whoever pulls your credit report is supposed to verify your consent. Fraud alerts are free, but they last only 90 days, so mark your calendar to regularly reinstate.

Regarding checking your credit report, Lieber suggests going to AnnualCreditReport.com, which allows you to check your credit report from each of the three bureaus for free every 12 months. (To cover the year, check a different bureau every four months.) Look for strange accounts or mistakes.



Strongly consider using a two-factor authentication, which requires an extra step after you log in to a website or app to guard against fraudsters; the second step authenticates your identity. That safety measure could involve entering a six-digit code or tapping a pop-up on your cell phone. Mr. Rothman explains: With two factors, hackers need both your password and access to your phone (or to another “second factor,” such as your email) to break in. Every online service worth its salt has a second-step option in its settings. Search Google for “two-factor authentication” plus the company’s website or the app’s name.

Being wise as a serpent these days is increasingly complex, but it’s less challenging for us who hone our minds with regular Bible reading. Kindly share this article with anyone less informed than you. ★

ZLM Bulletin Board



#Yes, I Can!

Enjoy [this video](#) of remarkable athletes, musicians, dancers, competitors who otherwise carry the label “disabled,” lacking arms, legs, stature. Did God “short” us by blessing

us too much? See what happens for those who make the most of their lot in life. If only God has blessed us with the attributes and mindsets of these anointed enthusiasts.



4 Singers ...

for the price of one.

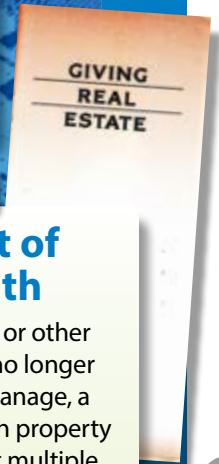
Try starting your day with a moving barbershop multitrack, multimedia experience. Vance Perry, a one-man barbershop quartet(!), sings “How Great Thou Art” back-dropped by inspirational photos and Biblical art that are certain to raise your spirits again and again. See it [HERE](#), or watch “[It Is Well With My Soul](#)”.



FREE ITEM

Pamphlet of the Month

If you own a home or other property that you no longer wish to live in or manage, a charitable gift of such property can efficiently meet multiple goals. The 20-page pamphlet **Giving Real Estate** addresses topics that include: 1) property that has changed in value, 2) making a gift while retaining use of the property, and 3) providing income from a contribution. Its Technical Advisory Section touches upon 1) real estate held long-term, 2) depreciated real estate, 3) limits on the income-tax charitable deduction, and 4) special gift opportunities with personal residences and farms. To receive this booklet at no charge, email us at staff@levitt.com or write to our P.O. Box.



Indigenous Peoples' Day

America's recent movement to bid *arrivederci* to Christopher Columbus Day includes Los Angeles, San Francisco, Austin, Seattle, and Denver. The Redhawk Native American Arts Council sponsors Re-Thinking Columbus Day events and espouses celebrating those who survived Columbus. **Now imagine who could legitimately march in Indigenous Peoples' Day parades in Israel?** If limited to those whose fossils surface at archaeological digs, then the Johnny-come-lately “Palestinians” would need to watch from the sidelines, *nu?* (“nu,” pronounced “noo,” is a Yiddish expression of agreement.)

“Come Home!”

Zola
Tours to
Israel



See [page 36](#)
for details



The Word Made Flesh

by **John Parsons**
Hebrew for Christians



הִנֵּה הָעַלְמָה הָרָה וְיֹלְדֶת בֵּן וְקָרָאת שְׁמוֹ עִמָּנוּ אֵל

“Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” – Isa. 7:14

הֵ	נָה	הָ	עַלְ	מָה	הָ	רָה	וְ	יֹלְ	דֶת	בֵּן	וְ	קָ	רָ	אֵת	שְׁ	מוֹ	עִ	מָ	נוּ	אֵל	
(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(1)
hi-neh	ha-al-mah	ha-rah	ve-yo-le-det	ben	ve-ka-raht	she-mo	im-ma-nu	El													
behold!	the virgin	will	and shall	a Son	and she	His name	“God with us”														
		conceive	bear		shall call																

At Sinai, the voice of God spoke from the midst of the fire (Deut. 4:33), an event that foreshadowed the advent of the King and Lawgiver Himself, when the Eternal Word would become flesh and dwell with us (Phil. 2:6–7; John 1:1, 14). Any theology that regards God as entirely transcendent (i.e., God is beyond any analogy with the finite) will have a problem with divine immanence (i.e., God is inherent within the finite), since the highness, holiness, and perfection of God will make Him seem distant, outside of us, and unknown. Incarnational theology, on the other hand, manifests the nearness of God to disclose the divine empathy. Indeed, the Lord became “Immanuel” (“God with us”) to share our mortal condition, to know our pain, and to experience what it means to be wounded by sin, abandoned, alienated. The “Eternal made flesh” bridges the gap between the realm of the infinitely transcendent One and the finite world of people lost within their sinful frailty. We therefore celebrate God’s giving the Torah both at Sinai and especially giving the “Living Torah” at Bethlehem with the birth of Messiah. We rejoice that God is indeed the King and Ruler over all, but we further affirm that God’s authority and rule extends to all worlds—including the realm of our finitude and need.

The goal of Sinai was revealing the Sanctuary. The two tablets of the law (the Ten Commandments) were stored inside the Ark of the Covenant, a sacred box placed in the Holy of Holies, the innermost chamber of the Tabernacle. The Ark served as *kisei ha-kavod*, the Throne of Glory itself. Upon the cover (crown, *kapporet*) of the Ark, two cherubic figures (the Talmud says a boy and a girl) faced one another. Each cherub’s wings spread heavenward as their eyes gazed on the cover (Exod. 25:18, 20). It was here that God’s voice was heard during the Yom Kippur service, when sacrificial blood was sprinkled on the crown to symbolize the atonement of sin secured through Messiah, the Word that became flesh for us. In the very heart of the Sanctuary, then, we see the Word of God and the sacrificial blood.

God Almighty was clothed with human skin: our flesh, our bones. The miracle of the Incarnation is a paradox wherein the infinite meets the finite in mystery of the Divine Presence. Here God “touches a leper” (Matt. 8:3), eats with sinners and prostitutes, sheds human tears, and suffers headache like all men... and dies for our sins.

The Creator of the cosmos “emptied Himself” to come in the form of a lowly servant—disguised to the eyes of the proud and hardhearted, but is revealed as High Priest to those who are genuinely broken and in profound need. ★



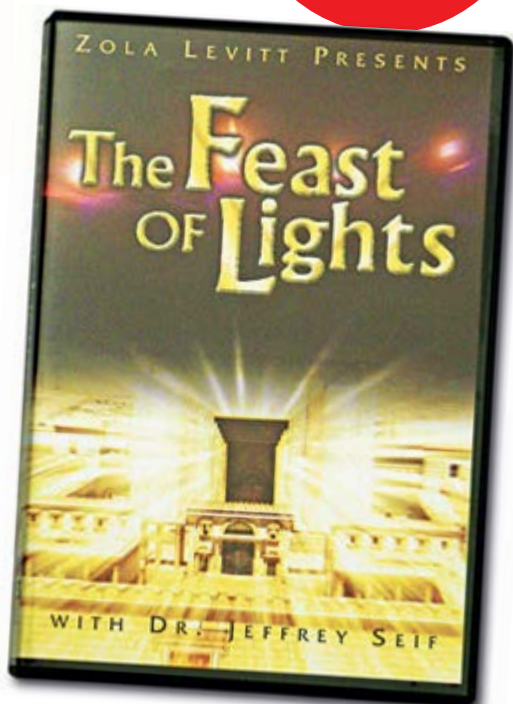
Courtesy: The Jerusalem Connection

The Feast of Lights

DVD Set

Three 30-minute
TV programs on one DVD

Since the dawn of time, forces of darkness have threatened the Jews with extinction. Yet, each time, God provided a leader who would shine the light of God's faithfulness. Hanukkah—the Jewish Feast of Lights—harks back to a time before Christ when an anti-Semitic dictator threatened to wipe out the Hebrews. But the Lord's deliverer arose (foreshadowing Yeshua, the Ultimate Deliverer), lit the lamp of hope, and saved Israel. In every generation, Jews have lit lamps in their homes to commemorate the victory and retell the story of the Feast of Lights.



The Story of Hanukkah

Dr. Jeffrey Seif explains the story of Hanukkah wherein Syrian dictator Antiochus Epiphanes overthrew Jerusalem and desecrated the Holy Temple. Although many have sought to destroy God's Chosen People, Jeff reassures us that "He who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." We look at harvesting olive oil and its importance to the Menorah in the Holy Place.



The Light of the World

Jesus told His disciples, "You are the light of the world." At a Messianic synagogue, Jeff explains the significance of light in celebrating Hanukkah as well as its prophetic image of our Messiah. Jeff interviews Rabbi Marty Waldman about the recent increase of Messianic Jews. Zola interviews Messianic Simcha Davidov.

The Feast of Dedication

Jeff explores the prophecy of Daniel as fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes' desecration, and the future abomination of desolation to be committed by the antiChrist. Discover the Feast of Dedication as observed by Jesus in the Bible, and a heartfelt look by Zola and Jean Rosenberg at the celebration of Hanukkah in the home today.

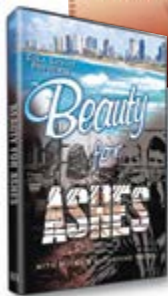
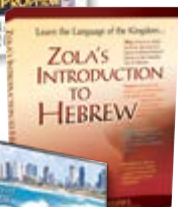
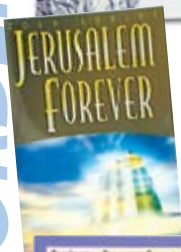
(Please see [cover article on Hanukkah.](#))



ORDER FORM

Zola's Classic Study Booklet Library

Qty.	Title	Price	Total
___	A Christian Love Story (p.26)	\$3	___
___	Glory! The Future of the Believers	\$3	___
___	How Can a Gentile Be Saved?	\$3	___
___	In My Father's House (pictured)	\$3	___
___	Israel, My Promised	\$3	___
___	The Miracle of Passover	\$3	___
___	The Promised Land (p.33)	\$3	___
___	The Second Coming	\$3	___
___	Seven Churches	\$3	___
___	The Seven Feasts of Israel	\$3	___
___	Spirit of Pentecost	\$3	___
___	Jerusalem Forever (pictured)	\$4	___
___	Mix or Match: ... 50 Classic Study Booklets (above)	\$49	___



Books

Qty.	Title	Price	Total
___	An Epic Love Story (Part of 50-book offer above)	\$3	___
___	The Beginning of The End	\$8	___
___	The Bible Jesus Read	\$10	___
___	Broken Branches: Has the Church Replaced Israel? (Zola on Replacement Theology) (pictured)	\$6	___
___	Coming: The End! Russia/Israel in Prophecy (pictured)	\$10	___
___	Genesis One	\$5	___
___	The Iranian Menace	\$8	___
___	In the Footsteps of the Rabbi	\$14	___
___	Israel's Right to the Land (p.34)	\$2	___
___	Jesus, the Jew's Jew	\$7	___
___	Once Through the New Testament	\$9	___
___	Signs of the End: Millennium	\$7	___
___	Our Hands are Stained with Blood	\$16	___
___	The Passover Haggadah (Messianic)	\$6	___
___	The Prophesied Messiah	\$8	___
___	Raptured	\$10	___
___	The Warrior King	\$12	___
___	Whose Land Is It?	\$6	___
___	Zola's Introduction to Hebrew (pictured)	\$39	___

Featured DVDs

Qty.	Title	Price	Total
___	Beauty for Ashes (pictured) ... (9 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$59	___
___	Best of Zola's Music Videos (2-DVDs)	\$49	___
___	Called Together New! (p.11) (8 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$49	___
___	Close Enc. w/ Yeshua (10 prog, 2-DVDs)	\$59	___
___	Ezekiel & MidEast 'Piece' (8 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$49	___
___	The Feast of Lights (p.17) (3 programs, 1-DVD)	\$19	___
___	Joseph: Dreamer/Redeemer (9 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$59	___
___	Journey of Restoration (10 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$59	___
___	Mine Eyes Have Seen (1-DVD)	\$19	___
___	The Seven Feasts of Israel (7 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$49	___
___	Times of the Signs (8 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$49	___
___	Whose Land Is It? (3 programs, 1-DVD)	\$19	___
___	Zion Forever (9 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$59	___

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 By phone call 24/7: 800-966-3377, or
 ZLM Dallas office: 214-696-8844, or
 print/tear out this 2-pg. form, fill out box at right, mail to ZLM, Box 12268 Dallas TX 75225



ORDER FORM continued

UNIQUE WITNESSING ITEMS!

Studies, Specialty, Etc.

Qty.	Item	Price	Total
___	2-flag Collar Pin (pictured).....	\$2	_____
___	Abraham to Jesus Genealogy Chart.....	\$10	_____
___	AHAVA Mineral Body Lotion 17 oz. (p.20).....	\$37 ⁵⁰	_____
___	AHAVA Mineral Foot Cream 3.4 oz. (p.20).....	\$22	_____
___	AHAVA Mineral Hand Cream 3.4 oz. (p.20).....	\$23	_____
___	Flag of Israel (3' x 5').....	\$10	_____
___	"Grafted-In" Gold Decal (1.2" x 3" hand-cut).....	\$2	_____
___	Half-shekel Key Chain.....	\$10	_____
___	Jewish Heritage Calendar (5778 / 2018).....	\$6	_____
___	Matzoh Postcards (pack of 12).....	\$8	_____
___	Messianic Roots Lapel Pin (pictured).....	\$10	_____
___	Messianic Grafted-In Sterling Necklace (p.36).....	\$39	_____
___	Pictorial Map of Jerusalem.....	\$12	_____
___	Pilgrim's Map of the Holy Land.....	\$6	_____
___	"Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem" Bumper Sticker.....	\$2	_____
___	The Prophesied Messiah Bookmark..... 2 for	\$1	_____
___	Institute of Jewish-Christian Studies (info only).....	no charge	_____



Teaching CDs by Zola

___	A Christian Love Story (p.26).....	CD	\$7	_____
___	Discovering Our Jewish Roots (pictured).....	(9 CDs)	\$39	_____
___	How Can A Gentile Be Saved?.....	CD	\$7	_____

Music CDs: Hear samples at levitt.com/music

___	A Pilgrim's Journey (pictured).....	(Zola's Music CD)	\$12	_____
___	Mine Eyes Have Seen: Zola's After-Christmas Musical.....		\$12	_____
___	The Works.....	(Zola's first 8 albums on 4 CDs)	\$49	_____
___	The Works II.....	(Zola's next 8 albums on 4 CDs)	\$49	_____

PLEASE SEND THIS ENTIRE 2-PAGE ORDER FORM—THANKS.

Please fill out area below and send the entire page.

Shipping & Handling Chart

up to \$15.99, add \$5
 \$16 to \$30.99, add \$7
 \$31 to \$60.99, add \$9
 \$61 to \$97.99, add \$10
 \$98 and over, FREE SHIPPING

For shipments outside the United States, please **DOUBLE** shipping. Please send U.S. funds.

(Please allow about 2-3 weeks for delivery.)

Any amount that exceeds the listed price is considered a tax-deductible gift to our ministry.

Subtotal _____
 Shipping (See left chart) _____
 UPS shipping (\$4 extra) _____
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 8.25% Tax (Texas only) _____
 Donation? _____
 Total _____

Name _____

(please print)

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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On what station/network do you primarily watch our programs? _____

Donor # _____ Phone No. (_____) _____

(see number above your name on mailing label)

My check is enclosed for \$ _____ or, Please charge \$ _____ to:

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Cardholder Signature: _____



AHAVA Mineral Skincare products:

New life for your skin—hands, feet, & 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.



AHAVA—Mineral Foot Cream (3.4 oz.)

This effective moisturizing cream softens and renews rough feet and soles. Powered by AHAVA's proprietary Osmoter™ and natural plant extracts, the rich formula of concentrated Dead Sea minerals helps to soothe, repair splits and cracks, and leaves feet smooth and hydrated. Avocado, Wheat Germ, Sweet Almond, and Jojoba oils smooth, soften, nourish, and comfort the feet. Aloe Vera soothes. Tea Tree Leaf oil contains antibacterial and antifungal properties. Salicylic acid helps renew skin.



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.





photo by
Shane Lin
(Flickr and
Wikimedia
Commons)

The Leica Freedom Train

BY GEORGE GILBERT / Aish.com

The Leica is the pioneer 35mm camera. A German product, it is precise, minimalist, and efficient. The family-owned, socially oriented firm that produced it during the Nazi era acted with uncommon grace, generosity, and modesty. E. Leitz, Inc., designer and manufacturer of Germany's most famous photographic product, saved the company's Jews.



Ernst Leitz II

Ernst Leitz II, the steely-eyed Protestant patriarch who headed the closely held firm as the Holocaust loomed across Europe, acted in such a way as to earn the title, "The Photography Industry's Schindler." As soon

as Adolf Hitler was named chancellor of Germany in 1933, Ernst Leitz II began receiving frantic calls from Jewish associates, asking for his help in getting them and their families out of the country. As Christians, Leitz and his family were immune to Nazi Germany's Nuremberg Laws that restricted the movement of Jews and limited their professional activities.

To help his Jewish workers and colleagues, Leitz quietly established what became known as the "Leica Freedom Train," a covert means of allowing Jews to leave Germany in the guise of Leitz employees being assigned overseas. Employees, retailers, family members, and friends of family members were "assigned" to Leitz sales offices in France, Britain, Hong Kong, and the United States.

Leitz's activities intensified after *Kristallnacht* (November 1938) during which synagogues and Jewish shops were burned throughout Germany. Before long, German "employees" were disembarking from the ocean liner *Bremen* in New York and making their way to the Leitz Manhattan office where executives quickly found them jobs in the photographic industry. Each new arrival wore around his or her neck the symbol of freedom—a new Leica.

The refugees were paid a stipend until they could find work.

Out of this migration came designers, repair technicians, salespeople, marketers, and writers for the photographic press. The "Leica Freedom Train" hit its height in 1938 and early 1939, delivering groups of refugees to New York every few weeks.

Then, with the invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, Germany closed its borders. By that time, hundreds of endangered Jews had escaped to America, thanks to the Leitzes' efforts.

How did Ernst Leitz II and his staff get away with it? E. Leitz, Inc. was an internationally recognized brand that reflected credit on the newly resurgent Reich. The company produced range finders and other optical systems for the German military. Also, the Nazi government desperately needed hard currency from abroad, and Leitz's single biggest market for optical goods was the United States.

Even so, members of the Leitz family and firm suffered for their good works. A top executive, Alfred Turk, was jailed for working to help Jews, and was freed only after the payment of a large bribe.

Leitz's daughter, Elsie Kuhn-Leitz, was imprisoned by the Gestapo after she was caught at the border helping Jewish women cross into Switzerland. She was eventually freed, but had endured rough treatment in the course of being questioned. She also fell under suspicion when she attempted to improve the living conditions of more than 700 Ukrainian slave laborers, all of them women, who had been assigned to work in the plant during the 1940s. After the war, Kuhn-Leitz received numerous honors for her humanitarian efforts, among them the Officier d'Honneur des Palms Academic from France in 1965 and the Aristide Briand Medal from the European Academy in the 1970s.

The Leitz family wanted no publicity. Only after the last member of the Nazi-era family died did its heroic efforts come to light. ★





Letters to ZLM

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

Which Judgment?

Dear ZLM,

I appreciated Mark's article on understanding and acting upon eternal values in the [October 2017 Levitt Letter](#).

However, Believers will not be standing before the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11–15). Rather, we will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, not for salvation but for assessment of our faithfulness to God in our lives and works (2 Corinthians 5:10). F.S. (FL)

Dear F.S. —

I stand corrected. My article failed to make the distinction between the Great White Throne and the Judgment Seat of Christ, which you have done succinctly.

I considered claiming this as a test for readers. It wasn't; but had

it been, many of you passed. The rest of us can use this reminder that our sins were nailed to the Cross, yet we must answer to Yeshua for our earthly actions on His behalf. — Mark

Dear F.S. —

I'll take partial blame for the mixing up of judgments to which Mark referred. I always read through the *Levitt Letter* before it goes to print, and I did make a note for correction, but I got sidetracked and neglected to follow through with our editor. No excuse! — Tony

"The Joy of the Lord is our Strength"

Dear ZLM,

The Harts seem very superficial. Former hosts were actually Jewish.

I'm sure they are fine entertainers, as they portray themselves to be, and I don't necessarily doubt their faith; they are just the wrong hosts for this program. — K.L.

Dear K.L. —

Please keep watching as they introduce a cornucopia of Jewish teaching from Israel, Messianic congregation leaders, Bible scholars, etc. Believe me when I say that their sincerity when the camera isn't rolling matches and surpasses. — Mark

Dear K.L. —

I love the reply by the late Gospel musician and Baptist minister Hovie Lister when an interviewer asked if he was in entertainment or ministry. He simply replied, yes ... next question! — Tony

(continued next page)





Fundraising

Dear ZLM,

I have been watching *Zola Levitt Presents* since the Zola-himself years and all the hosts that followed. I just love the program. I love the teachings, and I appreciate the Jewishness of the Gospel presented to the viewers.

But I am saddened by the way many denominations teach tithing—some as a Biblical “doctrine” for Christians. The issue, as I see it and from the New Testament’s message through Paul’s passionate letters to new Believers, is not to impose any law of money issues, other than of giving. Not tithing.

But the problem, I feel, is condemning Believers if they do not tithe—applying to Believers today the tithing laws tied to the Temple Period. My wife and I have received letters from churches telling us that we wouldn’t be considered for any role in the church unless we tithed, and provided proof that we did. Absolutely deplorable theology!

I have no problem with people who tithe; that is between them and God. Some ministers actually say that Believers are robbing God and in jeopardy of going to hell because they don’t tithe. They preach with anger.

After Pentecost, Paul’s letters

talk about accepting different levels of new Believers. Don’t judge someone by what they eat, how they dress, or by other such evaluations. Paul taught about loving one another and helping each other grow.

We are under the command to be givers. We have no Temple to bring our tithes to. If God sets up that system in the Kingdom, then we will. Sometimes I ask myself why ministers and churches don’t trust God to pay their salary or grow the congregation.

Anyway, this is why I love your television program. It instructs Jewish and gentile Believers in Christ to live and understand a walk with Christ through sound doctrine. I wish we had a local church like that. I sure could use the fellowship of like minds. — Mr. S. (WI)

Dear Mr. S. —

Zola was always the first to admit that he wasn’t a fundraiser. He found it uncomfortable to ask his readers and viewers, even when the ministry needed the funds to complete a project. He believed that God would provide if he stayed the course of his calling ... and God has. The principle of giving was taught in the Old Testament through tithing, but tithing was not carried forward to New Testament times. Paul taught the Corinthian church

(continued next page)

"let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. 9:7 — Mark

P.S. Zola addressed **tithing** in a ministry "[white paper](#)" and **giving** on [p. 10](#) of this newsletter.

A Jewish Perspective on Gentile Hosts

Dear ZLM,

Your TV program and TV personalities are outstanding, charming, and refreshing. Clothing is sharp; hair styles are up to date; linguistics on point. Adored your Jewish singing and guest rabbi teaching. What a nice contemporary show! Thank you, R.R.

Dear Readers —

These insightful comments, looking at R.R.'s last name, come from a Jewish viewer. This ministry's

anointed Bible teaching is now readier than ever to command the attention of younger generations, while carrying the same meaty substance for ZLMers who've been watching for decades — not to mention vying for eyeballs on the terribly competitive worldwide web.

Kudos to our TV producer, Ken Berg, for finding David and Kirsten, as well as recruiting our ever-growing stable of Messianic Jewish Bible experts who regularly serve as guest teachers. Please see my article "Ken Berg Presents" in the [August 2017 Levitt Letter, p. 14](#). — Mark

We appreciate Tony, Too!

Dear ZLM,

Tony's articles are very interesting and informative as well as a blessing. I look forward to them each issue. — L.D.M.

Dear Reader —

In the 1990s, Tony served as this ministry's shipping manager. He also moonlighted, delivering newspapers to put his son through college. Subsequently promoted to travel manager in 2000, Tony handled myriad details regarding our Holy Land tours. Meanwhile, he burned the proverbial midnight oil to earn a Master of Divinity degree. ZLM is blessed to have him on our team. Please see my article "Our Ministry's Abraham Lincoln" in the [March 2017 Levitt Letter, p. 14](#). — Mark ★



Dry Bones



High Schoolers Build Nano-Satellite

SCIENCE: BY VIVA SARAH PRESS (r) Israel21c.org



Duchifat-2 team members watch the launch in Florida

A nano-satellite built by Israeli high school students was launched to the International Space Station. Named for Israel's national bird, the Duchifat-2 (in English, Hoopoe-2) nano-satellite was one of 28 student-built nano-satellites sent into space. Israel's was the only QB50 nano-satellite constructed by high school students; the others were developed by college students.

More than 80 Israeli teenagers (in grades 9–12) from around the country gathered at Herzliya Science Center to help build the tiny 4-pound CubeSat satellite, a type of miniaturized satellite for space research.

Measuring just 8 x 4 x 4 inches, Duchifat-2 was launched aboard an Atlas V supply rocket from Florida's Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

The mini satellite is part of a larger project run by the European Union's QB50 thermosphere research program. Teams from 21 countries built the nano-satellites "to perform first-class science in the largely unexplored lower thermosphere."

A goal of the QB50 program is enabling space agencies to pursue on-site measurements in the lower thermosphere, always prevented by the high cost. It is hoped that a network of low-cost CubeSats will make this possible.

"Nano-satellites enable space engineering and space research at costs that are affordable for academia to assume a much more active role in the field," said Prof. Dan Blumberg, Ben-Gurion University's VP and Dean for Research & Development.

Duchifat-2 is meant to operate for about one year, sending signals from outer

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High Schoolers Build Nano-Satellite

(continued from p.25)

space to the Herzliya Science Center, where the students will analyze the incoming data.

Israeli Satellites

Israel has built itself an impressive reputation as a developer of the latest satellite technologies. The country holds prominence in the field of nano-satellites and micro-satellites. According to the Israel Space Agency (ISA), the country's engineers and scientists are considered world leaders in "miniaturizing the technology and developing small, light satellites with high resolution, remote sensing and communication capabilities" as well as specializing in "the development of technologies for miniature satellites and methods for launching them."

In 2014, Israel launched Duchifat-1, an experimental spacecraft developed and built at the Herzliya Science Center by secondary-school students. It is still in orbit. Duchifat-1 was the world's second high school student-built nano-satellite, following the NASA-sponsored TJ3Sat student satellite launched from the United States in 2013. The Duchifat-1 satellite is solar-powered and transmits real-time information via radio amateur packets from a low Earth orbit using automatic position reporting system (APRS) protocol.



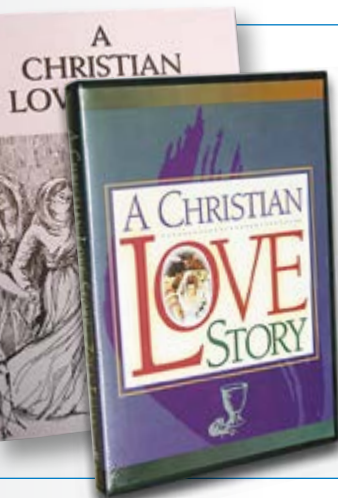
Photo: Dr. Meir Ariel

Duchifat-1, the first Israeli nano-satellite

Building the Duchifat-2 satellite, twice the size of its predecessor, again gave project participants the chance to take part in the R&D processes, analyses, simulations, tests, and even business development and public relations involved in building a satellite.

The students were advised by engineers from the ISA and Israel Aircraft Industries. They worked in teams — with each team responsible for a different technical specification of the satellite — and were given access to a clean room, electronics lab, and ground station.

See other Israeli students in action: [Jan 2015 Levitt Letter, p. 26.](#) ★



[A Christian Love Story](#) study booklet and CD

by Zola Levitt

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

Disease Resistance and Pigments



MEDICINE: BY WEIZMANN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE / Wis-Wander.Weizmann.ac.il

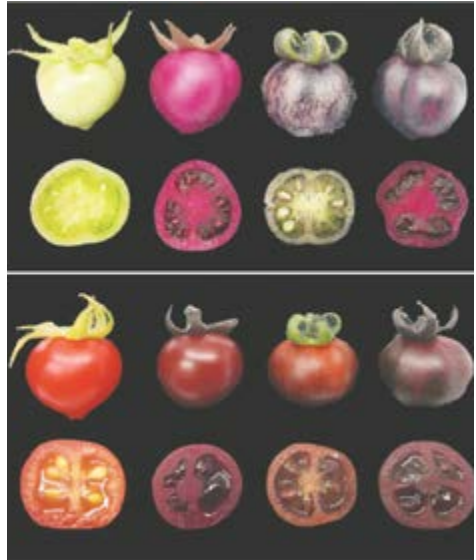
Color in the plant kingdom doesn't merely please the eye. Colored pigments attract pollinating insects, protect plants against disease, and confer health benefits that are used in the food and drug industries. A new study at the Weizmann Institute of Science opens the way to numerous potential uses of betalains, the highly nutritious red-violet and yellow pigments known for their antioxidant properties and common use as food dyes.

Betalains are made by cactus fruit, flowers (like bougainvillea), and certain edible plants — most notably, beets. **Betalains are relatively rare in nature, and until recently, their synthesis in plants was poorly understood.** Prof. Asaph Aharoni of Weizmann's Plant and Environmental Sciences Department and his team members used two betalain-producing plants — red beet (*Beta vulgaris*) and four o'clock flowers (*Mirabilis jalapa*) — in their analysis. Using next-generation RNA sequencing and other advanced technologies, the researchers identified a previously unknown gene involved in betalain synthesis and revealed which biochemical reactions plants use to convert the amino acid tyrosine into betalains.

To test their findings they genetically engineered yeast to produce betalains. Then they tackled the ultimate challenge: reproducing betalain synthesis in edible plants that do not normally make these pigments.

Success announced itself in living color. The researchers produced potatoes, tomatoes, and eggplants with red-violet flesh and skin. They also managed to control the exact location of betalain production, such as pigment production only in the fruit but not in the leaves or stem.

Using the same approach, the scientists caused white petunias to produce pale violet flowers, and tobacco plants to flower in hues varying from yellow to orange pink. They achieved a desired hue by causing the relevant genes to form different combinations during synthesis,



Unripe (top) and ripe (bottom) tomatoes. Regular tomatoes (far left) start out green and turn red when ripe. In contrast, genetically engineered tomatoes assume different shades of red-violet, depending on whether they produce betalains (second from left), pigments called anthocyanins (second from right) or betalains together with anthocyanins (far right)

making possible ornamental plants with colors that can be altered on demand.

But a change in color was not the only outcome. Healthy antioxidant activity was 60% higher in betalain-producing tomatoes than in average ones. "Our findings may be used to fortify a wide variety of crops with betalains to increase their nutritional value," says Aharoni.

The researchers also discovered that betalains protect plants against gray mold, *Botrytis cinerea*, which annually causes the loss of agricultural crops worth billions of dollars. The study showed that resistance to gray mold rose by a whopping 90% in plants engineered to make betalains.

Some of the new pigments may potentially prove more stable than naturally occurring betalains, possibly of major significance to the food industry where betalains are used as natural food dyes, for example, in strawberry yogurt. ★



When the British Captured the Holy Land



PART 2: BY AVIVA and SHMUEL BAR-AM (r) TimesOfIsrael.com

A number of historic sites related to Britain's 1917 conquest of Israel are located in the Negev (where it all began), and others are in Jerusalem. [Last month](#), we looked at the stories behind the Negev's sites; this month, we look at Jerusalem's.

In Jerusalem

1. Allenby Square: British-ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) victories in the Negev paved the way for an eventual takeover of Jerusalem on December 9, the eve of Hanukkah 1917. A monument in the center of Allenby Square reads: "Near this spot the Holy City was surrendered. ... Erected ... to those officers, NCOs, and men who fell in fighting for Jerusalem."

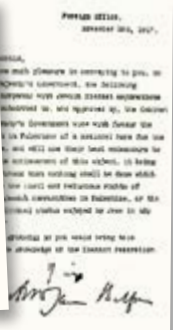
2. Citadel: On December 11, 1917, General Allenby, Commander-in-Chief of the British-ANZAC Egyptian Expeditionary Force, rode through the city. His procession along Jaffa Road was met with great fanfare and jubilation. Some even wept at the sight of the conquering heroes.

The Jews were ecstatic. After all, the Balfour Declaration had been ratified by Britain's Parliament on the very day that Commonwealth forces had conquered Be'er Sheva. And now, barely six weeks later and during the holiday of miracles, the Commander-in-Chief had actually entered the Holy City of Jerusalem. Unaware of what the future would bring, redemption seemed finally to be close at hand.



top: Allenby Square monument, present day
bottom: Allenby walks into Jerusalem, 1917

In *ANZACs, Empires and Israel's Restoration*, World War I enthusiast Kelvin Crombie writes that when Allenby reached the Old City walls, he dismounted, then humbly walked through the Jaffa Gate built by Suleiman the Magnificent in 1538. That way, he avoided the wide entrance that was cut through the walls in 1898 to allow Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany and an ostentatious entourage to pompously ride through.



Lord Arthur James Balfour and the Balfour Declaration

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Passing an honor guard of 110 troops from England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland on one side, and 50 ANZAC soldiers on the other, Allenby climbed the steps of the Jerusalem Citadel to proclaim martial law and freedom of worship for all faiths.

3. Beit Yehudayoff (Yehudayoff House): Located in Jerusalem’s Bukharim Quarter and built in 1905, *Beit Yehudayoff* was known as the “*Armon*” (“palace”). It was the most spectacular of Jerusalem’s dwellings, and it hosted many an extravagant reception. Beautiful pillars topped with Corinthian capitals and at least one of a row of stone goblets on the roof still stand. According to tradition, the *Armon* was also called *Beit HaMashiach* (House of the Messiah), as it was meant to house the Messiah when He comes to Jerusalem.

During World War I, the Turks commandeered the building, which the British repossessed after they conquered Jerusalem. Jewish soldiers in the British army held a Seder at the *Armon* on Passover in 1918, and on May 22 of the same year, dozens of important people lined the double winding staircase in a fabulous reception for General Allenby. Ironically, just over 20 years later, the *Armon* became a center for Etzel, an underground Jewish military force organized to combat Arab terror and to engage in retaliatory attacks against the British Mandatory authorities.



photo: Shmuel Ear-Am

Yehudayoff House in Jerusalem’s Bukharim neighborhood

4. Mount Scopus: Euphoric after the Balfour Declaration in 1917, the Jews of Israel presented the British with land for a cemetery. Most of the 2,500 soldiers buried within the meticulously kept plots fell in battles for Jerusalem and TransJordan. A number of Jewish graves are located high on the slope; many of the soldiers who are buried there served together in the Royal Fusiliers.

Every few years, a moving ceremony takes place at the cemetery, whose well-kept grounds are tended by workers for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. A hundred years after the conquest of the land that became the reborn State of Israel, the men who fell in battle for the Holy Land are still remembered. ★



After a memorial ceremony at the British military cemetery on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem





SELECT MEDIA BRIEFS

UNESCO head Irina Bokova expressed “profound regret” at the U.S. decision, calling it a “loss to multilateralism.”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that Israel

also plans to withdraw from the agency, calling it “a theater of the absurd because instead of preserving history, it distorts it.”

U.S., Israel to Exit UNESCO Over Anti-Israel Bias

Associated Press

The United States announced in October that it is pulling out of the U.N.’s educational, scientific, and cultural agency because of the agency’s anti-Israel bias and need for “fundamental reform.”



Outgoing Director-General Irina Bokova expressed “profound regret” at the U.S. decision and tried to defend UNESCO’s reputation. The organization is best known for its World Heritage program to protect cultural sites and traditions.

The U.S. stopped funding UNESCO after it voted to include Palestine as a member state in 2011, but the State Department has maintained a UNESCO office and sought to weigh in on policy behind the scenes. The U.S. now owes about \$550 million in back payments.

The decision will take effect December 31, 2018, and the U.S. will seek a “permanent observer” status instead.

Bahrain’s Religious Tolerance

BahrainMirror.com

Bahrain’s King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa recently denounced the Arab boycott of Israel, revealing the direction Gulf States are taking toward normalizing relations with Israel. Israeli news outlets quoted Hamad as saying that his “subjects are free to visit the Jewish state.”

The denunciation by the head of the Persian Gulf country (which does not have diplomatic relations with Israel) was revealed at a multinational event in Los Angeles, hosted by the Simon Wiesenthal Center.



Son of Bahrain’s king, known for his support for Israel, with Rabbi Marvin Hier

At the event, Rabbis Marvin Hier and Abraham Cooper, who head the Wiesenthal Center, revealed the king’s pronouncements made to them

(continued next page)





when they visited Manama, Bahrain's capital city, in early 2017.

A walk through the city during their visit was an eye-opener, Cooper reported. There was a church with a huge cross next to a Hindu temple, and 300 feet beyond that an impressive mosque. Even a small synagogue, the only one in the Persian Gulf region, still stands in an older part of the city.

The Bahraini king's Declaration of Worldwide Religious Tolerance was unveiled at the historic Wiesenthal Center Interfaith event. The Bahrain National Orchestra, conducted by Field Marshal Mubarak Najem, played the Israeli national anthem "HaTikvah" preceded by the Bahraini and U.S. national anthems.

When Hier and Cooper met with King Hamad, they discussed the ruler's plan to establish a Museum of Religious Tolerance in the capital city by the end of this year.

The Bahraini king's remarks came less than a week after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu described relations with the Arab world as better than ever. "What's happening now with the Arab bloc states has never before happened in our history — even when we signed agreements," said Netanyahu. "What we have now is greater than anything else during any other period in Israel's history."

Al-Jazeera Called Out

By Isaac Scharf / Associated Press

Israel said recently that it plans to ban Qatar's flagship Al-Jazeera news network from operating in the country over allegations it incites violence. Israel joins Arab nations that have shut down the broadcaster. Israeli communications Minister Ayoob Kara said he plans to revoke the press credentials of Al-Jazeera journalists, effectively preventing them from working in Israel. He has asked cable and satellite networks to block Al-Jazeera transmissions and is seeking legislation to ban them altogether.

Doha-based Al-Jazeera is a pan-Arab satellite network funded by the Qatari government.

Kara said, "When we see that almost all countries in our region have determined that Al-Jazeera is a tool of the Islamic State, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran, and we are the only one who has not, then something delusional is happening here."

American viewers became familiar with Al-Jazeera after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, when its golden-hued Arabic logo became synonymous with video messages by al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden. That sparked frequent complaints by then-President George W. Bush's administration. The station defended its policy, saying the messages were newsworthy. ★



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Gezer's Fiery Destruction Confirmed



ARCHAEOLOGY: BY YEHEZKEL LAING (r) BreakingIsraelNews.com

"Pharaoh king of Egypt had come up and captured Gezer; he destroyed it by fire, killed the Canaanites who dwelt in the town, and gave it as a gift to his daughter, Solomon's wife." 1 Kings 9:16



photo: Kunsthaus Lemperz, Cologne



The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, by Pieter Schoubroeck (circa 1570–1607)

Recent archaeological excavations at the ancient city of Gezer site confirm the Bible's account of the city's destruction by Egypt through fire.

According to the Bible, Gezer, an ancient Canaanite-Jewish city located half-way between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, was destroyed at the beginning of the 10th century B.C. when the city was conquered and burned by an unnamed Egyptian pharaoh during his military campaign in the land of Israel. The pharaoh then gave the city to King Solomon as the dowry for his daughter. Solomon later rebuilt Gezer and fortified it.

The Gezer Excavation Project recently uncovered three torched skeletal remains in a newly discovered massive layer of fiery destruction, attesting to the city's ruin 3,200 years ago. The remains were those of two adults and one child, the latter still wearing earrings.

Gezer's significance and appeal were due to the strategic

(continued next page)



photo: Tandy Institute for Archaeology

Burnt skeleton found at the Gezer dig site

position it held at the crossroads of the ancient coastal trade routes between north and south, east and west. While the Egyptians may not have set out to destroy Gezer (they usually preferred to subdue vassal cities and collect subjugation payments), the widespread destruction found at the site suggests the Egyptians encountered strong resistance from the city's inhabitants, who were beginning to rebel against Egyptian rule.



Indeed, Gezer is associated with Jewish rebellion. The city is mentioned in the Book of Maccabees, which, though not part of the Biblical canon, is considered by scholars an important work. Centuries after the Egyptian destruction, in its last stage as an important city, Gezer became the base of the Maccabees, the Jewish rebels of the Hanukkah story who revolted against the Greeks in the 2nd century B.C.

The destruction of Gezer is also mentioned in the Merneptah Stele, circa 1208 B.C., an inscription commissioned by Egyptian Pharaoh Merneptah. It is also known as the "Israel Stele" because it bears the earliest known explicit mention of "Israel" outside the Bible. This engraved granite memorial commemorates a number of Egyptian victories, including that over Gezer.

The last two lines read: "Canaan is plundered with every hardship. Ashkelon is taken, Gezer captured, Yenoam reduced to nothing. Israel is laid waste — his seed is no more." ★



Merneptah Stele known as the Israel Stele from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo



[The Promised Land](#) study booklet

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Nation Built on Religious Imperative

Israel Today

“The history of the Jewish people began at the site of the Temple in Jerusalem,” Israeli Minister of Information Gilad Erdan said in an interview.

“Every time it’s rumored that our government is trying to make the nation more religious, I feel like screaming. I don’t understand people who believe that Israel is becoming more religious. What do they think is the fundamental nature of our existence in this Land? Why are terrorists carrying out attacks in Jerusalem, in the area around the Temple Mount? I’ll tell you why: These terrorists understand better than many Israelis why we are living in this Land. And that is what they are fighting against.”

Erdan emphasized that the Almighty brought the nation of Israel back to the Land: “It is our Biblical right to live in Jerusalem. This is what our children need to learn. When this fact starts to vanish from our memories and our discourse, then our chances of surviving here vanish with it.” ★



photo: Tkoby/12345 (Wikimedia Commons)

Gilad Erdan serves as a member of the Knesset for Likud and the Minister of Public Security, Strategic Affairs and Minister of Information



Israel's Right to the Land!

booklet by David L. Hocking

Just as its title implies, this booklet answers head-on the question: “What right does Israel have to its land?” Featuring an introduction by Zola, *Israel's Right to the Land!* pulls abundant evidence from the Scriptures, and directly addresses the 12 key issues that resolve this topic once and for all.

Let’s spread the Word on who owns the Land (“from the river of Egypt to the River Euphrates” —Genesis 15:18) by divine right!

JEWISH HUMOR, ETC.



A cheerful heart is good medicine —
Proverbs 17:22

A Hanukkah Tree?

Admiring the Christmas trees displayed in his neighbors' windows, Nathan asked his father if their family could have a Hanukkah tree.

"No," his father replied.

"Why not?" protested Nathan.

"Well, Nathan," his father explained, "because the last time we had dealings with a lighted bush, we spent 40 years in the wilderness."

Cause of Death

"I've just found a 3,000 year old mummy of a man who died of heart failure!" the archaeologist exclaimed.

The curator replied, "Bring him in. I'll check it out."

A week later, the amazed curator called the archaeologist. "You were right about the mummy's age and cause of death. How on earth did you know?"

"A piece of paper in his hand said, '10,000 shekels on Goliath.'" ★

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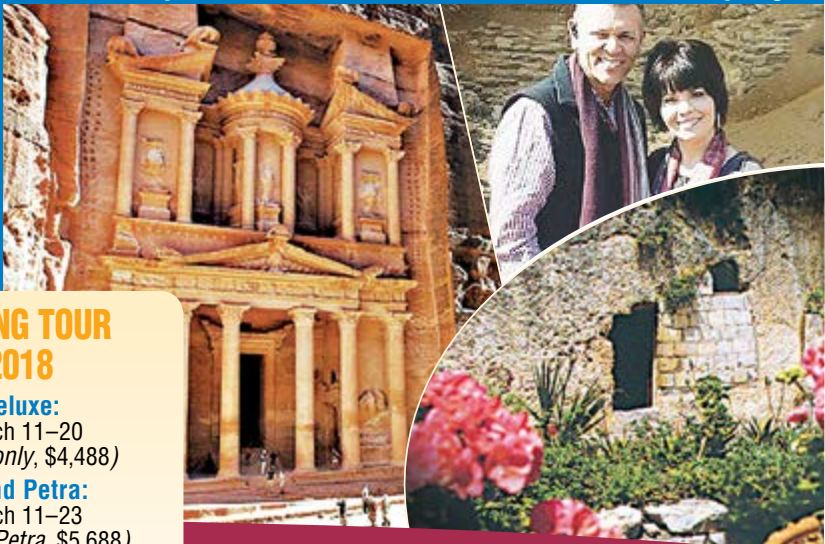


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