



Levitt LETTER

*Brethren, my heart's
desire and prayer to
God for Israel is that
they might be saved.*

— ROMANS 10:1

Maccabees (1842) by Wojciech Stettler (1800–1875), oil on canvas, National Museum Kraków

The Untold Story of Hanukkah

By Matan Peleg / JPost.com

Hanukkah joyfully commemorates a Jewish victory over foreign forces. Young and old are familiar with the tale of the outnumbered Maccabees who fought heavily armed Greek forces, and the miracle of the Temple's rededication in which sacred oil that should have lasted only one day instead lasted eight.

Less well known is the backstory, so to speak, to the struggle that Hanukkah depicts: the Maccabees against not only the Greeks but also the Hellenized Jews of Israel, who identified with the Greeks culturally, and actually encouraged them to strike at the institutions and essence of traditional Judaism.

In other words, though painful to acknowledge, **Hanukkah occurred due to a semi-civil war among the Jews.** How did this civil war play out? The Jewish aristocracy had

(continued p.2)

REMEMBER:

**Hanukkah is December 2 to December 10, 2018
(from sunset to sunset)**

inside: **Hanukkah
& Christmas p.7**



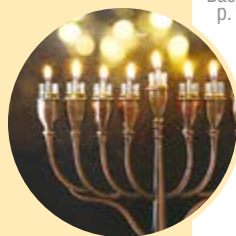
Former Nazi Hotbed Celebrates Hanukkah

By Orit Arfa / JNS.org

In Tübingen, Germany, the rusted memorial to the synagogue that burned during Kristallnacht is one of the few tributes to Jewish life that once existed in the city. Tübingen's fame stems from its university, founded in 1477 by Eberhard the Bearded, who expelled all Jews from the medieval town. Upon the rise of Hitler, about 100 Jews prayed at the synagogue, which was built in 1882. The names and fate of each are inscribed in metal; most managed to flee in time.

Just a few Jews live in the city today. But during Hanukkah, people gather to light a life-sized *hanukiah* (Hanukkah menorah with 9 candles instead of 7)

(continued p.9)



The Untold Story Of Hanukkah *continued from cover*

become enamored of Greek culture with its emphasis on physical beauty, sport, fashion, and a worldview at odds with that of traditional Judaism.

Ancient Compromise

With their wealth and influence, they succeeded in securing permission from Antiochus, Greek ruler of the Levant, to build a gymnasium in Jerusalem. This became a wedge for supplanting traditional Jewish practice, such as Temple rituals, study, and commandments (including circumcision). In addition, the Hellenistic Jewish elite committed the error of encouraging the Greeks to impose sanctions on traditional Jews. In essence, the Hellenists opened a Pandora's box that ultimately turned against them.

As the 1st-century historian Josephus recounts, Antiochus first invaded Jerusalem at the invitation of the Hellenists, and "he took the city without fighting, those of his own party opening the gates to him." Having plundered and slain many of the traditional opposition, Antiochus withdrew from Jerusalem.

However, Josephus notes, Antiochus returned to Jerusalem "and in order to plunder its wealth, he ventured to break the league he had made." In this second invasion, Antiochus turned against both Hellenist and traditional Jew



Ossuary found in an underground cave/tomb uncovered by workers widening a road in central Israel. The Hebrew inscription "Hashmonaim" appears on one of the boxes for human bones—the first evidence, archaeologists say, of the Hasmoneans (Maccabees) who rebelled against Greek rule in the 2nd century B.C.

and plundered the Temple, which prompted the uprising led by the Maccabees.

The secular history lesson of Hanukkah is that once foreign forces are drawn into domestic disputes, there is a danger that all can be lost. By making the proverbial "deal with the devil," the Hellenists were complicit in their own destruction because they had no control over the motives of the foreigners whose help they sought.



Antiochus Falling from His Chariot by Noël Hallé (1739)

Current Compromise

It is no different today. Anti-Zionist, Israeli non-governmental organizations (NGOs) willingly share the policies and attitudes of foreign entities, happy to get the financial support. In doing so, they play with fire, for their patrons have their own agendas that could threaten Israel's welfare. It behooves those of us who believe in the Zionist enterprise to call out the actions of Israeli NGOs and their foreign enablers. In doing so, we will have internalized the history and hidden significance of Hanukkah.

This Hanukkah, let us appreciate the action of the Maccabees, and also understand that what the Maccabees opposed remains in our midst today. May we be blessed to have their clarity in perceiving dangers, their courage to confront their foes, and their success in protecting Israel. ★





- Teaching**
- 4 Jerusalem—
The Background (part 1)**
- Studio Co-host**
- 6 Sounds of Silence**
- 7 Comparing Hanukkah and
Christmas**
- Zola Tours**
- 8 Does Our Lord’s Land Beckon
Your Presence This Spring?**
- 10 Rescuers #2, 3 & 4**
- Ask the Chaplain**
- 12 A Branch from the Root of Jesse**
- TJF Report**
- 13 A Divine Start**
- A Note from Mark**
- 14 A Coward Dies Many Times**
- 15 ZLM Bulletin Board**



- 16 Parsons: Hebrew Lesson
Outshining the Darkness**
- 21 3 Reasons to
Celebrate Hanukkah**
- 22 Letters to ZLM**
- Science**
- 26 Cyber Security**
- Medicine**
- 27 Alzheimer’s Vaccine?**
- 28 Talk About God
Decreases**
- 30 Select Briefs**
- Archaeology**
- 32 Temple Gold**
- 33 Crossword Puzzle**
- 34 Australia’s Islamic
Musical Chairs**
- 35 Jewish Humor**

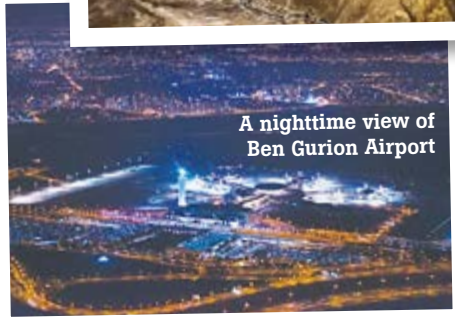


Israel from the Sky

Photographer Israel Bardugo mid-flight

BY PHOTOGRAPHER ISRAEL BARDUGO / YNetNews.com

More aerial photos of the Holy Land by Israel Bardugo from Masada’s tall cliffs, through eye-popping images of ancient Acre and the Ruhama Badlands, and an evening view of Ben Gurion Airport. ★



Jerusalem — The Background

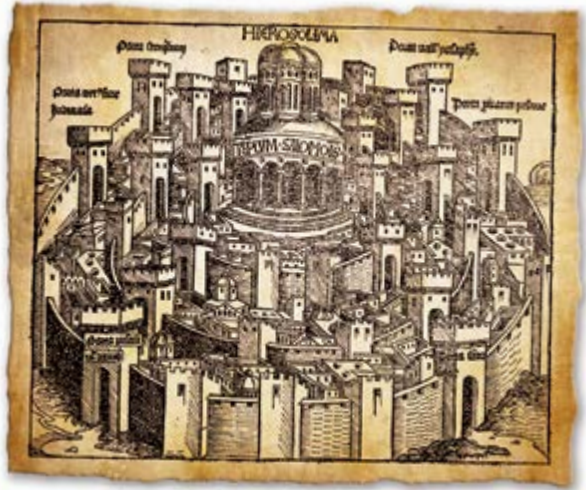
Classic McCall



BY THOMAS S. MCCALL

Thomas S. McCall was Senior Theologian of ZLM and Zola's co-author, mentor, pastor, and friend for more than 45 years.

Jerusalem, the Holy City, the City of the Great King, God's Holy Hill of Zion, the Center of the Earth, the Cup of Trembling, the Burdensome Stone, Sodom and Gomorrah, and Egypt. Jerusalem is called by these and many other names in the Bible. As Israel and the Arabs, under international pressure, pursue a "peace process," which is the effort to make a permanent settlement concerning Jerusalem, many claims and issues must be dealt with.



The oldest printed view of Jerusalem, 1493, by Hartmann Schedel, Nürnberg

To Whom Does Jerusalem Belong?

The Jews say it belongs to Israel. It was the political capital and Temple worship center of the ancient Commonwealth for over 1,000 years, has been the spiritual home of the Jewish people ever since, and is understood to be the future capital of the Messiah.

The Moslems say it belongs to Islam. It is the third most sacred place to Moslems, next to Mecca and Medina. The city was under Moslem control from the seventh century until World War I, with a one-century exception during the Crusades.

The Papacy says it belongs to Christendom. Jerusalem is sacred to Christians because of both Old and New Testament associations, and it is the site of Christ's death and resurrection. The holy sites are of great concern, of which the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is supreme.

The United Nations says it belongs to the world, with its fate negotiated along UN guidelines. Jerusalem is critical as a hot spot that could well endanger world peace.

Jerusalem Under Israel and Jordan

What should the attitude be among evangelical Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ? Our conviction is that all of the Land of Israel, including Jerusalem, belongs to the Jewish people by divine decree, and we should recognize their rights of ownership. During the last five decades, in which most of the Land has been under Israeli control, evangelical Christians have had full and free access to just about all of the country. Christian tourists have been welcome, and there has been no problem seeing all of the marvelous Biblical sites. The holy places of all religions are supposed to be kept sacrosanct and accessible so Jews, Moslems, and Christians can visit with assurance that no important site will be desecrated.

It was not the case when the country in general, and Jerusalem in particular, was under Moslem control. My wife and I toured Jerusalem in 1965. This, of

(continued next page)





course, predated the Six-Day War in 1967, and Jerusalem was part of the Kingdom of Jordan, and ruled by King Hussein. East and West Jerusalem were separated by a jagged zone called “no man’s land.” The Mandelbaum Gate was the only passage from one side to the other. It was like Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin. As a practical matter, no civilians could pass from Israel into Jordan, and about the only civilians who could go from Jordan to Israel were foreign tourists. Once Christians got into Jordan, they could visit most of the New Testament holy places, but getting to Jordan was a serious problem. (The problem was created by the unwillingness of Jordan to cooperate with Israel.)

As the Jordanians would not allow tourists to go from Israel into Jordan, we had to go to Jordan first, via Egypt, and then go into Israel through the Mandelbaum Gate. When Jerusalem was divided, it was difficult for pilgrims to visit the many important Biblical sites.

The Western Wall Under Moslem Control

The entire Old City in 1965 was in Jordan, along with most of the Biblical sites. This included the Temple Mount and the Western Wall. One of the places we wanted to visit was the Western Wall (*HaKotel*). Those who are familiar with the Wall as it looks today, with its spacious plaza and daily crowds of people who come to worship and pray, can scarcely imagine what it was like in 1965.



Wailing Wall, Jerusalem, 1887,
by Gustav Bauernfeind (1848–1904)

In actuality, the area around the Wall was a slum. Arab houses were built up to within about ten feet of the Wall, and the space between was an alley. Really, it was worse than that, because all around were the odors of a latrine. The Western Wall, closed in as a dank alleyway, was deserted then. No Jews were praying at this sacred site. [The Kotel is the closest that Jews currently can get to the Temple Mount.] No young boys performed their Bar Mitzvah rites of reading the Torah with all their admiring family rejoicing at the Wall. It was deserted when Jordan had control of the Old City. No Jews were allowed at the Western Wall for about 20 years. (Please see related “Jerusalem Quiz” on p. 15.)

Next month: Jerusalem under Jewish control ★



Pray For Peace

Bumper Sticker

*“Pray for the peace
of Jerusalem”*

Printed on removable vinyl, this attractive bumper sticker measures 3" by 11" and has a striking 3-D effect. Bold white letters of Psalm 122:6 jump out from the blue and black background.

Pass some on to your friends!



Sounds of Silence

Kirsten Hart
Studio co-host of
Zola Levitt Presents



Most churchgoers sing “Silent Night” each December. It’s a beautiful Christmas carol, and one that we often sing on Zola Tours in Bethlehem. But beautifully contradictory is that birthing a baby in a stable with animals around probably isn’t “silent.”

I’ve spent enough time around farm animals to know that they’re a noisy bunch. And unless the Lord blessed Mary with an extremely easy birth, Yeshua’s birth was likely riddled with shrieks of pain. The sounds coming from the “manger scene” combined with a host of angels loudly proclaiming “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men*” across the sky probably produced a boisterous spectacle.



Image from *The Celestial Country*, from *Church Missions House*, Edwin S. Gorham publisher

I appreciate the reverence of a subdued worship experience. Attending an all-girl Catholic school for eighth grade, I respected the piety of silence and stillness. Our Creator, however, is not the silent type.

God Is Not Silent

In the beginning, we are told, God spoke into being every single planet, star, and galaxy. I can’t envision the Word of God *whispering* a galaxy into being. It is also doubtful that a sky full of angels would murmur the greatest news ever given to mankind. *The Savior is born!* The time of salvation for mankind had come. *Glory to God!*

We know that God spoke to Elijah in a “still small voice” (1 Kings 19:12). But that’s not His customary pitch. Even in the “silent years” between the Old and New Testaments, God definitely spoke. Perhaps not through a major prophet, but he spoke to those who would listen and obey — e.g., the Maccabees.

Isn’t it odd that God would be silent for over 400 years? His nature isn’t to be quiet. Yet most Bible teachers seem to portray God as “sitting on His hands with tape over His mouth” during the InterTestamental Period (beginning in 420 B.C., between the Books of Malachi and Matthew). That’s because most evangelical Christian churches don’t teach the miracles surrounding the Feast of Lights.

In 167 B.C., Jewish priest Mattathias and his son, Judah Maccabee, led a revolt against the Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes who had desecrated the Temple. Judah reclaimed the Temple and re-consecrated it. If you have followed Zola Levitt’s teaching, you know the rest of this story. God spoke to Judah Maccabee and his followers, speaking to those who listened to Him. Those “silent years” were actually full of activity.

May God Continue to Speak

This season, whether you observe Hanukkah, Christmas, or both(!), may you find peace in the midst of the retail boom. The angels proclaimed (with mighty and strong voices) a message of *good news* to the shepherds in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago. May God continue to speak words of life, encouragement, and inspiration into your family. He *might* do it with a still, small voice, but don’t be surprised if God raucously exclaims His power and message of hope.

Blessings to you and your family in this season of light! ★





Comparing Hanukkah and Christmas

JewsForJesus.org



HANUKKAH

MACCABEES

A small band of guerilla fighters supernaturally defeat the King of Syria and all his resources.

EPIPHANES

Antiochus falsely claims to be Epiphanes, God incarnate.

TEMPLE CLEANSED

- The Temple had to be cleansed before it could be used for worship.
- The Temple had been defiled by an unclean sacrifice.
- Even after the Temple was cleansed, the Hanukkah story tells us we did not have enough oil to properly dedicate God's house; He had to provide it supernaturally.
- The desire to worship God became the basis for this joyous holiday.
- Jews traditionally eat special donuts because fried foods remind us of the oil needed to dedicate the Temple.

LIGHT OF MENORAH

The *shamash* (servant candle) brings light to the rest of the candles on the *hanukkah*.

CHRISTMAS

MESSIAH

Baby Yeshua/Jesus supernaturally survives despite Herod's death warrant on all boys His age: "An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, 'Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him'" (Matthew 2:13).

IMMANUEL

Yeshua truly is God incarnate: "The Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

TEMPLE COMPLETED

- Jesus came into the world so that we could be cleansed and each become a temple wherein God is worshiped: "...For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people'" (2 Corinthians 6:16).
- Jesus came in order to cleanse through His holy sacrifice what was defiled: "How much more shall the blood of Christ... cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:14).
- Even when we are cleansed by Yeshua's sacrifice, we do not have enough spiritual power to live a life dedicated to God; He provides it supernaturally through His Spirit: "You are the temple of God and... the Spirit of God dwells in you" (1 Corinthians 3:16).
- The desire to worship God is the basis for this joyous holiday.

LIGHT OF MESSIAH

Jesus, the Light of the World, gives His light to all who will receive it: "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12). ★



Back to Cover



To Index



Back to p. 17

Does Our Lord's Land Beckon Your Presence This Spring?

BY SANDRA LUTTRELL / Zola Tours Manager



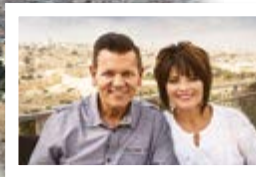
Zola Tours would love for you, your family, and your friends to join us on our 2019 spring study tour of the Holy Land. Nothing compares to experiencing the Bible lands first-hand. Touching the ground in Israel imparts a dramatic connection with the people and Land in your Bible. Afterward, Scripture leaps off of the page as you vividly recall standing at the very locations in both Testaments.

Walking in the steps of Yeshua, Paul, Peter, John, and the Patriarchs, our pilgrims explore places like Caesarea by the Sea, Mount Carmel, Megiddo, the Mount of Precipice, Mount of Beatitudes, Capernaum, Magdala, Tel Dan, Caesarea Philippi, Shiloh, Bethlehem, Mount Zion and the Upper Room, the Mount of Olives, Palm Sunday Road, the Garden of Gethsemane, the City of David, the Western Wall, the Pools of Bethesda, the Antonia Fortress, and the Via Dolorosa. Recognize any of those names? I thought you might!

Holy Places

Serene worship during our boat ride on the Sea of Galilee complements the reverence of being baptized in the Jordan River and the joy of floating and playing in the Dead Sea. The ancient fortress of Masada atop a rocky mesa may seem intimidating, but you can't ignore the intrigue of the Qumran caves where [the Dead Sea Scrolls](#) were found and the Israel Museum, where the Scrolls are housed.

While in Jerusalem, you will experience a solemn tour of Yad Vashem, Israel's monument and sacred tribute to the Holocaust's victims and survivors. At the Israel Museum, a 1:50 scale model of



Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period depicts the Jews' eternal capital as Jesus saw it. The Deluxe Tour of Israel concludes with a poignant Communion service at the Garden Tomb, where our group reflects on our Lord's sacrifice on the cross. After a delicious, but reflective, dinner, pilgrims not taking our extension head homeward from Ben Gurion International Airport.

Adding the **Petra** extension to your tour gives you an extra night in Jerusalem. We depart the next morning to Eilat, a magnificent resort city and Red Sea port in the south, near the border with Jordan. Stops include a life-size model of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness and a factory that makes jewelry from Eilat stones — Israel's green and blue national stone, discovered millennia ago in King Solomon's copper mines.



The next day, we cross the Aqaba border into Jordan to visit the ancient Rose City of Petra, carved into sandstone cliffs by the Nabataeans in the second century. Besides its fascinating secular history, many scholars believe that Yahweh will hide the Jewish people in Petra during the Great Tribulation (the second half of the seven-year Tribulation).

After a day of exploring, we overnight in Eilat before heading to Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport to fly home. Along the way, we encounter more phenomenal scenery, such as the Ramon Crater and Tel Be'er Sheva

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(Beersheba), where Abraham and Isaac dug wells and Abraham made a covenant with King Abimelech. If time allows, we visit Sde Boker, the home and gravesite of David Ben-Gurion, Israel’s first prime minister.

A Blessing to Our Faith

Each trip abundantly blesses my husband’s and my faith and heart — a common result of experiencing God’s country! Please reserve your spots for this 2019 spring pilgrimage soon to allow time to make arrangements and get passports in order.

Our tour prices are all inclusive: round-trip flights from JFK in NYC to Israel, double occupancy rooms at beautiful 4-and 5-star Israeli-owned hotels, scrumptious daily breakfast and dinner buffets, the very best Jewish

Israeli guides and drivers, a wonderfully full and captivating itinerary, tips, taxes, and fuel surcharges (subject to change). Plus, Kirsten and David Hart lead our worship music.

A completed registration form (available at levitt.com/registration) along with your refundable deposit of \$200/person for the Deluxe (Israel only) tour or \$400/person for the Grand Petra tour will hold your space. Final payments are due on January 10, 2019. Please see page 36 for further details.

With the prophecies of the Bible rapidly unfolding, the time is near for our Savior to return, so make plans to visit His Promised Land now. I’m waiting to hear from you! ★

Former Nazi Hotbed ... *continued from cover sidebar*

to honor the victims, sing Hebrew hymns as a statement that light will overcome darkness, and signal that, at least in this town, miracles can really happen.

The bearers of these Hanukkah candles aren’t Jewish, and many of them descend from avowed Nazis. They are members of TOS Ministries, a church in Tübingen that for the past decade has made it a religious mission to redeem the town, the souls of its residents, and the Christian faith by connecting Christians to their Jewish roots, researching personal family history as it relates to the Holocaust, and standing up for Israel.

“There is the history of the perpetrators, but the other part is the massive, passive majority who just stood by, watched, and remained silent, especially in churches,” said Pastor Jobst Bittner, the founder of TOS Ministries.

“Anti-Semitism didn’t begin with Hitler; it was present and hidden for centuries, especially in the Church,” Bittner added. “Every time churches don’t take an honest look at Church history, this hidden form of anti-Semitism prevails, and it usually finds expression in relation to Israel.”

“If we think about the Jewish roots of our faith, the festivals and holidays are a part,”

Bittner said. “It started with Hanukkah. It was the first Jewish festival that we discovered for ourselves.”

The TOS Hanukkah schedule includes nightly *hanukkiyah* lightings, each at a different spot of significance for Tübingen’s Jew-hating past; a lecture at the university on contemporary German anti-Semitism; a class on Yiddish; and a show featuring a Jewish band from the region.

“We don’t demand that people observe this holiday,” said Bittner. “But working through our history and facing the consequences birthed a deep love for Israel in our hearts.” A section from nearby railroad tracks, once used to deport Jews, has been set at the church’s entrance—a reminder to “never forget.”

Germany, now with 6 million Moslems, initially welcomed their invasion from the hellholes of Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Europe’s insidious anti-Semitism of decades ago has returned to haunt them after they replaced a thousand synagogues with ten thousand mosques. The continent that wiped six million Jews off their map epitomizes Gen.12:3. —Mark



Rescuers (continued from last month)



BY JONATHAN BLAUSTEIN (r) NYTimes.com

Malka Drucker, a children’s book author, and Gay Block, a fine art portrait photographer, documented “Rescuers,” **non-Jewish Europeans who risked torture and death to save Jews during the Holocaust.**

Starting by interviewing rescuers in Southern California, the writer and photographer eventually traveled to Canada and Europe for 100 interviews from 1986 to 1988.

Thirty years later — and in a time of misinformation and unsettling racial and religious violence — the women hope that these stories can inspire others to stand strong in difficult times.

“Each rescuer was different; there wasn’t any kind of formula,” said Block. “It was the biggest privilege of my life to meet these people.”

Rescuer #2 Gustav Mikulai

Gustav Mikulai’s family were Social Democrats in Budapest, Hungary with Jewish friends and neighbors. As a budding musician, he was impressed by the Jewish students he encountered in school.

“The Jews were capable and everyone was envious,” he said. “I understood that from the beginning. I wasn’t anti-Semitic: first, because I thought it would be immoral; and second, because I thought well enough of myself that I didn’t need to be envious of them.”

Mikulai eventually married a Jewish musician and then hid her and her parents when the Germans invaded in March 1944. From that point on, he dedicated himself to saving as many Jews as possible.

Being a resistance fighter required huge sacrifice because, as he explained, “I found during this time that I could kill anyone who was suspicious of me. It was a terrible time for humanity.”

Mikulai was able to look back knowing that he was no bystander, watching *(continued next page)*



Gustav Mikulai

Photo: courtesy Gay Block



while the world was subsumed by chaos. Reflecting from his perch in Bonn, Germany, he knew he had made a difference.

"I think I was able to save at least 50 people—maybe 80 or 100," he recalled. "I'm happy I was able to rescue children who, now married and with children of their own, would not have had such a life without my help."

Rescuers #3 & 4 Pieter and Joyce Miedema

Pieter and Joyce Miedema emigrated to Canada in 1952. He had been a Presbyterian minister in Holland and was an early proponent of helping Jews in the face of the Nazi onslaught.

He had a stroke late in life, and his wife spoke on his behalf during the interview. They had worked together to shelter and support Jews during the war.

"He thought he should practice what he preached," she said. "He was always one step ahead, and told his congregants, 'If you opt against opening your home and heart to an innocent fugitive, you have no place in the community of the just.'"

Our series began in the [November 2018 Levitt Letter, p. 10](#), and will continue next month. ★



Pieter and Joyce Miedema



Two-Flag Collar Pin

With interlocking American and Israeli flags, this unique full-color pin proudly encourages the unity of the U.S.A. and the Holy Land. What a terrific way to create opportunities to witness about Israel's importance in the Bible, the accuracy of Biblical prophecy, and God's gift of grace!



(Pin shown actual size)

A Branch from the Root of Jesse

Dr. Todd Baker
Zola Levitt Ministries
Staff Theologian



And he [Joseph] came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene." — Matthew 2:23

Q. I cannot find in the Old Testament any passage that supports the claim of Matthew 2:23 that the Messiah would be called a Nazarene. Which Old Testament prophet prophesied this?

A. Matthew using the plural word “prophets” in this verse and not the singular word “prophet” probably means that **he does not have a single Old Testament text in mind but, rather, a collection of OT Messianic prophecies all stating that the Messiah would be despised and lowly when He came.** The word “Nazarene” comes from the Hebrew word *netzer* found in Isaiah 11:1, which states a branch (*netzer*) will grow up from the root of Jesse. “Branch” can metaphorically mean “that which is despised and scorned, held in low esteem,” just as the Messiah would be. Jesus was, in this sense, despised as a Nazarene, coming from the despised town of Nazareth (John 1:46).



Tree of Jesse, 1573, engraving by Jan Wierix (Flemish, 1544–1625)

Jeremiah and Zechariah also foretold that the Messiah would be called the branch (*netzer*) and would come from lowly origins (see Jeremiah 23:5; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12). Hence, Yeshua’s coming from Nazareth (which means in Hebrew “house of the branch”) fulfilled a general position held by the prophets as a body. So the Messiah was a despised Person from a place considered no better than a lowly branch. Thus, “Nazarene” can be used as a synonym for the fact that the Old Testament prophets collectively predicted that the Messiah would be despised and detested in His First Coming to Israel.

His Second Coming will be a completely different story!

Isaiah 11:1 — *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*

John 1:46 — *And Nathanael said to him [Philip], "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."*

Jeremiah 23:5 — *"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth."*

Zechariah 3:8 — *"Hear, O Joshua, the high priest, you and your companions who sit before you, for they are a wondrous sign; for behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH."*

Zechariah 6:12 — *"And speak unto him [Joshua the son of Jehozadak], saying, "Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, "Behold the Man whose name is The BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the LORD."'"* ★



A Divine Start

Day 1 of our **To The Jew First** outreach: Our flight landed at Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, and August Rosado and I made our way to the car rental counter. To our astonishment, there was no line. August and I exchanged a glance of understanding that having no customers waiting behind us meant that the Holy Spirit was giving us more time to share the Gospel with the car rental agent. That is exactly what we did.

We casually mentioned to **Asaph**, the young Israeli man behind the counter, that we come to Israel several times each year to humbly make Israelis aware that the God of the Bible has miraculously preserved and protected the Jewish people against all odds. We added that those whom God loves, Satan seeks to destroy — Israel being a prime example. Those who seek to destroy the Chosen People, God promises to destroy in return (Genesis 12:3). God has kept this promise.

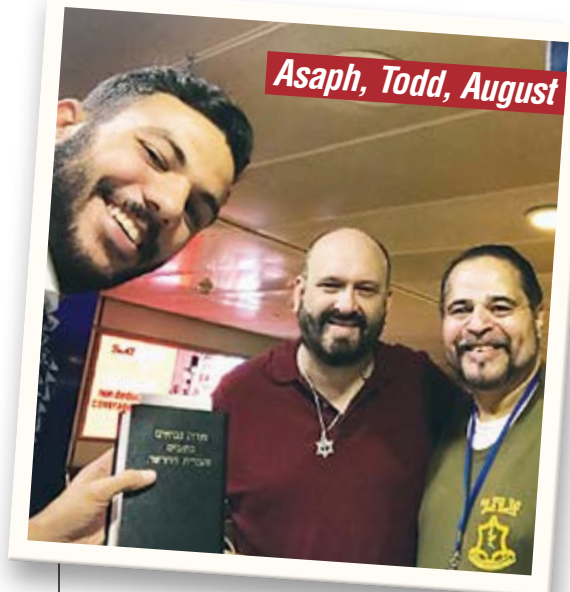
Asaph agreed and commented on how unreasonable it is for other religions not to believe in a God who punishes in Hell men (like Hitler) who escaped justice in this life for their evil actions. It was the opening August and I were waiting for the Holy Spirit to provide. We replied that all life without God and His Son, Yeshua the Messiah, is empty and meaningless. To emphasize this point, we quoted *Kohelet* (Hebrew for “the preacher”), the principal speaker in Ecclesiastes and the name by which the Jews refer to that book of the Bible. In Ecclesiastes 1:2, *Kohelet* intones, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

To enjoy the fullness of a life with God now and an eternal life to come, we suggested that Asaph accept our gift of a complete (with both New

and Old Testaments) Hebrew Bible.

Asaph reasoned that everybody going to Heaven doesn't make any sense: If that were the case, why would there be a Hell? We assured Asaph that his logic was Biblically on the mark and that redeeming the elect is exactly why the God of Israel sent His Son Yeshua to die as a *kippurah* (atonement) for our sins.

Asaph gratefully accepted a complete Bible in Hebrew along with Messianic tracts. Please join us in praying for him to trust Yeshua HaMashiach (Jesus Christ) for his salvation. Asaph wanted to exchange email addresses and contact numbers so that we could follow up our Gospel ministry with him. What a divine start to another pivotal Gospel outreach to the Chosen People!



Thank you, Dear Readers, for your prayers and financial support — both for past and for future Gospel trips to Israel. ZLM and the ministry's **To The Jew First** outreach depend on the body of generous supporters. ★



Dr. Todd Baker
ZLM Staff Theologian
TJF Team Leader



A Coward Dies Many Times

A Note From Mark
by **Mark Levitt**
ZLM Director



Was Cyclops a coward in *Krull*, the 1983 British-American science fantasy swashbuckler film? “If a Cyclops tries to avoid his foreseen death, all he gets is a more horrible death.”

Ernest Hemingway: “The coward dies a thousand deaths, the brave but one.” A noteworthy continuation: **“The brave dies perhaps two thousand deaths if he’s intelligent. He simply doesn’t mention them.”** Let me confess now that during my 30 years with ZLM, I have foreseen too many “deaths” of this outreach.



Ernest Hemingway
(1899 – 1961)

Our Messiah, no coward, foresaw His bitter cup (Luke 22:42), and opted to partake of every last drop when He could have called out *“Dayenu!”* and ended His suffering. [See Side Note.](#)

Embracing all the possibilities of failure can synthesize the raw materials of inventive planning. “Necessity is the mother of invention” (ascribed to Plato). While it is usually cliché to declare, “Failure is not an option” (NASA motto from the film *Apollo 13*), a less black-and-white thinker might decide, “Here are the Godly, sacrificial extremes to which I’m willing to go to pursue success.”

Legit eternal thinkers are more likely than atheists to accept possible defeat and death for a greater good.

Sir Winston Churchill strategically sacrificed to captivity 4,000 allied soldiers at Calais, a port city in northern France, in order to buy time



Sir Winston Churchill
(1874 – 1965)

to evacuate the 338,226 soldiers at Dunkirk.

Question: What if ZLM is primarily a “Calais diversion” whose function is to distract a two-horned rival from a larger scale battle?

Answer: In that case, we give our supreme effort though facing what might be deemed mostly a defeat in its own right because we answer God’s calling to serve a greater victory.

Our ministry’s syndicator has yet to respond to my request to shop for additional network airtimes with an eye toward expanding—in defiance of megatrends against televised, religious programming, Zionism, and Believers. Berg Productions laid off their receptionist last month, and so did our ministry. But I remember learning that some farsighted organizations seized underpriced opportunities during the Great Depression.

While my head says it’s prudent to routinely shop vendors, such as television stations and networks, my heart hopes that a heavyweight donor will step forward and offer funding for a one-year contract on a new national TV network. A contribution of such magnitude would give this ministry’s economies of scale a badly needed jolt.

A bigger impact might result from asking ZLMers to email webmaster@levitt.com to offer suggestions on how to conquer major ministerial territory for cheap in the blossoming realm of the Internet. This ministry can prevail on more than one battlefield. Meanwhile, its bravest warriors do our best fighting on our knees.



SIDE NOTE:

Jews chant *“Dayenu”* (“Enough”) each Pass-over, describing God’s many gifts and claiming that just one would have been *dayenu*. Incidentally, *“dayenu!”* is a worthy substitute for worn-out expletives.



ZLM Bulletin Board



Israel's Got Talent

The Holy Land's credible counterpart to the TV programs *America's Got Talent* and *Britain's Got Talent* offers a six-minute video that unveils Tomer Dudai, a next-level magician from Israel. Visit [the YouTube video](#) and be transfixed, even though it's in Hebrew. His torso-less, headless assistant wears a flowing skirt and high heels as she strides across the stage, but how does she know where or when to walk? Tomer magically levitates even though he's no Levite!



Jerusalem Quiz

(see related article on p. 4)

Fact: Israeli population religious affiliations as of 2016: 74.7% Jewish, 17.7% Moslem, 2% Christian, and 1.6% Druze; the remaining 4.1% comprised Samaritans, Baha'is, and the irreligious.

Match: "Jerusalem" appears in the following religious books how many times? Draw a line between the matching numbers and books.

146 times
660 times
0 (zero)

Old Testament
the Koran
New Testament

Answers on page 35.



PA Prioritizes Terror

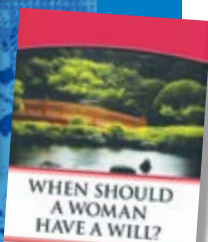
"We view the Martyrs and prisoners as stars in the sky of the Palestinian people and the sky of the Palestinian people's struggle, and they have priority in everything." — Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas on official PA TV, July 2018. Abbas also stated that the last Palestinian penny would be spent on prisoners before being used for ongoing PA expenses. In fact, the PA spends 44% of the amount it receives from foreign donors on terror rewards.

Source: palwatch.org

FREE ITEM

Pamphlet of the Month

To complement last month's pamphlet that discussed estate planning for women, ***When Should a Woman Have a Will?*** enumerates 11 answers that include: when she is single or married, when she has children (minors or adults), and when she owns property. It suggests reviewing estate plans when her marital status changes, when she wants to name her own personal representative, or when she has charitable wishes. Reason #8 explains: "A properly drafted will or trust can reduce estate taxes, probate expense, and other costs — even for modest estates." To receive this pamphlet at no charge, email us at staff@levitt.com or write to our P.O. Box.



"Come Home!"

Zola
Tours to
Israel



See page 36
for details



Outshining the Darkness

by John Parsons
 Hebrew for Christians
 Hebrew4Christians.com



כִּי־אֶתָּה תֹאִיר נְרִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יְנִיחַ חֹשֶׁךְ כִּי

“For it is You who lights my lamp; the LORD my God outshines my darkness.”
 – Psalm 18:28

כִּי	חֹשֶׁךְ	יְנִיחַ	אֱלֹהֵי	יְהוָה	נְרִי	תֹאִיר	אֶתָּה	כִּי
(2)	(1)	(3) (2) (1)	(3) (2) (1)	(1)	(2) (1)	(2) (1)	(3) (2) (1)	
chosh-kee	ya-gee-ah	E-loh-hai	Adonai	nei-ree	tah-er	kee - at-tah		
my darkness	outshines	my God	the LORD	my lamp	will light	for You		

The only way out of the distressing ambiguity of life is to hear a message from the higher world, the Heavenly Voice, that brings hope to our aching and troubled hearts: “Faith comes by hearing the word of Messiah” (Rom. 10:17). And yet what is the meaning of this message if it is not that all shall be made well by Heaven’s Hand? There is hope, there is hope, and all your fears will one day be cast into outer darkness, swallowed up by God’s unending comfort. “Go into all the world and make students (*talmidim*) of all nations” (Matt 28:19). That means sharing the hope that what makes us sick (our depravity and despair) has been healed by Yeshua, and that we escape the gravity of our own fallenness if we accept His invitation to receive life in Him. “For it is You who lights my lamp; the LORD my God outshines my darkness.”

Exercising faith means actively listening to the Eternal Voice, the Word of the LORD that calls out in love in search of your heart’s trust. To have faith means justifying God’s faith in you; that is, understanding that you truly matter to God and that the Voice calls out your name, too. Living in faith means consciously accepting that you are accepted by God’s love and grace. **Trusting God means that you bear ambiguity, heartache, and darkness, yet you still allow hope to enlighten your way.**

“We walk by faith, not by sight” — as if the *invisible* is indeed *visible*. We must stay strong and keep hope, for through hope we are saved (Rom. 8:24). Faith is the *conviction* of things unseen (Heb. 11:1). Do not be seduced by mere appearances; do not allow yourself to be bewitched into thinking that this world should ever be your home. No, we are strangers and pilgrims here; we are on the journey to reach “the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven” (Heb. 12:22–23).

Therefore, do not lose heart. Keep to the narrow path. Set your affections on things above, since your real life is “hidden with God” (Col. 3:1–4). Do not yield to the temptation of despair. Look beyond the “giants of the land” and reckon them as already fallen. Keep pressing on. *Chazak, chazak, ve-nit chazek* — “Be strong, be strong, and let us be strengthened!” Fight the good fight of the faith. May the LORD our God help you take hold of the eternal life to which you were called (1 Tim. 6:12). **Happy holy days in our Messiah, friends!** ★

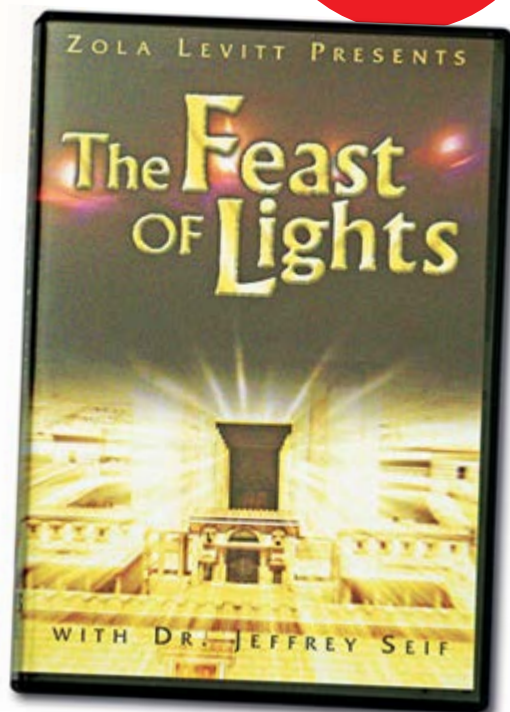


Courtesy: The Jerusalem Connection

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" (Psalm 121:4). We look at harvesting olive oil and its importance to the menorah in the Holy Place.



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 minister in Ashdod, 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 articles about Hanukkah on pp. 1, 7, and 21.)

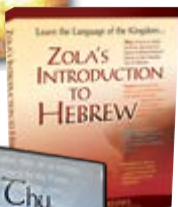
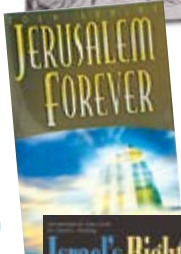


To
Index

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___	The Second Coming	\$3	_____
___	Seven Churches	\$3	_____
___	The Seven Feasts of Israel	\$3	_____
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Updated!

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Dallas TX 75225

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ORDER FORM continued

UNIQUE WITNESSING ITEMS!

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___	The Prophesied Messiah Bookmark	2 for \$1	_____
___	Institute of Jewish-Christian Studies (info only)	no charge	_____



Teaching CDs

___	A Christian Love Story	CD	\$7	_____
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___	Discovering Our Jewish Roots (pictured)	(9 CDs)	\$39	_____

Music CDs: Hear samples at levitt.com/music

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

Please fill out area below and send the entire page.

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

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

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[Secrets of the Scrolls](#) [DVD Set and](#) [Transcript \(eBook\)](#)

7 half-hour TV programs on two DVDs

In 1947, a Bedouin boy in search of a lost goat threw a stone through the narrow opening of a cave. Hearing the sound of breaking pottery, he entered the cave and happened upon a 2,000-year-old treasure. He had discovered the Dead Sea Scrolls. *Secrets of the Scrolls* gives a historical account of these treasured manuscripts and presents some remarkable revelations. The authors of the Scrolls were intensely Messianic and appear to have documented the fulfillment of prophecy in the person of the Messiah. Such terms as “son of God,” “branch of David,” “stripes or piercings,” “being put to death,” and “raising the dead” all strike a familiar chord. Quite possibly, these incredible Scrolls represent the first extra-Biblical revelation of Jesus Christ in history.



The Scrolls—A New Revelation We quickly produced this half-hour program when the DSS first became widely accessible for study. Zola quotes from the Associated Press news release and emphasizes the significance of access.

The Scrolls: Part 2 Within days of our first program’s broadcast, Dr. James Tabor phoned Zola to initiate a series of interviews that would unveil one of the 20th century’s most dramatic revelations. This program is the first of these interviews. A professor of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Dr. Tabor delivers an incredible lesson.

The Scrolls: Part 3 During this interview, Dr. Tabor refers to several books about the Dead Sea Scrolls, including *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls* in English by Vermes (Penguin Press), *The Dead Sea Scriptures* by Gaster (Anchor Doubleday), and *A Facsimile Edition of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2 Volumes) by Robert Eisenman and James Robinson.

The Scrolls Special This program consolidates the first three programs and delivers their powerful message in only thirty minutes. Later discoveries in Scrolls research inspired the three following programs.

The Wilderness Group Michael Baigent, an English author, lectures in Qumran about the Scrolls. Dr. Tabor describes various approaches to excavation and how they pertain to the Scrolls. Dr. Robert Eisenman, a professor of Middle East religions at California State University at Long Beach, discusses the fascinating history of the Scrolls.

In Search of Answers Dr. Eisenman discusses his quest to gain access to the Scrolls. Dr. Tabor describes his archaeological team and how they map the caves in Qumran.

Prof. Michael Wise An in-depth interview with a professor of Aramaic, the language of Yeshua. University of Chicago professor Wise helped translate the fragments when they were first released and enthusiastically discusses The New Jerusalem text, telling how the future will be.

(See related article on [p.32.](#))



To
Index



Back to
p.8



Back to
p.33

3 Reasons Christians Should Celebrate Hanukkah



BY TYLER O'NEIL (r) PJMedia.com

While Hanukkah is not one of the two most important Jewish holidays (those would be Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the Jewish new year and Day of Atonement, respectively), it commemorates a miracle for the Jewish people at a pivotal time in the history of Israel. The holiday has some important lessons for Christians, particularly with the salvation of Israel from the hands of oppressors (something Jews anticipate from the coming Messiah). Christians should not dismiss Hanukkah as a foreign holiday, but take the time to remember what happened in Israel before the birth of Jesus and learn a key reason why many Jews did not accept Christ as their promised Messiah. Here are three reasons why followers of Jesus/Yeshua should be familiar with Hanukkah.

1. It's an important Jewish story

Hanukkah, "The Festival of Lights," commemorates the miracle of one day's oil lasting for eight days during the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

After the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes looted the Temple and outlawed Judaism, in 167 B.C., he ordered an altar to Zeus be erected in the Temple. He banned circumcision and ordered that pigs be sacrificed on the Temple's holy altar.

Judah Maccabee (meaning "The Hammer") recaptured Jerusalem, rededicating the Temple in 165 B.C. He then established the Hasmonean Dynasty, which threw off Seleucid rule completely in 129 B.C. Jewish independence lasted until the Romans conquered the city in 63 B.C.

The Hasmonean kingdom was the first time since the Babylonian Captivity (roughly 597 B.C. to 539 B.C.) that Israel governed itself as an independent kingdom. The rededication of the Tem-

ple marked the beginning of this brief period of independence, and so loomed large for the Jewish people until the State of Israel was established in 1948.

2. It's a major reason Jews don't accept Jesus

When the Jews chafed under the rule of the Roman Empire around the time of Jesus, they were looking for a Messiah like Judah Maccabee—a ruler to free the oppressed people of Israel and end their domination under the thumb of Rome.

Famously, Yeshua did not do this. He did not even encourage rebellion against the Empire. Instead, He encouraged His disciples to pay taxes (Matt. 22:21), said "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36), and told His followers to go the extra mile when Romans asked them for help (Matt. 5:41).

It is very likely that the history of Judah Maccabee helped discourage the Jews from following Yeshua as the Messiah. With such a powerful example of God's deliverance from political oppression in their recent history, many Jews understandably desired a military and political leader, not a humble man whose triumph over sin is represented by a cross—the humiliating instrument of death Romans used for the basest of criminals.

3. It's a good way to address Jews' concerns about Jesus

We'll share these witnessing tips next month. ★



The Triumph of Judas Maccabeus, oil (1635) by Peter Paul Rubens





Letters to ZLM

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

Comments from www.levitt.com

From H.K.: Praise God — His Spirit has revealed what He has in mind for us. I thought temptations were from God, but now I know better from Tony's [October 2018 PL](#) teaching on the Book of James. — ZLM will always maintain its focus on the Bible. Zola understood that the writer of Psalm 119:105 was correct: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." We will continue our study of James until its conclusion: all five chapters. — Tony Derrick (ZLM's resident theologian)

From D.K.H. (Canada): I just watched *Thy Kingdom Come*. This bearded fellow is a fellow to grow on. I like him; he is so Godly in his words and carefully talking for the Lord Jesus Christ! Thank you again for this older bearded fellow; there is something wonderful about him — truly a friend in Christ. — You were watching our ministry's founder, Zola Levitt. He's been in Heaven for 12 years, but his words are as relevant today as ever. He would be pleased that you are inspired by his teachings. There is no expiration date on the Word of God. Thank you for tuning in. — Tony

From R.A.: I am so HAPPY to see Zola's original teachings! MORE! MORE! MORE! I attribute much of my spiritual life to the good foundation Zola brought. — You're in good company, R.A., and "more! more! more!" you shall receive! — Editor

From J.C.W. (TX): Please continue Zola's teaching on ZLP. Never tire of his teaching.

From L.J.M. & C.Y.H. (OR): Thank you for your plain, honest request, not "free gift" stuff. We appreciate it and believe that really is Messiah's way.

Which Station To Cut?

Dear Mark,

As a very longtime viewer and supporter, I read your [Note in the October Levitt Letter](#) and appreciated your explanation about choosing between two airtimes on Daystar.

Here are my two cents. I record every show on Freeform. On DirecTV, the Daystar shows standard definition (SD), so are not the same quality as those on Freeform's high definition (HD) broadcast. [According to Daystar's website, HD broadcasts are available in the

(continued next page)



To Index

UK; Dallas and Austin, Texas; and via Spectrum cable TV.]

I realize that you take into account many other criteria, but I thought I'd let you know which channel I prefer. (Airing time doesn't matter since I record the shows.)

Spiritual matters and business are strange bedfellows, and yet tons of us Christians have to navigate those perilous waters all the time. I am praying for you to have wisdom for this and the other decisions that you have to make. —G.C.B.

Dear G.C.B. —

It will be interesting to learn how many other ZLMers experience the SD vs. HD quality of Daystar and Freeform. Your loyal support of our ministry for more than 30 years should enable you to share additional insights, which I would appreciate. Thanks so much for dropping a line. —Mark

Kvetch (v): to complain, especially chronically

Dear ZLM,

What a blessing to hear the teachings of Zola again! Because they are based on Scripture, they are timeless — as relevant today as when he first aired them. I pray that you continue to air Zola's teachings for those who have forgotten them and for new viewers who never got to hear him.

Your new hosts are personable; however, they seem uninformed about Jewish culture, Feasts, etc. Visiting Israel twice a year doesn't give them that knowledge, and it is actually embarrassing to watch them. *Zola Levitt Presents* completely misses the mark with the Harts and is undermining Zola's legacy. We have been patient, but each time they speak, it is incredible how much they have to learn. Please stay with Zola's rich teaching ... and thank you for bringing it back! —Anonymous (PA)

Dear Anonymous —

Music to my ears, your concession about David and Kirsten being personable. I would add *charismatic, musically gifted, ethical, and devoted*. Allow me to offer some points for you to ponder in the context of your constructive criticism. (Your note was shortened for publication.)

First, thanks for echoing the popular sentiment about Zola's teachings being timeless. You correctly suppose there are many more of his remarkable Biblical lessons available. Yes, hundreds! Thank you for praying for this ministry and for adding, "no one teaches [the Jewish Feasts] better than Zola."

I hoped you might include a donation. Nonetheless, it's good to know that you support us in spirit ... not that vendors accept invigorating words of encouragement as payment for their invoices.

You commented that visiting Israel twice a year doesn't give David and Kirsten knowledge about the Jewish culture, Feasts, etc. Agreed. But **like you and me, our studio hosts are works in progress**. And they are doing more to learn than you assume, such as taking the 12 monthly studies of ZLM's correspondence course, *The Institute of Jewish-Christian Studies*. To get their diplomas, by the

(continued next page)



"I thought you were teaching this dog how to fetch, not kvetch!"



way, they have to pass each of the mail-in tests that you would.

“ZLM really needs someone who was reared in a Jewish home and culture, who met Jesus as their Messiah.” **So true, Anonymous!** Are you referring to seasoned Messianic pastors and teachers like Jeff Seif, Eitan Shishkoff, Chaim Malespin, and Dov Schwarz, described at levitt.com/about? They all served as teachers and commentators in several of our most recent television series.

You didn't mention Tony Derrick, this ministry's Abraham Lincoln (see [March 2017 Levitt Letter, p. 14](#)). Though Tony may not have broken enough matzo to be sufficiently Jewish for you, please weigh the quality of his recent *Personal Letter* teachings on James rather than searching his pate for a yarmulke. Speaking of being Jewish enough, as opposed to being grafted-in, the Third Reich designated four degrees of Jewishness (see [March 2018 LL, p. 14](#)).

I respond more effectively when someone suggests solutions to problems rather than just *kvetching*. So let me invite you to locate this ministry's next teacher of Zola's caliber and persuade him (or her) to send an audition video to staff@levitt.com. If you know a qualified Messianic Bible expert who loves Israel and has 1) the charisma of David and Kirsten, 2) the theological credentials of Todd Baker, and 3) the Messianic Jewish background of Jeff Seif and our array of other top-quality theologians, then please act sooner than later.

Incidentally, Ed Sullivan was no singer, dancer, or comedian (just as David and Kirsten aren't theologians), but he very capably introduced such entertainers to his audience. Moses had a speech impediment that caused him to doubt the Lord's calling, yet look at the leader that God made of him! May Yeshua grant you the patience to watch David and Kirsten blossom as they fulfill their Godly mission. And may you step out in faith to surpass your own expectations of what God wants to achieve through you. — Blessings, Mark



Suggestions for Cutting Expenses

Dear Mark,

Combine the *Personal Letter* and *Levitt Letter* by including Tony's lesson and pertinent ads in the *LL*; stop sending postage paid envelopes for donations. If people can afford to give, they can provide the stamp. May your mission be blessed. — C.J.S. (TN)

You're right, C.J.S. —

ZLM could minister less and reduce convenience for donors. I choose, however, to embrace The Great Commission (Matt. 28:19–20) and share Biblical insights as much as possible by making our needs known.

Would you prayerfully click on “Donations” at levitt.com? You'll see secure options for donating that include gift cards, cars, and assets such as stocks and real estate. Donating by text requires no stamp *or* envelope: Just send a text message to 469-615-2009 with the amount you'd like to donate. — Mark

I humbly suggest that considering the distressing financial whirlpool that your ministry is facing, you ought to start charging yearly subscriptions of \$7 (beginning January 2019) for the monthly *Levitt Letter*. If customers can tip 18–20% in restaurants and hair salons, they should not grumble at a small subscription fee for a newsletter that blesses them. I am very much edified by your magazine each month. — A.D. (NJ)

Dear A.D. —

Your suggestion reminds me of the allegory regarding long spoons in eternity:

To demonstrate the difference between Heaven and Hell, God shows

(continued next page)

a man a room in which diners sit around a massive table with a huge pot of mouthwatering stew. Yet the diners appear famished because each has a spoon with a very long handle tied to his arm at the wrist and again above the elbow. They can scoop spoonfuls of stew, but because they can't bend their arms, they can't lift the food to their mouths.

The man shudders at their suffering. God says, "You have seen Hell."

A second room has the exact same setup: a massive round table holding a huge pot of stew and diners with identical long-handled spoons tied in the same fashion. Yet they are well nourished, laughing, and talking. The man is puzzled until he watches the diners scoop spoonfuls of stew and feed each other across the table.

"It is simple," God explains. "These people learned early on to share and feed one another, while the greedy only think of themselves."

A.D., just printing and posting our "free" *Levitt Letters* and *Personal Letters* costs closer to \$20/ year/ subscriber. Your contributions feed not only yourself, of course, but also around 2,000 imprisoned subscribers. Even more significantly, your donations feed multitudes of television and online viewers of *Zola Levitt Presents* who don't receive our newsletters. Producing and airing our "free" TV programs costs much more than disseminating our newsletters. Praise the Lord, ZLM is a heavenly ministry that uses the long spoons of the Internet, television, and bulk mail to feed the masses who otherwise would go hungry. ("Feed My sheep," said Yeshua in John 21:17) —Mark

Thank you, C.J.S. and A.D., for your thoughtful suggestions.

Following the direction of Proverbs 15:22, "Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established," we will continue to seek the wisdom of God, and the Godly counsel of those who love Zola Levitt Ministries. —Tony



Still Waiting ...

Dear Mark,

I wonder if giving is down because readers are picking up your animus against our president (i.e., your lack of support for moving the embassy to Jerusalem — wait and see attitude). —J.McC. (MI)

Dear J.McC. —

Rather than animus, any "wait and see attitude" on my part boils down to wondering when construction of America's permanent embassy in Jerusalem will actually begin so it can open for business. Yesterday would not be too soon for me.

President Trump, I believe, has done his part in this overdue pending move — certainly more than prior administrations. I salute Guatemala for following suit, and am pulling for Australia's effort to move its embassy to Jerusalem.

Thank you for your enclosed donation. Your tangible support conveys increased sincerity to your words. —Mark ★

Dry Bones





It's long been known that you should never insert an unknown USB drive into your computer because it could be loaded with malware. However, new research at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) exposes 29 types of USB attacks, and they extend to your smartphone.

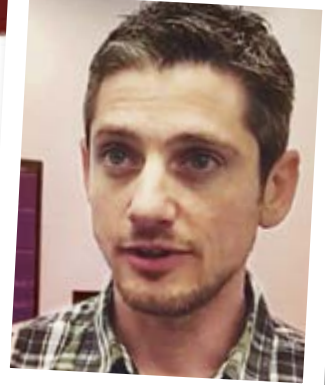
It shows that you should never use a USB charger you find lying around, or plug into a public USB port. Both could be compromised by attackers, according to BGU researcher Ran Yahalom.

Yahalom is the co-author of an article published in the journal *Computers & Security* with Dr. Nir Nissim, head of the Malware Lab at Cyber@BGU, and Prof. Yuval Elovici, who heads Cyber@BGU.

"If you use a charger in a coffee shop, an airport, or a train station — any charger that is not your own, you don't know what that piece of hardware really does," he stresses. "It may not be a charger, but a microcontroller hidden inside a charger casing. It could be something else. You don't know. Once inserted into your phone, anything could happen.

"The general rule of thumb is this: treat technology as something you don't naturally trust. As users, we have a tendency to trust technology. You trust your flash drive; you trust your keyboard, but you trust it because you're aware of where it's been and who has access.

"Treat technology like a syringe: You wouldn't inject yourself with a syringe you found in the parking lot, because you're aware you could be infected. You have no knowledge of what could happen, but are afraid because it could be dangerous. This is exactly how you should treat unfamiliar USB ports and chargers." ★



BGU cyber researcher Ran Yahalom



SOME BASIC CYBER-SECURITY RULES:

- Bring your own charger
- Use your own hardware
- Don't trust wi-fi networks
- Educate yourself about different levels of security. For example, 3G is more secure than wi-fi, because wi-fi is easier to hack.

Alzheimer's Vaccine?



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

Alzheimer's disease, affecting some 47 million people worldwide, for now remains an irreversible and fatal brain disorder. Taking a proactive approach, an Israeli brain researcher is developing a vaccine against this devastating disease.

Most vaccines work by mounting an immune response toward a weakened pathogen to boost the immune system's ability to fight the real pathogen. Prof. Eitan Okun's vaccine primes the body to attack amyloid beta protein accumulations in the brain, one of the signature signs of Alzheimer's disease.

He is preparing to design human trials on people at known risk of developing the disease in their 50s or younger: those genetically inclined toward Alzheimer's and people with Down syndrome.

"These critical trials will determine whether the vaccine actually works in humans," said Okun, who also is investigating why people with Down syndrome are more apt to develop Alzheimer's. In experiments at his Paul E. Feder Alzheimer's Research Lab at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, Okun used mice engineered to mimic Down syndrome.

In addition to his potentially groundbreaking vaccine, Okun is investigating new ways to diagnose Alzheimer's earlier and more accurately using advanced MRI technologies to detect initial signs of amyloid protein clumps in the brain.

"My researchers and I have been seeking to **construct a protein that could enter the bloodstream, make it through the blood-brain barrier, bind to the amyloids and then be visible in an MRI scan,**" he said. "I am always looking for new angles to attack Alzheimer's. I have never been more optimistic that prevention of the disease will be achieved."

"There is currently no cure for neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, and medical science can only identify such conditions behaviorally — through the symptoms that indicate that brain tissue has already been destroyed," he explained.

"Our challenge is to find the clues in molecular biology and biochemistry of the brain that would indicate there's a problem, and would also give us possible targets for early drug intervention."

I am convinced that a vaccination approach is the way to go with neurodegenerative diseases," said Okun.

His father was diagnosed with dementia in his 60s. "By the time the changes in his motor and cognitive function became apparent, the brain tissues were already lost. It is my hope that, by gaining a fuller understanding of what happens to our brains as we age, we will be able to help more people live a fuller, more cognitively healthy life."

Okun, 39, earned his master's and doctorate in immunology at Bar-Ilan and did a post-doctoral fellowship at the National Institutes of Health in the United States. ★



Human brain bisected in the sagittal plane, anatomical illustration by Dr. Johannes Sobotta



Talk About God Decreases



BY JONATHAN MERRITT (r) NYTimes.com

More than 70% of Americans identify as Christian, but an overwhelming majority say that they don't feel comfortable speaking about faith most of the time. In much of America, increasingly, religious fluency is not assumed. Work often takes precedence over worship, social lives take priority over spiritual disciplines, and most people save their Sunday-best clothing for Monday through Friday.

Christianity has always produced progeny through the combination of spiritual speech and good deeds. Nearly every New Testament author speaks about the power of spiritual speech, and Jesus' final command sent His disciples into the world to spread His teachings. You cannot be a Christian in a vacuum.

Disappearing Testimony

In a survey of 1,000 American adults that I conducted with the Barna Group, a social research firm focused on religion and public life, I found that a range of internal conflicts drives them from God-talk. Some said these types of

conversations create tension or arguments (28%); others feel put off by how religion has been politicized (17%); still others report not wanting to appear religious (7%), sound weird (6%), or seem extremist (5%). Whatever the reason, for most of us in this majority-Christian nation, our conversations almost never address the spirituality we claim is important.

A deeper look reveals that **the decline in sacred speech is not a recent trend**, though we are only now becoming fully aware of it. Searching the Google Ngram corpus — a collection of millions

of books, newspapers, webpages, and speeches published between 1500 and 2008 — shows that the frequency of religious and spiritual words has been declining in the English-speaking world since the early 20th century.

Disappearing Words

One might expect a meaty theological term like "salvation" to fade, but basic moral and religious words are also falling out of use. A study in *The Journal of Positive Psychology* analyzed 50 terms associated with moral virtue. Language about the virtues that Christians call the fruit of the spirit (words like "love," "patience," "gentleness," and "faithfulness") has become much rarer. Humility words (like "modesty")

(continued next page)



fell by 52%. Compassion words (like “kindness”) dropped by 56%. Gratitude words (like “thankfulness”) declined by 49%.

There is a practical reason we need a revival in God-talk, specifically at this time in American history. Many people now avoid religious and spiritual language because they don’t like the way it has been used, misused, or abused by others. But when people stop speaking God because they don’t like the way such terminology has been used, those who are causing the problem get to hog the microphone.

That toothy televangelist keeps using spiritual language to call for donations to buy a second jet. The politician keeps using spiritual language to push unjust legislation. They can dominate the conversation because we’ve stopped speaking God. In our effort to avoid contributing to the problem, we actually worsen it.



Time to Revive Sacred Speech

Believers in 21st-century America must work together to revive sacred speech and rekindle confidence in the vocabulary of faith. If we cannot rise to this occasion, sacred speech will continue its rapid decline—and the worst among us will continue to define what the word “Christian” means. ★

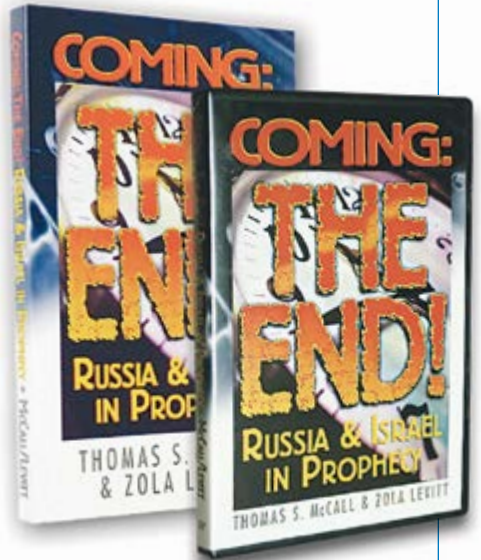


Coming: The End! Russia & Israel in Prophecy

Book & teaching CD by
Zola Levitt and Dr. Thomas S. McCall

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

(Please see [p.4](#) article on Jerusalem by Dr. Thomas S. McCall.)



SELECT MEDIA BRIEFS



An old IDF tank barrel from the Yom Kippur War looks out over the Syrian side of the Golan from a hilltop a few hundred yards from the border

photo: Seth J. Frantzman

Golan Border Understanding

By Herb Keinon / JPost.com

In August, Israel and Russia reached an understanding to ensure the preservation of the 1974 cease-fire line on the Golan Heights.

According to a TASS Russian News Agency report, Israel's Ambassador to Russia Gary Koren said, "We coordinated the arrangement under which Russia pledged to make sure, as it were, that the Syrian Army will not cross the cease-fire line established under the 1974 agreement. It looks like everything is functioning for the time being. I hope it will be so in the future, as well."

Koren said Israel insisted on the full withdrawal of Iranian troops from Syria.

The 1974 Separation of Forces Agreement between Israel and Syria, which followed the Yom Kippur War, separated Israeli and Syrian troops and created a **146-mile buffer zone in the Golan Heights**. Israel demands the buffer zone be respected, even as

it is deeply concerned that Iranian or Shia forces moving south with Syrian President Bashar Assad's troops may try to violate it.

Refugee Ethos Is The Biggest Obstacle To Peace

By Raphael Ahren / TimesOfIsrael.com

Former Member of the Knesset (MK) Einat Wilf believes that peace will not come as long as the Palestinians cling to their demand to "return" to areas now belonging to Israel.

In *The War of Return*, a book that she co-authored with former *Haaretz* journalist Adi Schwartz, she notes that immediately after the 1948 War of Independence, Arab leaders opposed the return by those who had left their homes in what had become the State of Israel, as this was considered a tacit recognition of Israeli sovereignty.

But a short while later, Arab leaders changed their strategy and demanded that the "refugees" return to their

(continued next page)



FRAZZ

BY JEF MALLETT





IF THE PALESTINIANS WANTED PEACE THERE WOULD BE PEACE. IF ISRAEL WANTED WAR, THE PALESTINIANS WOULD NOT EXIST!

– Anonymous

old homes. The “right of return” was thus formulated clearly “as the continuation of war by other means,” write Wilf and Schwartz.

The War of Independence has never ended, the authors maintain. Officials at the Palestinian Authority today pay lip service to a two-state solution, but in reality are convinced that masses of “refugees” will soon “return” to their homes in Jaffa and Haifa, ultimately destroying the Jewish state.

“We were blind — maybe willfully blind — to what they wanted. You can’t make peace with blindness,” Wilf said.

[How did so much of the world lose sight of the original “two-state plan”:](#) Jordan and Israel? — Editor

Frankincense Honey

By Ilan Ben Zion /APNews.com

Frankincense trees bloom on the [Balm of Gilead Farm](#) founded by Israeli [Guy Erlich](#) near Almog, an Israeli settlement near the Dead Sea in the Jordan Valley, in the West Bank. Erlich is cashing in by

producing exotic honey from a rare tree that produces frankincense — the resin once worth its weight in gold and venerated in the Bible. But the Palestinians and the vast majority of the international community consider Israeli settlements in the West Bank, along with their use of local natural resources, to be illegal.

“I focus on plants that few other people in the world cultivate,” Erlich said. “These are very important plants, and if they’re not cultivated they’ll disappear.”

Erlich’s *Boswellia sacra* trees are still too young to produce frankincense, but their honey may provide an interim source of revenue. His first batch of single-source honey made from the desert plants’ tiny flowers sold for nearly \$500 a pound. Growing demand for frankincense in traditional Chinese and other alternative medicines has put an incredible stress on the natural habitat of the *Boswellia*. For now, farms like Erlich’s are rare.



Frankincense flowers

photo: AP Photo/Issam Alabayov

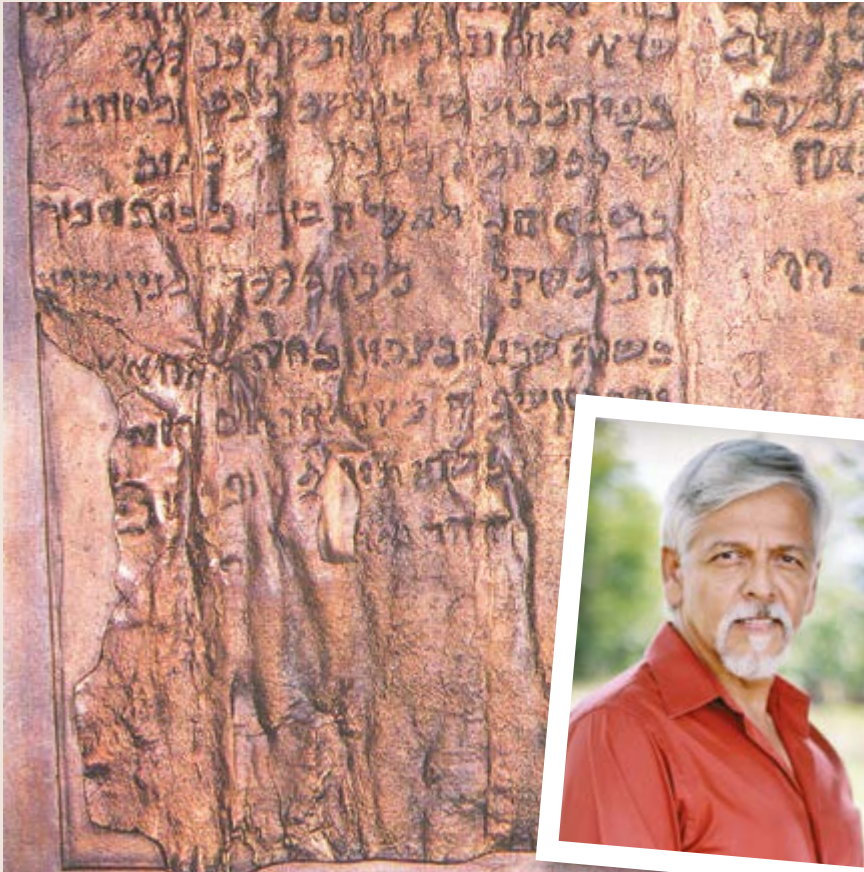
Boswellia trees take around 10 years to become mature enough to be tapped for their resin. Erlich’s oldest plants are still years from that point. While he’s pleased to have found a profitable byproduct from the young trees, he still has a hurdle to overcome ahead of his next honey harvest: “I’m personally a bit afraid of bees, but it looks like I’ll have to get over it,” he said. ★



On the Trail of Temple Gold



ARCHAEOLOGY: BY ADAM ELIAHU BERKOWITZ (r) BreakingIsraelNews.com



Parts of a replica of the Copper Scroll

Jim Barfield

Discovered in 1952 near Qumran on the shores of the Dead Sea, the Copper Scroll is unlike the other Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), which are mostly religious manuscripts written on parchment. The Copper Scroll is engraved on a thin sheet of copper, and many archaeologists believe it is an inventory from the Second Temple, a list of gold and silver items and the 64 locations where they can be found. Temple vessels and priestly vestments are also listed.

No archaeologist has ever deciphered the directions contained in the Copper Scroll to find the treasure.

Jim Barfield's unique skills may have solved one of history's most enduring mysteries. Barfield, a Noahide who speaks no Hebrew, has no background in archaeology. He is a retired criminal investigator for an Oklahoma Fire Department, used to patiently sifting through the ashes to find the truth.

In 2006, Barfield was interested in the DSS and their relevance to Bible study. At first, he was uninterested in the Copper Scroll, which has no theological significance, but then he met Vendyl Jones, a Texas preacher turned Biblical archaeologist, who told Jim that the Copper Scroll had more prophecy in it than any of the other DSS.

Barfield met with Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) director Shuka Dorfman who was unreceptive. But as Barfield laid out his proofs, Dorfman became enthusiastic and arranged a meeting with veteran archaeologist and Qumran expert, Yuval Peleg.

(continued next page)



To
Index



Back to
p. 20



Peleg agreed to dig some exploratory holes at the site with Barfield. Less than an hour after beginning shallow test pits, Peleg received a phone call and without any explanation, Peleg shut down the dig.

This was the beginning of many bureaucratic stonewalls preventing Barfield from verifying his theories.

Later, Barfield met Moshe Feiglin, at the time a Likud Member of Knesset and a strong advocate for the Temple. A few weeks later, the two were wandering around the tourist site, a large duffel bag in tow. They visited five spots that Barfield felt were most likely repositories for Temple treasure.

An hour later, Barfield ran the data from a metal detector through his computer. Every spot was a hit and one locus especially so.

However, the Israeli government still won't permit Barfield to investigate and has placed a moratorium on archaeological digging at Qumran. It is disputed territory, and anything that comes out of the ground can be disputed. It is possible that the Israeli government is concerned that if they dig up this massive treasure, Jordan or the Palestinian Authority will sue for it — even if it comes from the Jewish Temple.

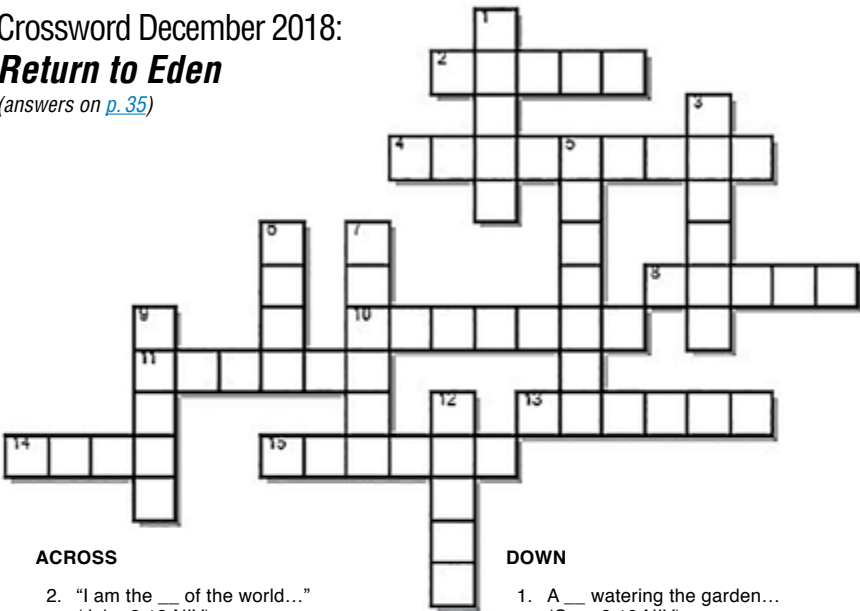
The Copper Scroll, an ancient Jewish artifact inscribed in Hebrew, is currently in a museum in Amman, Jordan.

(See [p. 20](#) for our *Secrets of the Scrolls* DVDs.) ★

Crossword December 2018:

Return to Eden

(answers on [p. 35](#))



ACROSS

2. "I am the ___ of the world..." (John 8:12 NIV)
4. So God created the great" (Gen. 1:21 NIV)
8. "Let the ___ teem with living creatures..." (Gen. 1:20 NIV)
10. Wheat (Hebrew)
11. Fig (Hebrew)
13. He seized the (Rev. 20:2 NIV)
14. "Look, I am coming ___!" (Rev. 22:12 NIV)
15. I did not see a ___ in the city... (Rev. 21:22 NIV)

DOWN

1. A ___ watering the garden... (Gen. 2:10 NIV)
3. Barley (Hebrew)
5. Date (Hebrew)
6. The Lord says, "I will return to ___." (Zech. 8:3 NIV)
7. Bread (Hebrew)
9. The house was built of (1 Kings 6:7 NIV)
12. It shone with the ___ of God... (Rev. 21:11 NIV)



Australia's Islamic Musical Chairs

BY MARK BROOK / DailyMail.co.uk



Sheik Taj El-Din Hilaly (center), Grand Mufti of Australia

A controversial Islamic sheik who compared uncovered women to “pieces of meat” has been sworn in as Australia’s top Muslim cleric. Sheik Taj El-Din Hilaly was recently appointed Grand Mufti of Australia by Queensland’s long serving Imam Abdul Taub Raza. The event took place in front of fellow Imams, community leaders, and worshippers, but not all leaders were made aware of the move.

Hilaly was apparently reluctant to take the role of Grand Mufti of Australia, a position he last held 11 years ago before he stepped down amid a series of controversies. A source from within the Muslim community confided that the outspoken Mufti only accepted the role after he was pressured by community leaders. “They said he is the only person who can clean up this position,” the source said.

The outspoken sheik stepped down as Australia’s Grand Mufti in 2007 after he issued a series of offensive comments. In 2006, he caused outrage after he said that women who do not wear the veil are like “uncovered meat” who attract sexual predators. And then in 2007, he upset critics by saying that Muslims are more Australian than those with convict ancestors.

The decision to reinstate Hilaly as Grand Mufti comes amid increasing tensions between warring Islamic factions following the death of Dr. Abdul Azeem al-Afifi. **Some community members believe al-Afifi was only given the role to allow for the current acting**

Grand Mufti Ibrahim Abu Mohamed to assume the title after his death.

Dr. Mohamed was forced to take a 12-month break from the role after he completed the maximum two three-year terms in March, but returned in July after al-Afifi’s death. His return to the top job reportedly fueled tensions within the Muslim community and aided suspicions that the terminally ill al-Afifi was only appointed to prevent the publicly nominated candidate Sheik Yahya Safi from being anointed.

“They knew before they appointed al-Afifi that he was dying, that he had cancer,” Abraham Zoabi of the Voice of Islam radio network told *The Australian* at the time. The move to reinstate Hilaly comes just days after he reposted a comment from 2016 on



Hilaly (right)

social media that called for the position of Grand Mufti to be abolished.

However, Keysar Trad, a former spokesperson for Hilaly, said that the decision to reappoint him had been in the cards for several months.

“Discontent has grown over what many in the community see as an exclusive club with musical chairs, known as the Australian National Imams Council (ANIC) and the position of Grand Mufti,” Trad said. ★



JEWISH HUMOR, ETC.



*A cheerful heart is good medicine —
Proverbs 17:22*

Hanukkah Wish

When Solomon asked his little boy what he wanted for Hanukkah, the boy replied, "A baby sister."

As it turned out, Solomon's wife was pregnant and delivered on the first day of Hanukkah. A couple of days later, she brought home a brand new baby sister for their son.

The next year, when Solomon asked his little boy what he wanted for Hanukkah, the boy said, "If it wouldn't make Mommy too uncomfortable, I'd like a pony!"



Catchy!

Q. What did Adam say on the day before Christmas?

A. It's Christmas, Eve. ★

Answers for Jerusalem Quiz (p.15)

146 times New Testament
660 times Old Testament
0 (zero) Koran

Answer Key for December 2018 Crossword (p.33)

Across:
2. Light 11. Teenah
4. Creatures 13. Dragon
8. Water 14. Soon
10. Chittah 15. Temple

Down:
1. River 7. Lechem
3. Seorah 9. Stone
5. Tahmahr 12. Glory
6. Zion



Zola Levitt Presents TV Airing Schedule

Freeform Airing Day & Time by zone

DirecTV – Channel 311 Dish – Channel 180

Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Days	2:30 AM and 5:30 AM Sun	3:30 AM and 6:30 AM Sun	4:30 AM Sun	5:30 AM Sun

Daystar Airing Day & Time by zone

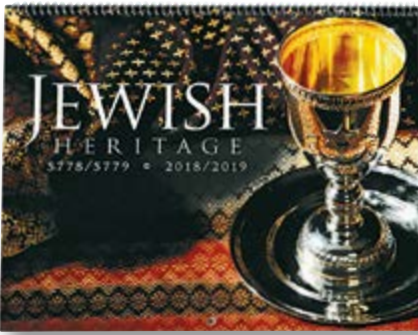
DirecTV – Channel 369 Dish – Channel 263

Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Days	8 PM Wed 3 PM Fri	9 PM Wed 4 PM Fri	10 PM Wed 5 PM Fri	11 PM Wed 6 PM Fri

Our complete TV Airing Schedule includes dozens and dozens of independent channels and is posted at www.levitt.com/schedule

(New series from Israel airing soon!)





Jewish Heritage Calendar 5779 (2018-2019)

With the Seven Feasts of Israel in mind, imagine the usefulness of our delightful and inexpensive Jewish Heritage Calendar. This beautiful calendar began in September and spans 13 months, through September 2019. It provides the dates of all the Biblical feasts and Sabbaths plus the names of the months, the Holy Days, and all the rest through English phonetics like those in our monthly Hebrew Lesson in the *Levitt Letter*. Enjoy Biblical feast graphics, Hebraic regalia pictures, and inspiration.

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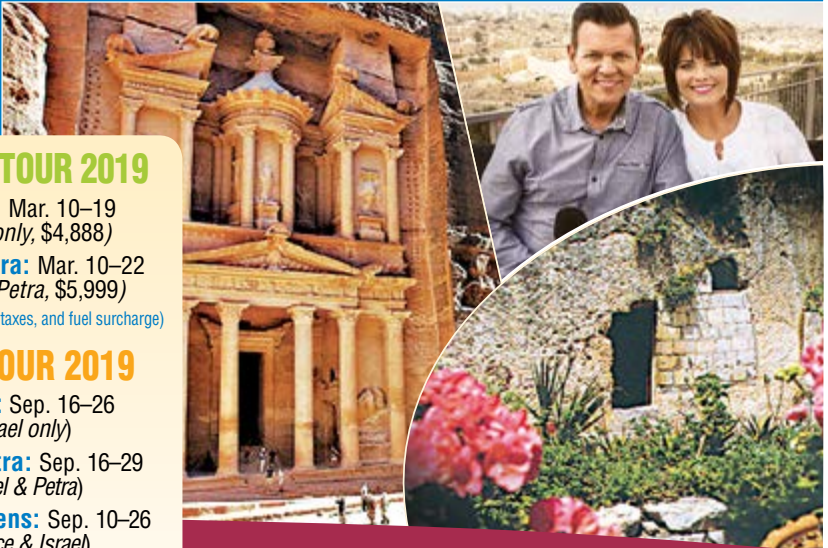
Zola Levitt Ministries is ECFA approved



To
Index

Join David & Kirsten Hart in Israel & Petra this
SPRING; or in Israel, Petra, & Greece next **FALL**.

Petra,
the Harts,
& Garden
Tomb



SPRING TOUR 2019

Deluxe: Mar. 10–19
(Israel only, \$4,888)

Grand Petra: Mar. 10–22
(Israel & Petra, \$5,999)

(prices include tips, taxes, and fuel surcharge)

FALL TOUR 2019

Deluxe: Sep. 16–26
(Israel only)

Grand Petra: Sep. 16–29
(Israel & Petra)

Grand Athens: Sep. 10–26
(Greece & Israel)

Ultra Grand: Sep. 10–29
(Greece & Israel & Petra)

(Dates are tentative, prices are pending)

For more info and registration see:
www.levitt.com/tours

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or email travel@levitt.com.

A refundable deposit by credit card
will hold your reservation.

Go!



Back to
p. 15