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Enhancing Trust

Dear Reader,

April 2021

Denying that the Resurrection happened doesn't mean that it didn't. Plenty of people question whether Jesus lived, but His earthly existence is universally accepted by even serious doubters of His divinity. April's cover story will give you confidence to believe what the Bible says and defend it to skeptics. Right on time, a newly discovered "Christ born of Mary" inscription adds fuel (p. 21).

On our cover, Zola explains how Jesus/Yeshua fulfilled the first three of the Lord's Seven Feasts. (Next month, we'll look at the fourth fulfillment.) You'll also read surprising things that the disciples did after the Resurrection (p. 10).

Tony concludes our Bible study of Ecclesiastes, sharing more of Solomon's wisdom (4), and Kirsten breaks down the Israelites' exodus to the Red Sea with a logistical mind (6). In January, Kirsten pled for kindness; Mark relates that we have a way to go (14).

Israeli researchers address timely issues, like quick-charging car batteries (26) and countering the impact of Covid on lungs (27). Todd continues his discussion about baptism (12), and then, with his TJF team, reports on their anointed efforts to plant Gospel seeds in Israeli hearts (13).

Some Muslims still preach hate (34); but you'll see hope as many Arabs acknowledge the Holocaust (28).

Please remember to *sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim* — pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6),



Margot

Margot, Editor
Zola Levitt Ministries

P.S. Good News! Israel is planning to welcome tourists again, thanks to their masks and mass vaccination initiatives. Zola Tours Fall Tour 2021 and Spring Tour 2022 itineraries are taking shape (info on p. 36). You can bless Israelis by touring Israel or by supporting ZLM and our benevolence funds that spread the Gospel here and abroad.

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

The Feast of First Fruits (Easter)

By Zola Levitt
(1979)

inside: **Passing Through p.6**

credit: Photo "A look from inside the tomb in Israel" by Pstet Heng on Unsplash



In Leviticus 23, the God of Israel gave a marvelous and profound prophetic system by choosing, seemingly arbitrarily, seven holy feasts to be held each year by the Chosen People. On Mount Sinai, God imparted this important information to Moses, who dutifully delivered it to Israel in the wilderness. From that moment, the Tabernacle was built and the feasts observed by the true believers exactly according to the instructions of the Lord.

It is the third feast, First Fruits, we'll discuss here. The Church continues to celebrate First Fruits in its New Testament essence as Resurrection Sunday (Easter). Yet, Believers* can realize neither its full impact nor its glorious promise for the future without understanding the feast's original form directly from God's Old Testament instruction in Leviticus.

The Church appreciates Passover because *(continued p.8)*

Passover Week: sunset March 27 to sunset April 4,
Resurrection Sunday/Easter: April 4,
Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day): April 7–8
sunset to sunset

Is the NT Accurate about the Resurrection?

JewsForJesus.org

Some people automatically question the New Testament documents when attempting to uncover the "historical Jesus." The assumption is that its writers were biased and interjected their own agendas rather than record what actually happened. But this attitude often stems more from our modern age of cynicism than from any familiarity with the New Testament itself.

It is amazing that **so many people who have little direct knowledge of the New Testament have dogmatic ideas about its contradictions or its historical inaccuracy.** A familiarity with the New Testament should be the starting point of any discussion *(continued p.2)*

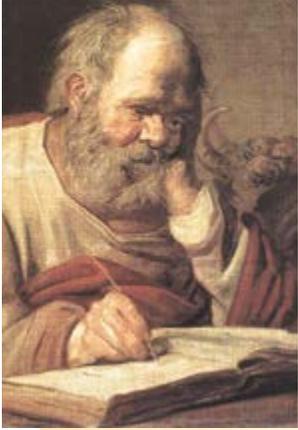
* "Believer" is short for "believer in Yeshua/Jesus as Messiah."

Is NT Accurate about the Resurrection? *continued from cover sidebar*

about Yeshua, if only to identify the traditional view.

The first four books of the New Testament are called the Gospels, the

biographies of the life of Yeshua. Each book gives the account from the writer's own vantage point, and all four mention the Resurrection. When Yeshua was on the cross, His followers were defeated and faithless, as



Detail of *St. Luke* (circa 1625) by Frans Hals

they did not understand the necessity for His death. After the Resurrection, Yeshua physically appeared to them and from then on, we see changed behavior in their lives. No longer cowardly and bumbling, they were transformed into bold proclaimers of the message of the Resurrection.

The Book of Acts

Following the Gospel accounts is the Book of Acts, which records the history of the first generation of Jewish followers who began to take this message around the world. Their message focused on the empty tomb. The remainder of the books in the New Testament (with one exception) consist of instructional letters, in which the Resurrection is mentioned repeatedly as the basis for this faith.

History, it is said, is written by the winners. But at the time the New Testament was written, **the followers of Yeshua were a small, persecuted minority.** They were hardly the group in power, able to say whatever they pleased. And as for their agenda, they felt compelled to promote the belief that Yeshua rose from the dead. Why else would the New Testament contain such embarrassingly

truthful events of the fear, faithlessness, and sin of the very community that was promoting this message?

The best way to recognize the New Testament as a historical document is to read it. It is hard to come away with any other conclusion.

One of the most famous Jews of the 20th century did just that and discovered something quite remarkable. In a 1929 interview in *The Saturday Evening Post*, Albert Einstein was asked if he believed in the historical Jesus, and he replied,

"Unquestionably! No one can read the Gospels without feeling the actual presence of Jesus. His personality pulsates in every word. No myth is filled with such life."

The same documents that tell us Yeshua lived also mention that He died and rose again. While no serious scholar doubts that Yeshua walked among us, skeptics (both Jewish and gentile) frequently try to extract the "real history" from these documents and throw away what they believe to be myth.

Each year a new set of scholars steps up to the plate, planning to knock down the traditional life of Yeshua. Their arguments are then readily embraced by those who are looking for reasons not to believe. Yet by the following year, a whole new school of thought emerges, taking exception with the previous year's scholarship and going off in a new direction.

We are left with these questions: Were these 1st-century Jewish believers in Jesus the most brilliant deceivers in history, able to interweave truth and fiction in a way that has not been reproduced or disproven by centuries of challengers? Or were they simply sharing the historical events as they happened when they described the resurrection of Yeshua? Until a compelling and lasting alternative is produced, the New Testament must be taken seriously when discussing the resurrection of Yeshua. ★





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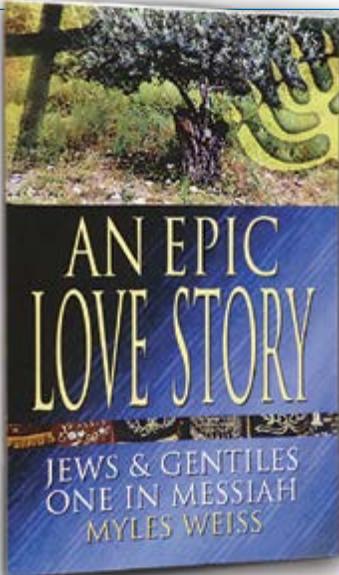
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An Epic Love Story

study booklet

by Myles Weiss

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

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(This and many titles also available as eBooks.)

The Conclusion of the Matter

Ecclesiastes 11–12

Tony Derrick
Theologian for
Zola Levitt Ministries



If you have followed this study of Ecclesiastes from its beginning in the [February 2020 Personal Letter](#), I applaud your determination to see it through to the end.

To conclude our study, we will cover chapters 11 and 12. In chapter 11, Solomon points out the need to embrace one's work with determination. He then concludes chapter 11 and begins chapter 12 by advising his readers to begin their service to God in their youth.

Let's look at what Paul wrote to Timothy, *"Let no one despise your youth but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity"* (1 Timothy 4:12). Good advice!

Now let's look at Solomon's final words of wisdom. At first it appears that Solomon contradicts himself regarding riches. In chapter 2, he described the emptiness that pleasure and wealth can bring. However, he knew that in everyday life, a living needed to be made. So, he set forth to give readers sage advice about how to best provide for their needs.



Detail of *Timothy with his Grandmother Lois* (ca. 1650) oil by Willem Drost

1. Be Wise in Your Trade (11:1–6)

Verses 1 and 2 have been interpreted in different ways. Some would say to cast your troubles onto the water and watch them sink, or cast off your past and remove it from your memory. But Solomon is giving advice to entrepreneurs to develop investments in seven or eight different options. He concludes verse 2 reasoning that one cannot know what evil lurks, or in other words, which investment may fail.

Next, Solomon encourages people in verses 3 and 4 to sow seed in the moment. It may rain, or it may not, but waiting is wasting time. His advice in this instance gets to the heart of the matter concerning decisions. Solomon knew that if farmers hesitated to plant, their livelihood would be in peril, which would affect everyone who depended on the crops.

In verses 5 and 6, Solomon impresses upon his readers to sow their seed throughout the day. In other words, stay busy in the daylight hours. They could not know which seed will take hold, no more than they know the direction of the wind, or the formation of a child in the womb.

2. Seek God in Your Youth (11:9–10)

Solomon concludes chapter 11 with the counsel to seek God in your youth. In these final verses, he cautions the young in verse 9 that they can chase everything their hearts desire and what appeals to them that looks good. But, at the end of the verse Solomon gives a warning, "But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment."

3. Commit to God before Old Age (12:1)

Solomon now presses the issue to remember God early in life. He urges his

(continued next page)





readers to keep His laws and serve Him consistently, because God is the Creator, and everyone's life is in His hands. That can be both comforting and frightening, depending on how a person decides to live his or her life.

4. Face the Facts of Aging (12:2–7)

Verse 2 offers insight into the possibility of depression as a person gets older and his interests and abilities diminish. It is inevitable that each of us will “lose a step” as we age. I am reminded of a Canadian TV Show called *The Red Green Show* in which the host of the show (Mr. Red Green) would have a segment where he cautions men who are getting older that they should no longer say, “Watch this.”

Verses 3–5 list an array of signs of failing health. When you read the verses in your favorite Bible translation, **you will see the picture that Solomon is painting about growing old.**

“Keepers of the house tremble” — A once sturdy and stalwart person is now unstable and shaky.

“Grinders cease” — The loss of teeth causes chewing to be difficult.

“Windows grow dim” — Eyesight is failing.

“Doors are shut in the street” — This could represent the mouth drawn in when closed because of the loss of teeth.

“When one rises at the sound of a bird” — This indicates the inability to

sleep through the night. A person is awakened by the slightest sounds.

“The daughters of music brought low” — The singing voice has faded.

“Afraid of height” — One becomes unstable and very cautious.

“Almond tree blossoms” — The obvious interpretation is the graying of hair.

“The grasshopper is a burden” — It takes longer to move any distance.

“Desire fails” — This could be taken as sexual, or the lack of pleasure in anything.



Many of the maladies mentioned in these verses have been mitigated by modern western medicine. But remember, this is Solomon's description of his time. There was little to be done to combat the normal aging process in his day.

5. Face the Fact of Death (12:6–8)

Solomon returns again to the fact that people die. We all have been reminded of that fact with the tragic number of deaths during the coronavirus pandemic. Verses 6 to 8 probably picture a life that is poured out. The “silver cord” has been cut that holds the “golden bowl,” which could be some type of lamp, or perhaps a menorah. The lamp breaks and all the oil spills out, and with that the light goes out.

6. Solomon's Conclusion (12:9–14)

Solomon points out that his purpose was to offer wise counsel to the people. He compared his words of wisdom to an ox goad, which is a long sharp stick used to drive cattle and oxen. He also referred to them as “well-driven nails,” or we could say he nailed down the basic principles of life.

Solomon's final words on the matter are found in the last two verses: *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment. Including every secret thing. Whether good or evil.”* ★

Passing Through

Kirsten Hart
Studio co-host of
Our Jewish Roots



credit: Everett Collection

In *The Ten Commandments* (1956), Charlton Heston as Moses parted the sea into two huge walls of water, between which the Children of Israel crossed on a temporarily dry seabed to the opposite shore.

As March becomes April this year, many are celebrating the Feast of *Pesach*, also known as *Passover*. *Passover* commemorates the liberation of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. Most of you already know that fact. But I researched the journey of the Israelites and discovered that they had quite an adventure just getting to the Red (Reed) Sea.

The Real Exodus

Movies about the Exodus seem to show the Hebrews escaping Egypt and narrowly making it to the sea before Pharaoh's army comes hunting them down. I wondered if it was simply a few miles between their "escape point" and the location where Moses parted the waters. Though many scholars speculate about the actual point of crossing through the sea, assuming 200 miles (roughly) allows us to do a little bit of figuring.



Charlton Heston plays Moses in *The Ten Commandments*

The average, healthy person can walk three miles per hour. That is if you're in shape, wearing appropriate shoes, and obviously not burdened with all of your possessions (and gold!). Now factor in running after toddlers and the generally slower pace of the elderly. If the Israelites' journey was 200 miles, and if they could walk three miles per hour, simple math tells us that their beginning journey took them 66.66 hours of non-stop travel. That's almost three days of walking without a rest!

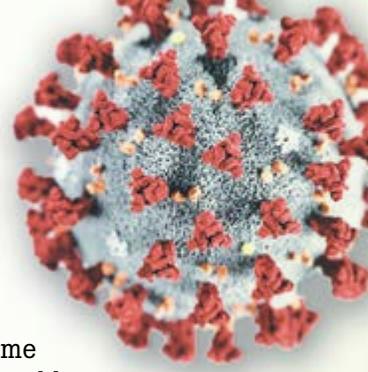
On their way to the Promised Land, the Israelites began with an intense journey in its own right. Unlike in the movie *The Ten Commandments*, Pharaoh and his army may not have suddenly appeared over the horizon.

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Moses and his people were probably already tired and worn out when they saw the chariots approaching along the road they'd just traveled.



Our Own Journey Today

Today's global population has been walking through some trying and difficult days since Covid-19 came on to the world-wide scene. Too many loved ones have unexpectedly died, and almost everyone has witnessed suffering and setbacks around them. Many of us have lost jobs and seen our careers and life's savings disappear. The Passover story offers hope of God's unfailing faithfulness and supernatural miracles. However, when we zoom in on the details of the people who walked through the treacherous hardships prior to the walls of seawater being held back, we catch a glimpse of a humanness that we can relate to.

God comes through — He always has, and He always will — even when we can't see the "how." You might feel as if you've walked through a barren wilderness yourself, and you're at the point of physical, mental, and spiritual exhaustion. But hold on. Don't give up hope. You may simply be *passing through* this current season. In the end, God delivered His people to a land that was bounteous with everything they would need ... and more. I'm believing that same outcome for you today. ★



because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.
— 2 TIMOTHY 1:12 NW



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During his lifetime, Zola Levitt composed over 200 Spirit-filled songs. This rich legacy was revived when musicians David and Kirsten Hart became the studio hosts of our television broadcast.

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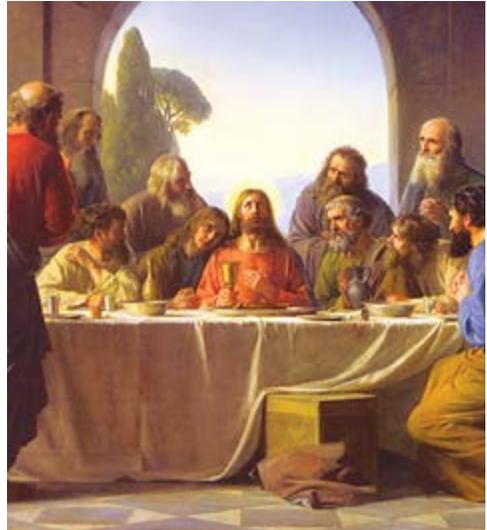
The Feast of First Fruits *continued from cover*



Yeshua cited this feast Himself as a holy convocation. Believers take the bread and the wine of Passover as Holy Communion according to the Bible's record of the Passover dinner before Yeshua's crucifixion. We correctly *"Do this in remembrance of Me"* (Luke 22:19), remembering our deliverance from bondage by the blood of the Lamb (as Israel was delivered by the blood of the lamb in the Exodus from Egypt).

The second feast, Unleavened Bread, constitutes a holy walk —

"And on the fifteenth day of the same month ... seven days ye must eat unleavened bread" (Lev. 23:6). Leaven, in the Bible, is sin, and the God of Israel asked for a week of eating "sinless" bread. As we walk in Christ, "the Bread of Life" (John 6:35), we continuously keep this feast, which is exactly our instruction from the Apostle Paul: *"Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth"* (1 Corinthians 5:8).



The Last Supper (1875), painting by Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834-1890)

First Fruits

We should look carefully at the original instructions for the third feast and understand fully their implications:

"Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it." — Lev. 23:10-11

To paraphrase, God is telling Moses, "I am taking My people into an exceptionally fertile land, and I would like them to acknowledge that fact. Each spring, when the first harvest of the year is available, the people should bring some of their initial crops to the Temple so that the high priest can acknowledge them before Me. This must be done on the Sunday (*"the morrow after the sabbath"*) during the week of Unleavened Bread."

Thus, early in the Bible, God honors Resurrection Sunday, the Sunday after Passover, as representing the things that come up out of the ground spontaneously and miraculously after the long, dead winter. We see this miracle every spring and we take it for granted, for which of us has to go out and do anything special to our trees or our shrubbery to make them come forth with their first fruits in March or April?

Obviously, we don't expend any effort at all to reap these first fruits. They are the free gift from God, as is our coming resurrection.

[The origin of the name "Easter" was discussed in the [March 2016 Levitt Letter, p. 8](#). — Ed.] The Old Testament name of the third feast, however, contains this

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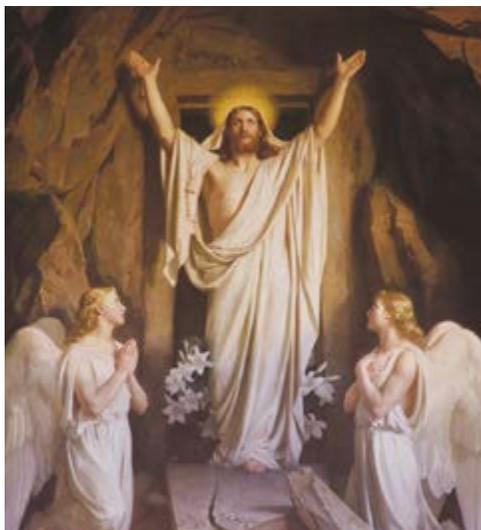
profound truth: If there are first fruits, then second and third and so on must follow. That is the true meaning of this Sunday feast. We do not celebrate merely the resurrection of the Lord on First Fruits, but more so, the resurrection of the entire Church. That the Lord rose from the dead is cause for extreme wonder and blessing. But are we really surprised? He could raise the dead Himself, He could walk on water, He could feed the thousands. The more spectacular miracle is that we ordinary, mortal, earthly sinners will all rise! As Paul presented so clearly:



“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.” — 1 Cor. 15:22–23

Those “in Adam” die, since all descendants of our sinning original father have inherited his terrible tendency. But in Christ we are made alive again. And this

will happen in some given order, as the Scripture tells us. If Christ is the firstfruits, His “number” was one. Apparently, we all have a number and will be raised from our graves in order. *“The dead in Christ shall rise first”* (1 Thess. 4:16), since they have lower numbers.

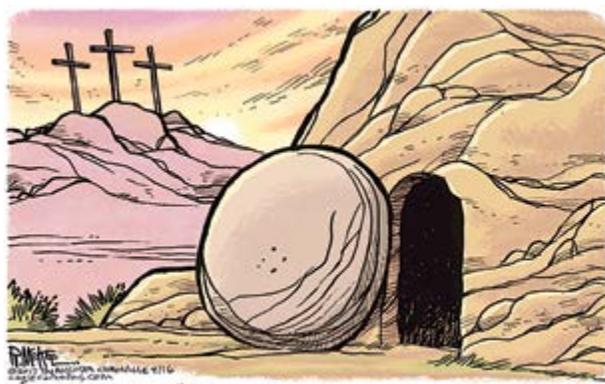


The Resurrection (1881), painting by Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834–1890)

Jesus celebrated First Fruits in the appropriate manner by rising from the dead on that feast day. He also gave the Father His proper First Fruits offering: Graves opened, and dead people rose and were seen after His resurrection in Jerusalem (Matt. 27:53). Our Lord, similar to any farmer of the soil, gratefully brought before the Father a few early “crops” of what would be a magnificent harvest later on. We

sometimes overlook that **Jesus was not the only deceased person to rise on that miraculous Feast of First Fruits.** Those He brought forth from their graves foreshadowed the Church. We Believers shall also be brought forth from our graves for the big fall harvest — the Rapture — at the Feast of Trumpets (1 Thess. 4:16–17). It was not, then, only the Lord’s resurrection that presages our promise, but the resurrection of those chosen saints of the time also assures us of our own triumph.

It is good to know *why* we do *what* we do. ZLM revels in our calling to disseminate core Biblical knowledge to readers and viewers. — David ★



“HE IS NOT HERE, BUT IS RISEN...”



5 Surprising Things Yeshua's Followers Did After Easter



BY ROBERT HUTCHINSON (r) FaithGateway.com

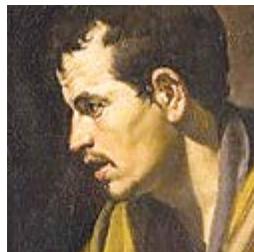
After 2,000 years, some aspects surrounding Christ's resurrection remain not well known, particularly the actions that His followers took in the days and weeks after His return from the dead.

Here are five specific things the disciples did after Easter that may surprise us.

1. The disciples were skeptical.

The Gospel records are clear: Many of Yeshua's closest followers were openly skeptical of the early reports of His resurrection.

When the women who first saw Jesus alive reported what they had seen, the other followers dismissed it as "an idle tale" and "did not believe them" (Luke 24:11). Thomas insisted that he would have to put his finger in the nail holes in Jesus' hands before believing such a thing. Some disciples had doubts *even when they saw Jesus with their own eyes* (Matthew 28:17). This means that Christians should acknowledge the skepticism they encounter about the Christian testimony.



Detail of *Saint Thomas* by Diego Velázquez (1599–1660)

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." — 1 Peter 3:15



2. They broke bread in Yeshua's memory.

The Last Supper rite bequeathed by Jesus to His followers was put into practice very early, perhaps within *days* of the Crucifixion. Mark relates briefly and Luke at length (Luke 24:13–35) about an encounter that two followers had with the risen Lord near the village of Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. The disciples did not recognize Him but invited Him to eat with them. At the table, Jesus took

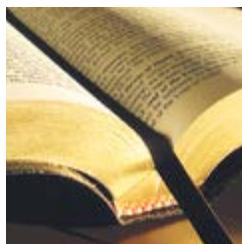
bread, blessed it and broke it, and the disciples' eyes were opened (v. 31). They reported the incident to the entire community, saying that Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

The New Testament makes it clear that Yeshua's earliest followers obeyed His command to "*do this in memory of Me*" (Luke 22:19). After Easter, the disciples in Jerusalem "*broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts*" (Acts 2:46). But His followers didn't only break bread. They did something else too.

3. They searched the Scriptures.

With few exceptions, the earliest followers of Jesus were devout Jews, steeped in the traditions and laws of their ancestors. It was natural for them to search their ancient holy books to find explanations for the recent extraordinary events, often using the Greek translation known as the Septuagint.

The Apostles, particularly Peter, explained in detail the meaning of passages in the Hebrew Bible and how they foreshadowed Yeshua's life and mission. The Apostle Philip did the same with the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26–40). Paul and Barnabas also explained the Jewish Scriptures in synagogues throughout Cyprus and what is now central Turkey.



(continued next page)





Christians today should be like the residents of Berea who received the Gospel message with great eagerness but “searched the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true” (Acts 17:11).

4. They healed the sick.

A major component of Yeshua’s mission on Earth was free healing. Twenty-five of His thirty-seven miracles (68%) concern healing.

Mark calls Jesus a healer early in his Gospel: *“Jesus healed many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons”* (Mark 1:34). **That Jesus commanded His followers to do the same is less well known.** Jesus called the twelve and instructed them to heal *“every disease and every affliction”* (Matt. 10:1). Jesus sent out 72 of His disciples two by two as emissaries of the kingdom, instructing them specifically: *“heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you’”* (Luke 10:1, 9).

After Peter healed a lame beggar in a post-Easter miracle (Acts 3:1–10), he and the other disciples engaged in a healing ministry (Acts 9:32–40). Christians since then have been involved in medical mission work, e.g., building hospitals and medical organizations such as the Red Cross. Hôtel-Dieu, the original hospital for the sick in Paris, France, first opened in A.D. 651 and still operates today in the very same location. Medical missions have been an essential part of the Christian witness from the very beginning.



Peter Preaches to Jews and Gentiles, engraving from *Bible History* (1904)

5. They invited others into their fellowship.

Some New Testament scholars claim that Jesus never intended to launch a movement. Yet the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament are emphatic that Jesus instructed His followers to *“make disciples of all nations”* (Matt. 28:19).

Yeshua’s first challenge to the Galilean fishermen was to follow Him and He would make them *“fishers of men”* (Matt. 4:19). Indeed, one of His metaphors explained that the kingdom of God is like a fishing

net. *“The kingdom of Heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind”* (Matt. 13:47–49).

Within weeks of Easter, the Lord’s followers were inviting into their fellowship everyone who would listen. After Peter’s sermon to the crowds gathered at Pentecost, *“about three thousand souls”* joined the community in a single day (Acts 2:41).

Sociologist Rodney Stark points out that the phenomenal growth of the Christian movement can be explained by the welcoming attitude of Yeshua’s followers toward groups scorned by others, such as women, slaves, Samaritans, and foreigners (gentiles). **Stark estimates that the Jesus movement grew at the rate of about 40% per decade**—from an initial 1,000 followers to roughly 217,000 followers at the end of the second century, to almost 34 million in A.D. 350, to 2.4 billion today.

Not surprisingly, the rapid growth of Christianity was also due to the disciples’ willingness to patiently answer the skepticism of their critics, break bread with strangers, search the Scriptures, and take care of the sick. These practices proclaimed to the world what Jesus and His followers were all about.

The Church needs to remember our faith’s life-changing, foundational pillars. — Kirsten ★

Water Baptism

PART 2 See Part 1 in the [March 2021 Levitt Letter](#).

Dr. Todd Baker
Zola Levitt Ministries
Staff Theologian
staff@levitt.com



Q. What does water baptism mean?

A. Water baptism is not necessary or a prerequisite for salvation. The thief on the cross who was saved is a classic example proving this. The thief merely asked Jesus for salvation, and the Lord granted it to Him without the requirement of water baptism (Luke 23:39–43). Some who do teach water baptism salvation will point to [Mark 16:16](#) — *He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.*

A correct reading of this verse does not teach that baptism saves, but rather that unbelief condemns the lost. Nor does

water baptism produce salvation or cleansing from sin. The shed blood of Jesus Christ coupled with the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit cleanses the Believer from sin (Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 1:7). When Jesus spoke of water in John 3:5 (*“unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God”*), He referred not to the water of Christian baptism but to the Old Testament symbol of spiritual washing and renewal by the Spirit of God (Psalm 51:1–10; Isaiah 32:15; 44:3–5; Ezekiel 36:24–27; Joel 2:28–29).

Acts 2:38 does not teach that baptismal regeneration produces forgiveness of sins. The text was poorly translated into English as: *“Repent for the remission of sins.”* The correct reading from the Greek text: *“Repent **because** of the remission of sins.”* Note: this is in proper keeping with the whole tenor of Scripture that teaches that water baptism follows salvation. 1 Peter 3:20–21 does not teach that baptism saves the sinner. The context shows that Peter was speaking about how being in Christ is like being on Noah’s Ark: It saves us from God’s judgment. And though Peter was speaking about baptism, he was quick to teach that it cannot remove or wash away the filth of our fallen nature in the flesh. Baptism is performed as an answer of good conscience before God.

Baptism by full immersion in water reflects the New Testament Greek word $\beta\alpha\pi\tau\iota\zeta\omega$ (*baptizo*, pronounced vap-TEE-zoh) for “baptize” means to fully immerse. Nowhere in the New Testament did they sprinkle water. The New Testament Greek word for “sprinkle” is $\rho\alpha\upsilon\tau\iota\zeta\omega$ (*rhantizo*, pronounced rah-DEE-zo); it is never used in association with water baptism. Christian baptism has its roots in the Old Testament, with the Levitical priests washing themselves in the bronze laver that was included in both the Tabernacle and the Temple. Observant Jews immerse themselves in the *mikveh*, or ritual bath of water. If you are saved and have not been baptized, being baptized will demonstrate to the world that you are an obedient disciple of Jesus Christ, following Him in His death, burial, and resurrection.

When our Israel tour groups have the opportunity to be baptized in the Jordan River, many pilgrims ask whether it is “proper” or not. Baptism remains a symbolic act of an inward change. Why not jump in and embrace the joy of *mikveh* cleansing? —David ★



Baptism of Jesus, from a series of woodcuts by Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1794–1872) for *Die Bibel in Bildern*, 1860



Past Season of Openness

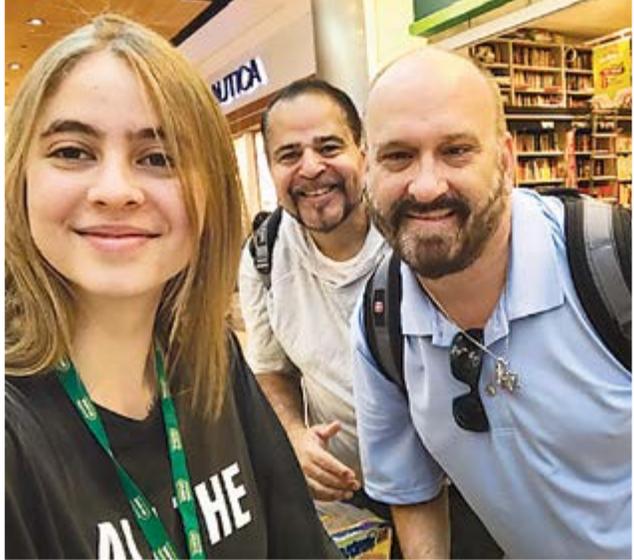
Dr. Todd Baker
ZLM Staff Theologian
TJF Team Leader



Our **To The Jew First** team has concluded this Gospel trip to Israel and is returning Stateside. Praise God, this outreach trip set another record. On our previous visit, team member August Rosado and I received no rejections from the people we met in Israel! Earlier this year we went 28-0, with every Israeli accepting a Hebrew Bible and/or a Messianic Gospel tract. That happened only once before, three years ago, when we approached 64 Israelis and each one accepted a Bible or Gospel tract from this ministry! And now, this outreach is the second in a row without a single rejection. We met thirty Israelis who were open to accepting Bibles from us.

The 30th precious soul belonged to **Gitty**, pictured here with August and me. We met her while she

was working at the Steimatzky bookstore in Jerusalem's Malcha Mall. When I mentioned that I was from Dallas, Texas, the door opened



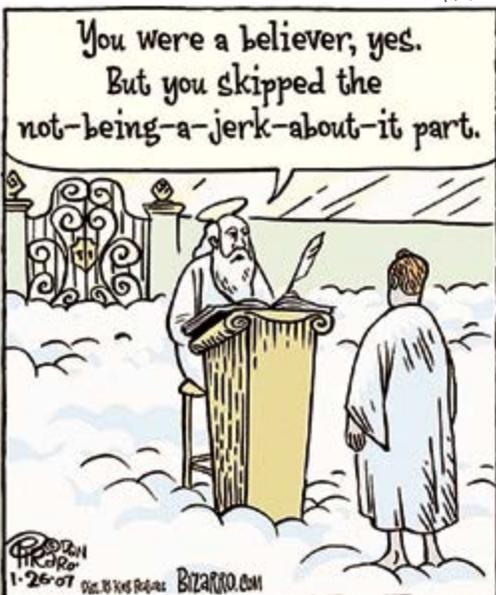
Gitty, August, and Todd

for a Gospel witness as Gitty had spent some time in Austin. The Holy Spirit works behind the scenes like that. Gitty was very open to what we had to say about Yeshua and *Ha Basarah* (the Gospel). We offered her a *matanah* ("gift" in Hebrew). **She was overjoyed to learn that it was an Old and New Testament Bible in the Hebrew language.** Praise Adonai for opening the hearts of the Chosen People to learn about Yeshua, the Messiah described in Scripture who came to save both Jew and gentile. And thank you, readers, for supporting this ZLM benevolence to Israel.

[This report details a previous year's outreach because of the current pandemic.](#) — Editor ★

BIZARRO.COM

by Dan Piraro



An Unkind Response to a Plea for Kindness

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



Dear ZLM,

Concerning [January's "A Note from Mark: Seeking Constructive Criticism"](#) and Kirsten's "Be Ye Kind," both Levitt and Hart seem to conveniently forget that it was the same Apostle Paul who preached kindness, forbearance, compassion, and uplifting words of edification, and who ripped into people when they showed no signs of repentance. Kirsten's heart is not in the right place concerning this, and neither is Mr. Levitt's.

Hart and Levitt need to learn the difference between mean-spirited attacks and righteous anger. **There's nothing wrong with righteous anger.** I have been very angry with ZLM for un-Christlike things you put into print and the way you are deceiving people with erroneous teachings. Conse-

quently, I recognize your readers' righteous anger — indignance over ZLM's lack of good, sound judgment and mishandling God's written Word. Contrary to Mr. Levitt's boast, it's not "solid Bible teaching" at all.

Iron cannot sharpen iron (Prov. 27:17) unless we are willing to take well-deserved rebukes to heart. And the refining fires of the Lord cannot take place in our hearts unless we first recognize our need for refinement. We must fully submit ourselves to Him for this painful and humbling process.

This will be the last letter that I write to ZLM. Yeshua Himself will have to deal with you. Readers who gush and fawn over you are not your true friends. *True* friends tell it like it is. — J.M.C. (AL)

Dear J.M.C.,

There's little fodder better than the banter of a Superior Christian (Matt. 7:2). Such Perfect Christians have so perfected casting Perfect Stones that they wouldn't even need a sling to take on Goliath (John 8:7). Forgive my chiding, but my sharpening stone says you're way more angry than righteous.

FACT: Neither the *Levitt Letter* nor *Our Jewish Roots* will ever be perfect — never. Maybe 99⁴⁴/100% like Ivory soap, maybe not.

We ZLMers stand to be corrected, especially concerning content that will

cumulatively edify our readers and viewers. No matter where you splash down on such issues as whether God created fossils for evolutionists, face masks are of the devil, or Goliath's height (see [p. 23](#)), it is learning the arguments behind the conclusions that enhances enlightenment. Have you taken us to task on salvation issues? Nope. Have you sent us articles that are superior to ones we've reprinted? Nope. If you're not part of the solution, then you are — sharp or dull — part of the problem. — Mark ★



ZLM Bulletin Board



Do Jewish Lives Matter? (part 4)



Probably not to those who reminisce about the Third Reich by wearing Camp Auschwitz T-shirts and sweatshirts that feature a skull and crossbones. Online marketplace Etsy apologized and banned the seller upon discovering their marketing of the offensive items. During WWII, Nazis murdered more than a million people (mostly Jews) at the Auschwitz concentration camp.

(NOTE: see [September](#), [October](#), and [December 2020 Levitt Letter Bulletin Boards](#) for parts 1, 2 & 3)



HELP WANTED

Part-Time Magazine Editor

Our news magazine editor is getting ready to retire. We are seeking an experienced replacement who is set up to work remotely with contributing writers, proofreaders, and our graphic artist. The ideal candidate will be a strong Believer with good computer equipment and high-speed internet access. Proficiency with the editing functions of Word and Adobe is a must. Please email your cover letter and resume to Margot's attention at staff@levitt.com.

FREE ITEM

Pamphlet of the Month

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"Come Home!"

Zola
Tours
to Israel



See page 36
for details



The Most Important Fact of History

by John Parsons
 Hebrew for Christians
Hebrew4Christians.com



חַיִּיהוּהָ וּבָרַךְ צוּרִי וְיְרוּם אֱלֹהֵי יֵשׁוּעַ

“The LORD is alive, and blessed is my Rock,
 and the God of my salvation is exalted!” – Psalm 18:46

חַיִּי-יְהוּהָ = וּבָרַךְ צוּרִי = וְיְרוּם אֱלֹהֵי יֵשׁוּעַ
 yeesh-ee' e-lo-hel' ve'-ya-room' tzoo-ree' u-va-rookh' chai'-Adonai
 the God of my Salvation and exalted is and blessed is my Rock the LORD is alive

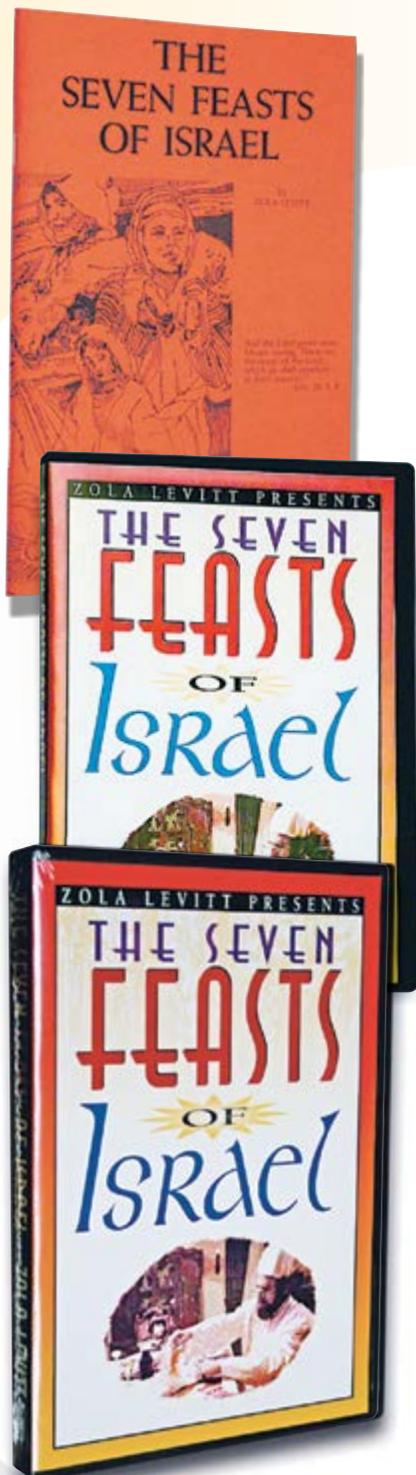
The most important fact in all history— which radically transforms everything else—is Yeshua’s resurrection from the dead. Spiritual life means being awake to the risen reality and saving Presence of the One who overcame and vanquished the power of death. Without Him we are hopeless; with Him we are more than conquerors (1 Cor. 15:14; Rom. 8:37). The Resurrection means that Yeshua is forever alive and today can hear your heart’s cry. He is surely able to help you, and nothing can overthrow His invincible will. Our Lord suffered and died for your inner peace and healing, but now death has no hold over Him (Rom. 6:9). He *“ever lives to make intercession for you”* (Heb. 7:25). He is your compassionate Advocate (*parakletos* in Greek, lit. “one called alongside”) who gives you Heavenly comfort (1 John 2:1). Even more: The very power that raised Yeshua from the dead now dwells in you (Rom. 8:11). The miracle of new life is *“Messiah in you, the hope of glory”* (Col. 1:27). The Lord will never leave you nor forsake you (Heb. 13:5); He *“sticks closer than a brother”* (Prov. 18:24); He sustains your way, and He will perfect the work of salvation on your behalf (Jude 1:24). **In short, there simply is no “Gospel” message apart from the Resurrection!** The Resurrection is the victory of God’s plan of salvation— His everlasting vindication over the powers of darkness—for your life.

The Talmud says: “All the world was created for the Messiah” (Sanhedrin 98b). The New Testament had earlier said the same thing: *“All things were created by Him [Yeshua] and for Him”* and in Him all things consist (lit. “stick together”) (Col. 1:16–17). Indeed, all of Creation is being constantly upheld by the Word of Messiah’s power (Heb. 1:3). *“For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him is glory forever. Amen”* (Rom. 11:36).

Yeshua is the LORD of all possible worlds—from the highest celestial glory to the dust of death upon a cross. So while we can agree with the Talmud’s general statement that the world was created “for the Messiah,” we know His name as Yeshua, and there is no other (Acts 4:12). The heart of faith sees *Elohei Yishi*, the “God of my salvation”—namely, the One who was and is and is to come—as the LORD our God Yeshua (Rev. 1:4;8; Isa. 41:4). The early theologian Augustine of Hippo (A.D. 354–430) translated *Elohei Yishi* as “God my Jesus,” since “Jesus” (Yeshua) rightly means “YHVH saves.” Yeshua is the One who breathed life into the first Adam just as He is the One who breathes eternal life into those who are descended from Him, the great “second Adam.” **We are made alive because of Him!** ★



Courtesy: The Jerusalem Connection



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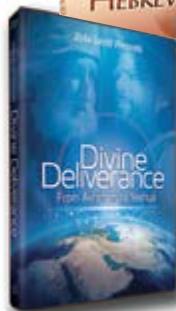
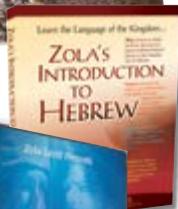
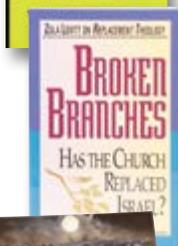
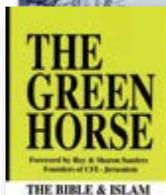
Hanukkah and Purim

The delightful festivals of joy when Israel rejoices in the blessings of the Lord are included in the series DVDs.



Please see the related article “The Feast of First Fruits (Easter)” on [the cover](#).

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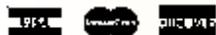
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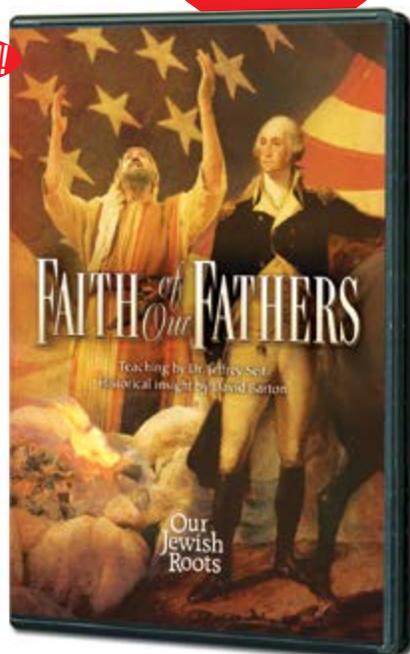
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Faith to Build a Nation Upon **The Bible's accounts of Israel becoming a nation inspired America's Founding Fathers.** They believed that God's Word is the ultimate source for establishing faith and righteousness.



Actors in OJR's newest series *Faith of Our Fathers*

Faith in our Leaders Bible heroes like Ruth and David weren't perfect but succeeded by placing their hope and trust in God. Firsthand accounts and original source documents portray George Washington as a man of faith who experienced divine guidance and protection on multiple occasions.

The Cost of Faith Risks accompany a faithful life. Consider the Bible's Esther and Mordecai.

John Adams helped gather representatives of the thirteen colonies around a set of principles that would become the Declaration of Independence.

The Actions of the Faithful Living out faith sometimes requires boldness. The Bible chronicles Peter's actions, e.g. his attempt to walk on the water. Benjamin Franklin called members of the Constitutional Convention to prayer.

The Application of Faith Narratives about men and women of faith pervade the Holy Scriptures. Most of our Founding Fathers believed in the Bible's God of Israel. Their deeds and writings testify to putting faith into action.



5th-century “Christ born of Mary” Inscription

By Leah MarieAnn Klett / ChristianPost.com



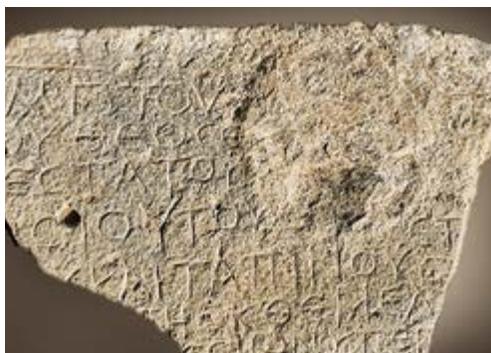
Archaeologists recently discovered an ancient Greek inscription bearing the phrase “Christ born of Mary” in northern Israel — the first evidence of an early Christian settlement from 1,500 years ago in Taibe, located in the Jezreel Valley.

According to the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA), archaeologists discovered the inscription on a wall of a late-Byzantine era structure during excavations in Taibe. Researchers say that the inscription had originally been laid at the entryway of a previously unknown 5th-century church. The phrase “Christ born of Mary” was often used at the beginning of documents or other forms of text, serving as a blessing and protection from evil.

“As a blessing, the inscribed stone would have originally stood at the entrance of the church, where people could see it,” said IAA archaeologist Yardenna Alexandre. “However, this inscription was found incorporated in the walls, leading us to believe that the stone was reused as construction material. Likely the building collapsed and was rebuilt.”

The ruins of a Crusader Period church were previously discovered at Taibe, a Christian village in the Byzantine Period (beginning A.D. 330) that was later rebuilt into a Christian fortress during Crusader times (beginning A.D. 1095). However, before the discovery of the inscription, there had been no evidence of a Christian presence from the earlier Byzantine era, said IAA archaeologist Walid Atrash. “There are many signs of ancient Christian life in the Jezreel Valley region, but **now we know that there were Christians here during the early Byzantine era,**” he added.

The complete inscription reads: “Christ born of Mary. This work of the most God-fearing and pious



A late-fifth-century A.D. Greek inscription: “Christ born of Mary”

bishop [Theodo]sius and the miserable Th[omas] was built from the foundation. Whoever enters should pray for them.”

“The inscription greets and blesses those who enter. It is therefore clear that the building is a church,” said Leah Di Segni, researcher at the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, explaining that churches, unlike monasteries in those times, greeted visitors at the entrance.

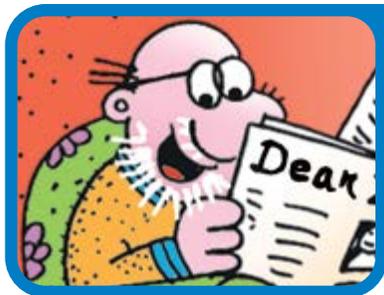
Atrash said that Theodosius, one of the first bishops of Christianity, encouraged the construction of churches in his region. The mention of his name points to a financial donation from his seat in Beit She’an, the center of the religious life and the capital of Palaestina Secunda, a Byzantine province from A.D. 390 until the Islamic invasion of circa 636. His name in the partially destroyed text also provided the archaeologists with a secure dating.

There is a large blank circular area on the stone where a large cross once was engraved, Atrash said. He believes that the cross was intentionally destroyed — by Christians or Jews who lived in the area — before the stone was recycled into the wall of the later building.

[New archaeological discoveries help make each Holy Land study tour unique.](#) — David ★

credit: Tzachi Lang / Israel Antiquities Authority





Letters to ZLM

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

Comments from www.levitt.com

From S.S. (ID): Re [Sar Shalom \(episode 4\) "Models of Behavior"](#) — THANK YOU, dear brother, for clarifying LOVE YOUR ENEMIES. Such guilt has riddled my Spirit for years because loving enemies is difficult and confounds me. But I fully understand doing good, being kind to them. Why Elohim waited so long to help me, who knows? I so did not want to fall short in this matter. Sincerely, BLESS YOU!

Abundant blessings — a 2-way street

Dear Friends at ZLM,

Enclosed please find our check for \$1,200 — the amount of our recent government stimulus check. We pray that this will bless the ministry that has blessed us abundantly. Our 1999 Israel tour with Zola and Sandra brings many memories as we watch your weekly program *Our Jewish Roots*. The whole team is doing a fabulous job! Our prayers continue as you persevere in reaching the lost. Love and blessings — J. & D.M. (FL)

Dear J. & D.M.,

Your generosity in using an unexpected financial blessing to further the Kingdom of God through this ministry is humbling. You are a beautiful example to many. Blessings — David

Getting the Word out

Dear ZLM,

You might be able to distribute your videos more widely if you compiled them on a large memory USB thumb drive. The material would be more portable for those who are on the go, so we could view it anywhere in the world.

Putting ZLM's entire library on 256-gigabyte thumb drives would make it possible to train a whole new generation with not only Zola's recordings, but later teachings that the ministry has produced as well. — M.J.H. (MI)

Dear M.J.H.,

Our ministry might experiment with offering a thumb drive collection, perhaps a Classic Zola Collection. Then again, anyone with a computer or smart phone can access our free programming at levitt.tv and YouTube. We know we

(continued next page)

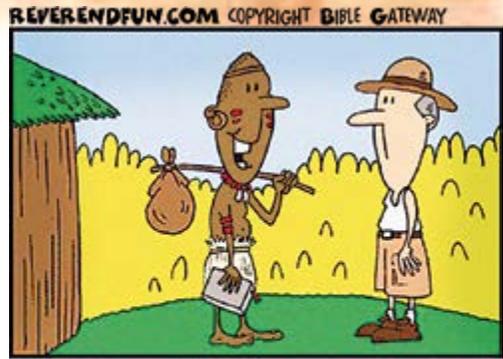


© 2008 Currier Black Inheritsthemitzvah.com



lose DVD sales by making our videos available at high quality for free viewing, but spreading the Word is our mission.

Incidentally, for the price of a new remote (\$30+), you can order a device from [Roku.com](https://www.roku.com)—another way to use the internet to put our broadcasts on your television. — Webmaster



THANKS FOR TRAVELLING THOUSANDS OF MILES TO TEACH ME YOUR CHRISTIAN WAYS ... I'M OFF NOW AS A MISSIONARY TO AMERICA, I HEAR THERE IS A REAL NEED THERE

Prayer currency

Dear ZLM,

I was disheartened to see the lead story ([January 2021 Levitt Letter](#)) about the Knesset disallowing tax benefits for Messianic congregations in Israel. I am a Christian in the U.S. and support the Messianic mission. Though I cannot assist financially, please advise if I can help in some other way. — D.C.

Dear D.C.,

We appreciate your concern about this dispiriting topic. Prayer and faith can move mountains—and prayer is the best defense against religious persecution. — David

Cubit = 17"–21"

Re: "Goliath's True Height"
([February 2021 Levitt Letter, p. 26](#))

Dear ZLM,

I cannot take the measurements in this article seriously.

Consider King Og (Deuteronomy 3:11): *"For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the giants. Indeed his bedstead was an iron bedstead.... Nine cubits is its length and four cubits its width, according to the standard cubit."*

The traditional definition of a cubit is 18 inches, so Og's bed was 13.5 feet long. As beds are usually less than a foot longer than the height of the occupant, Og may have been as tall as 12 feet! — J.R. (OR)

Dear J.R.,

Thanks for this additional information from Scripture. I don't see the conflict between your calculations and Professor Jeff Chadwick's. His calculations agree with yours, putting the cubit at 21 inches. (Merriam-Webster defines a cubit as 17"–21".) If King Og was 12 feet tall, he and his 9-cubit bed would indeed tower over 8-ft. Goliath and his bed of about 5 cubits.

Most modern beds are 75–80 inches long. Today's average male is about 70 inches tall (5' 10").— Editor



David and Goliath (1888), color lithograph by Osmar Schindler (1869-1927)

(continued next page)

Swiss cheese masks

Re: "Would Jesus Wear a Mask?"
([December 2020 Levitt Letter, p. 7](#))

Dear ZLM,

I have wanted to learn what I can do to prevent getting COVID. In his article, Dr. Lorenz explains, "... recent studies of communities that required masks support that the practice is effective."

I have not found anything to support this statement. Can you help? —R.C.

Dear R.C.,

Suppose that facemasks are effective only against allergens, bacteria, and certain viruses. Even then, by preventing or lessening their related symptoms and keeping users from touching the covered portions of their faces, masks reduce risk. Consider the Swiss Cheese Model of Pandemic Defense: multiple layers improve success (see graph below). — Mark

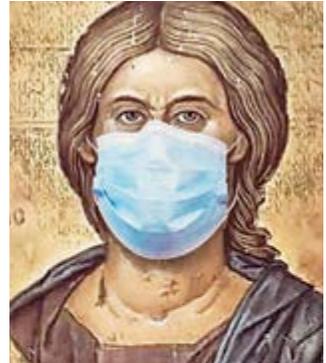
Dear R.C.,

Here is an article by the University of California San Francisco that [links to several studies and experiments on the efficacy of wearing masks in preventing and slowing viral spread.](#)

[ucsf.edu/news/2020/06/417906/](https://www.ucsf.edu/news/2020/06/417906/still-confused-about-masks-heres-science-behind-how-face-masks-prevent)

[still-confused-about-masks-heres-science-behind-how-face-masks-prevent](https://www.ucsf.edu/news/2020/06/417906/still-confused-about-masks-heres-science-behind-how-face-masks-prevent)

— Editor

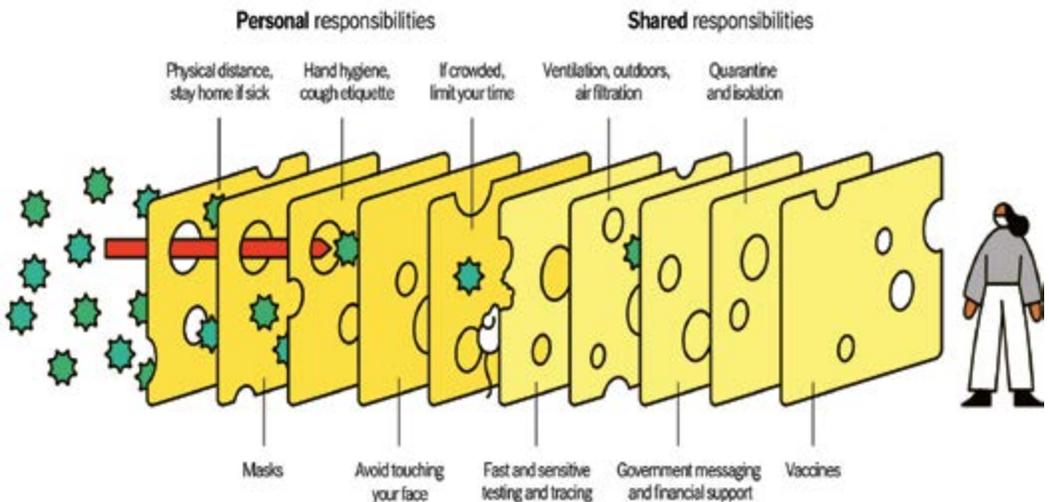


Detail of *Christ the Pantocrator* by Jovan Zograf (1384) (mask added)



Multiple Layers Improve Success

The Swiss Cheese Respiratory Pandemic Defense recognizes that no single intervention is perfect at preventing the spread of the coronavirus. Each intervention (layer) has holes.



Source: Adapted from Ian M. Mackay (virologydownunder.com) and James T. Reason. Illustration by Rose Wong

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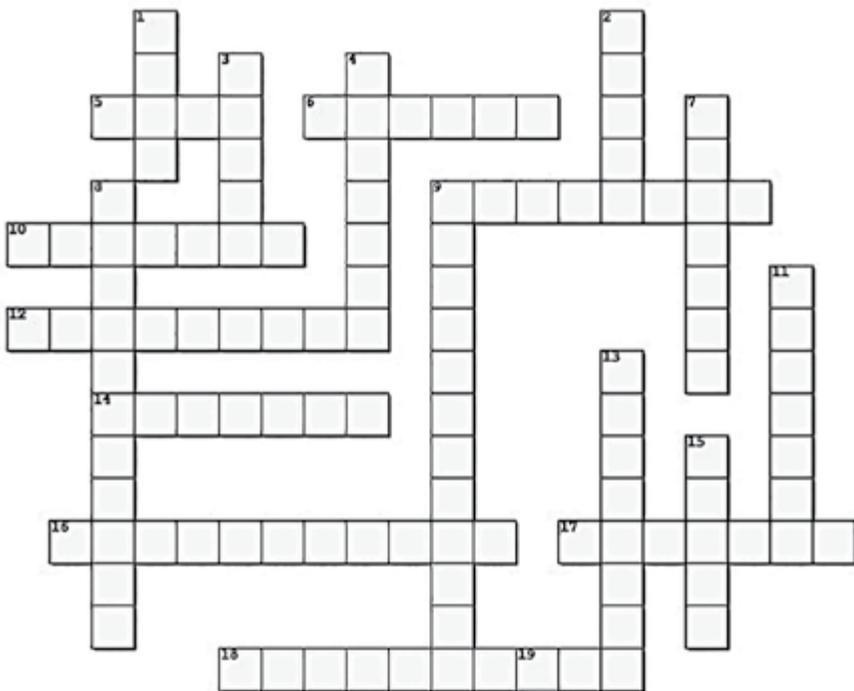


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with 10 Messianic Songs

Marty's voice is magnificent, and he sings Scripture in such a way that inspires profound worship. Our *Psalms of Ascent* TV series features much of this heartfelt exaltation of the Lord.



ACROSS

5. By faith __, being warned of God... (Hebrews 11:7)
6. ...Let my __ go... (Exodus 5:1)
9. ...for the Lord preserveth the ____ (Psalm 31:23)
10. __ is the man that endureth temptation... (Jms. 1:12)
12. A faithful man shall abound with ____ (Prov. 28:20)
14. ...and __ built an altar there... (Genesis 22:9)
16. ...they were not afraid of the king's __. (Heb. 11:23)
17. But if any __ not for his own... (1 Timothy 5:8)
18. Through faith we ____ (Heb. 11:3)

DOWN

1. ...Well done, thou __ and faithful servant... (Matt. 25:23)
2. Now __ is the substance of things hoped for... (Heb. 11:1)
3. ...thy faith hath made thee ____ (Matthew 9:22)

Crossword April 2021: *Faith of Our Fathers—*

Part 1 (KJV)

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

4. ...the God of the __ hath met with us... (Ex. 5:3)
7. ...get thee out of thy ____ (Genesis 12:1)
8. Thy faithfulness is unto all ____ (Psalm 119:90)
9. ...and Thy __ reacheth unto the clouds. (Ps. 36:5)
11. ...is like to a grain of __ seed... (Matthew 13:31)
13. So Abram __, as the Lord had spoken... (Gen. 12:4)
15. So __ prevailed over the Philistine... (1 Sam. 17:50)
19. And the __ of the Lord appeared... (Exodus 3:2)



Electric Cars: 5-Minute Charge Battery

THE TIMES
OF ISRAEL

SCIENCE: [TimesOfIsrael.com](https://www.timesofisrael.com)



credit: AFP photo / Tobias Schwarz (modified)

Volkswagen (VW) electric car plugged into power at a service station

Israeli company StoreDot recently announced a landmark achievement in the electric vehicle industry: the world's first car battery that can be fully charged in just five minutes. The invention will take time to become commercially feasible since the ultra-fast charge requires much higher-power chargers than are currently available.

Electric cars, which are a major part of global attempts to tackle the climate crisis, have faced the challenge of batteries taking hours to fully charge, giving rise to "range anxiety" — the fear of a battery running out mid-journey and the driver getting stranded at a charging station.

But now, provided that charging stations undergo a major upgrade (which could take years), charging an electric car could become as quick as stopping to refuel a gas-run vehicle. In June of 2020, the startup fully charged a two-wheeled electric vehicle in just five minutes. BP Ventures, the venture arm of the British multinational oil and gas firm BP plc, has invested \$20 million in StoreDot.

StoreDot has also demonstrated ultra-fast charging times for phones, drones, and scooters.

StoreDot CEO Dr. Doron Myersdorf said, "We're on the cusp of achieving a revolution in the electric vehicle charging experience that will remove the critical barrier to mass adoption of electric vehicles. A five-minute charging lithium-ion battery was considered impossible. We are releasing engineering samples from a mass production line, not a lab prototype. This demonstrates that it is feasible and it's commercially ready."

"The bottleneck to extra-fast charging is no longer the battery," he said, adding that Herzliya-based StoreDot is working with BP on upgrading charging stations and grids that supply them.

Prof. Chao-Yang Wang of the Battery and Energy Storage Technology Center at Pennsylvania State University stated: "I think such fast-charging batteries will be **available to the mass market in three years**. They will not be more expensive; in fact, they allow automakers to downsize the onboard battery while still eliminating range anxiety, thereby dramatically **cutting down the vehicle battery cost**." ★



Dr. Doron Myersdorf, co-founder and CEO of StoreDot

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Israeli COVID Cure?



MEDICINE: BY MAAYAN JAFFE-HOFFMAN (r) JPost.com

A group of Israeli researchers recently launched a Phase II study of a drug that they believe could keep COVID-19 patients off mechanical ventilation and speed their recovery. The trial, which is collectively run by Ziv and Rambam Medical Centers with researchers from Bar-Ilan University and Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, examines the use of a drug based on a naturally occurring peptide called angiotensin 1-7 to help counter the impact of COVID-19 on the lungs.

Coronavirus enters a person's cells through angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) receptors. These same receptors produce angiotensin 1-7, explained Dr. Karl Skorecki, dean of the Azrieli Faculty of Medicine of Bar-Ilan University in the Galilee. Angiotensin 1-7 is a protein that is naturally produced in the body and responsible for preventing cell proliferation and inflammation.

"When the enzyme is busy acting as a receptor, it can no longer do what it is supposed to do, which is make angiotensin 1-7," Skorecki said. "The hope is that by replenishing this peptide, patients' lungs will get back what the virus nefariously took away from them."

Around 3% of all people who contract coronavirus in Israel are hospitalized, and many do not respond to what have become traditional steroid or antiviral drug treatments. The trial uses TXA127, a pharmaceutical formulation of angiotensin 1-7 developed by the American company Constant Therapeutics, LLC.

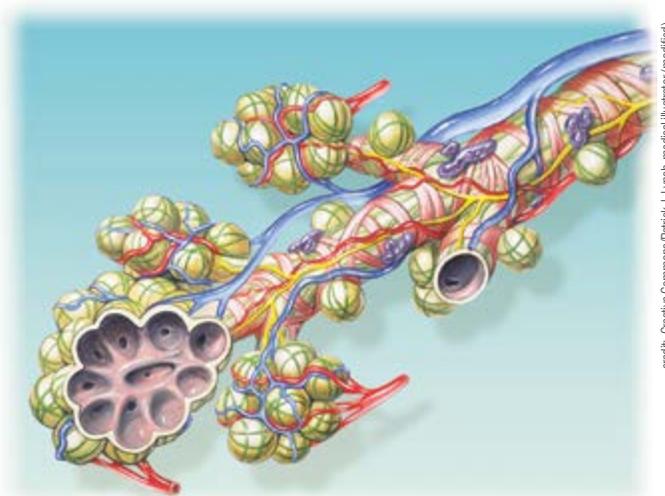
The CEO of the company, Rick Franklin, said, "I am proud of my Jewish roots and of partnering with Rambam, Ziv, Bar-Ilan, and the Technion — world-renowned institutions."

Because the protein is a biological substance, the likelihood of its causing side effects is low.

The Phase II trial involves 120 hospitalized COVID-19 patients whose condition is defined as moderate. Half of the patients will receive the treatment and half a placebo.

Coronavirus mutations would not affect the effectiveness of treatment, according to Rambam's Dr. Ety Kruzell. "We are so confident in the results that Constant Therapeutics is recruiting partners to prepare for global manufacturing and distribution." ★

"The hope is that by replenishing this peptide, patients' lungs will get back what the virus nefariously took away from them."



Bronchial anatomy detail of alveoli and lung circulation



credit: Creative Commons/Patrick J. Lynch, medical illustrator (modified)

1st Arab-Initiated Event to Commemorate the Holocaust



BY ELIANA RUDEE (r) Jewish News Syndicate JNS.org



source: Screenshot

Sharaka online event to memorialize victims of the Holocaust

In the wake of the Abraham Accords and in honor of International Holocaust Memorial Day on January 27, individuals from the group Sharaka held an online event to memorialize victims of the Holocaust and to promote an action plan for Holocaust awareness and combating anti-Semitism. According to Sharaka (“partnership” in Arabic), the event was the first-ever Arab initiative to commemorate the Holocaust, bringing together Arab leaders in the Middle East.

Participants from the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia were joined online by viewers from North America, Europe, and Israel. Some of the Arab participants took part in Sharaka’s tour of Israel in December, where many first learned about the Holocaust.

“While Jews and individuals in the Western world study about the Holocaust for years in school, in a lot of Arab countries, there are Holocaust deniers, like in Iran, and friends in Saudi Arabia have told me that they never heard about the Holocaust in school,” Sharaka founder Amit Deri remarked.

During the online event, Israel’s President Reuven Rivlin offered an address, saying it was “very moving” to see young people of all religions from across the region working together. He also noted that the 50 leaders from Sharaka visited Yad Vashem in Jerusalem during their trip.

“We are bringing together Holocaust survivors with young Israeli and Gulf leaders, Jews, Muslims, Christians, and Druze, to say ‘never again,’” he added.

“This pandemic has closed borders and distanced us, but it has also reminded us of our common humanity and the need to work together to meet this challenge,” continued Rivlin. “Unfortunately, coronavirus has given rise to more anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, and we have continued to see attacks against synagogues and Jewish institutions.”

Rivlin called on all countries to “ensure that the promise of ‘never again’ becomes a shared reality.” That can be done in part by adopting the International

(continued next page)





source:
jewishnews.
timesofisrael.
com

Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism, joining to “defeat the virus of anti-Semitism and radical hate” and showing “zero tolerance for forms of anti-Semitism, racism, and extremism.”

“You are not alone anymore”

Auschwitz survivor Vera Kriegel told her heart-wrenching story of being subjected to pseudo-medical experiments by Dr. Josef Mengele, who infamously used prisoners at the Auschwitz death camp for experiments. “I was punished and starved and treated like a monkey. My self-esteem, my pride, my identity — all were taken away from me. I became a total nothing. I became a number, tattooed on my arm: A26946. This was my identity,” she told the group.

Kriegel and her twin sister, Olga, were just 6 years old in 1942 when they were violently taken from their beds in Czechoslovakia on the eve of Passover by Nazi soldiers. **They were brought to the concentration camp, where 40 of their family members “vanished through the chimney.”**

Amjad Taha, a Bahraini and co-founder of Sharaka, urged that countries in the Arab world and Gulf must educate about the Nazi persecution of the Jews in school curriculums. “From a young age to graduation, they should be taught about the Holocaust and ways to counter anti-Semitism,” he related.

Majid Al-Sarrah from the UAE encouraged all people to “see the reality of the Holocaust at Yad Vashem and promised, “We will spread the knowledge about the Holocaust. We will raise peace and love, say ‘never again’ to anti-Semitism, hate, and discrimination. We are brothers and sisters. We will stand together, and together, we will build a world free of anti-Semitism and hate.”

Masha'el Al-Shemeri from Bahrain said, “I would like to say to all Jews and the people of Israel: You are not alone anymore.”

Najat Al-Saeed from Saudi Arabia added, “We must educate young generations about the full horrors of the Holocaust, including by ensuring that the Holocaust is taught in schools in the Abraham Accords countries and that special envoys are appointed for preserving Holocaust remembrance.”

Kriegel expressed joy in knowing that the Arab leaders wanted to learn about the past, saying, “I’m so overjoyed, so happy, so moved, so everything, and I embrace all of you.”

At the event, Sharaka presented its five-point plan for combating anti-Semitism, which includes promoting Holocaust awareness and education, interfaith dialogue, incorporating the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism, and countering online anti-Semitism and the BDS movement that seeks to delegitimize Israel.

Deri announced that Sharaka will lead the first-ever Arab delegation of young leaders to Auschwitz-Birkenau as part of *Yom HaShoah*, Israel’s Holocaust Remembrance Day [observed this year on April 8].



source: jewishnews.timesofisrael.com

The Sharaka Delegation visit to Yad Vashem, December 13, 2020





A Holocaust survivor's number, tattooed in a Nazi concentration camp during the Holocaust

SELECT MEDIA BRIEFS

900 Holocaust Survivors Died of COVID-19 in Israel in 2020

JPost.com

In 2020, 17,000 Holocaust survivors passed away in Israel, including 900 who succumbed to COVID-19, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported recently. Some 5,300 survivors were infected with the virus during the year.

In December, there were 179,600 Holocaust survivors in Israel. An additional 3,000 Israelis were recognized as being survivors of the Holocaust during 2020, the statistics bureau said.

About 60% of the survivors in Israel are women, and 64% are from Europe. All of the survivors are over the age of 75, and 17% are at least 90. Nearly 850 survivors are centenarians, two-thirds of whom are women.

The statistics bureau report was released to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

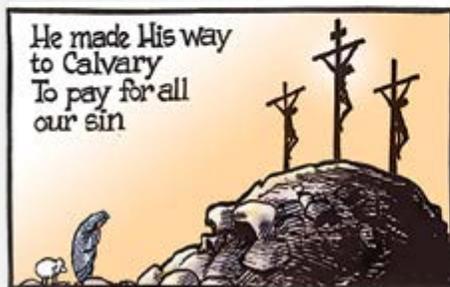
Israel having nearly 180,000 Holocaust survivors should suffice for Holocaust deniers to move on to other conspiracy theories. May God bless (and we remember) these precious souls — and their stories. — Kirsten

Arab Nurse Recites Shema for Dying Jewish Patient

By Shiryn Ghermezian / Algemeiner.com

The Arab head nurse at the COVID-19 unit of Ha'emek Medical Center in Afula, Israel, recited the Hebrew *Shema Yisrael* prayer for a Jewish patient before he died of coronavirus.

(continued next page)



garyarvel.com

Ibrahim Maher treated coronavirus patient Shlomo Galster, a Hasidic resident of northern Israel, for more than a month at the hospital. On a February morning, Galster's family was told that his condition was deteriorating and they needed to say their goodbyes.

When medical workers in the COVID-19 unit realized it was unlikely that Galster's family would arrive in time to recite the prayer before his death, Maher decided to recite the Hebrew prayer for him.



"I knew he was a religious man," said Maher, who was raised Muslim. "I don't know the entire prayer exactly, but I knew it was important that he hear the words *Shema Yisrael* (Hear, O Israel). We were fond of him and his family."

Galster's daughter stated: "It was a difficult, sad day. My father never



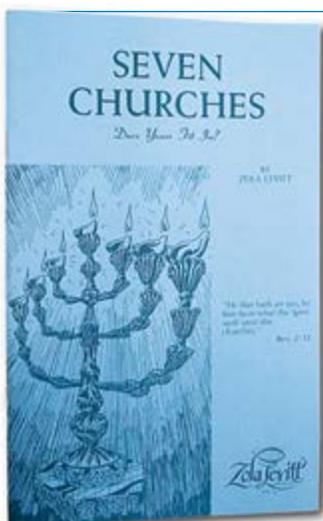
stopped talking about the devoted care he received and how thankful he was to Maher and the entire team."

U.S. Embassy Stays in Jerusalem

[Senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov)

On February 4, the U.S. Senate voted 97–3 to keep our nation's embassy in Jerusalem. Democratic Senators Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, and Tom Carper cast the opposing votes. During the Trump Administration in 2018, the U.S. Embassy in Israel was relocated to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv. As we reported last month ([March 11, p. 7](#)), President Joe Biden assured voters that America's embassy in Israel would remain in Jerusalem.

May it remain there until the 1,000-Year Kingdom! — Mark ★



Seven Churches — Does Yours Fit In?

study booklet

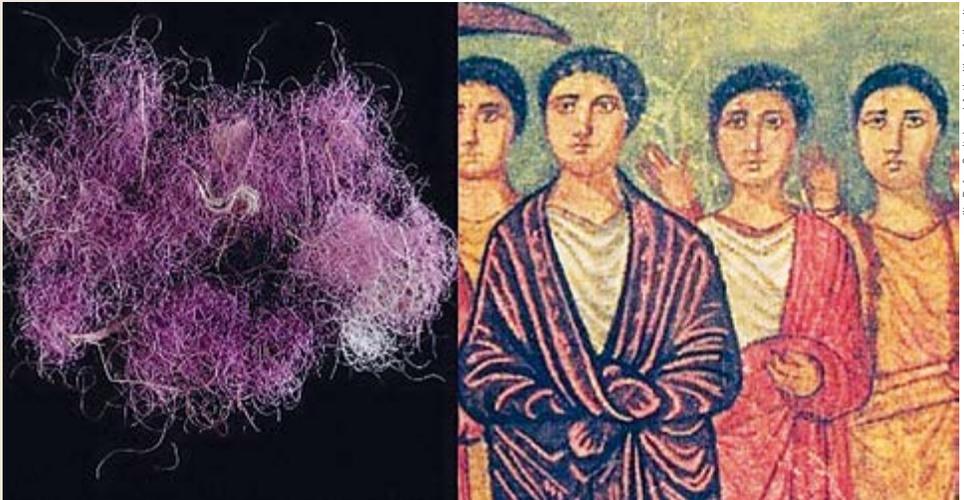
by Zola Levitt

The Lord appeared to the Apostle John at Patmos and dictated the dramatic Revelation of Jesus Christ. He began with commentary on seven churches of the time, which has remained an object lesson for all generations. The seven churches of Asia as seen by the Head of the Church.

True Royal Purple Fabric Worn by King Solomon



ARCHAEOLOGY: BY JUDY SIEGEL-ITZKOVICH (r) Israel365News.com



Wool fibers dyed with Royal Purple, ca. 1000 B.C. “King David being anointed by Samuel”

*Let them attach a blue thread
in the tassels of the corners*
— Numbers 15:38



What did a fashionable king in Israel wear 3,000 years ago? The colors purple, red, and blue were prominent in their wardrobes.

Four years ago, archaeologists at Tel Aviv University (TAU) discovered pieces of cloth from King David’s and King Solomon’s time at ancient copper mines in the Timna Valley (in Israel’s southern Negev Desert). The cloth had been colored blue and red with dye from various plants. **Thanks to the very dry climate in the area, the colors have been preserved for three millennia.**

Recently, in a “breakthrough discovery,” the team found ancient scraps of fabric dyed in true royal purple from shellfish. “The color immediately attracted our attention, but we found it hard to believe that we had found true purple from such an ancient era,” said TAU’s Dr. Erez Ben-Yosef. According to the researchers, true purple [*argaman* in Hebrew] was produced from three species of mollusk native to the Mediterranean Sea — the banded dye-murex (*Hexaplex trunculus*), the spiny dye-murex (*Bolinus brandaris*), and the red-mouthed rock-shell (*Stramonita haemastoma*). The Sea is over 190 miles from Timna. The dye was produced from a gland located within the body of the mollusk by means of a complex chemical process that lasted several days.

According to the Song of Songs (3:9–10), King Solomon had a carriage made from wood brought from Lebanon whose seat was upholstered with purple cloth. Now, for the first time, rare evidence has been found confirming this.

While examining the colored textiles from Timna in a years-long study, the *(continued next page)*

researchers were surprised to find remnants of woven fabric: a tassel and fibers of wool dyed with royal purple.

Direct radiocarbon dating confirms that the finds date from approximately 1,000 B.C., corresponding to the Biblical monarchies of David and Solomon in Jerusalem. The dye is mentioned often in the Bible and appears in various Jewish and Christian contexts.



This is the first time that purple-dyed Iron Age textiles have been found in Israel, or indeed throughout the Southern Levant. The research was carried out by Dr. Naama Sukenik from the Israel Antiquities Authority and Ben-Yosef of TAU's Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures.

"This is a very exciting and important discovery," said Sukenik, the IAA's Curator of Organic Materials. "This is the first piece of textile ever found from the time of David and Solomon that is dyed with the prestigious purple dye. In antiquity, purple attire was associated with nobility, with priests, and of course with royalty. The gorgeous shade of the purple, the fact that it does not fade, and the difficulty of producing the dye — found in minute quantities in the body of mollusks and often more costly than gold — made it the most highly valued of the dyes.

Until the current discovery, we had encountered only mollusk-shell waste and potsherds with patches of dye, which provided evidence of the purple industry in the Iron Age. Now, for the first time, we have direct evidence of the dyed fabrics themselves, preserved for some 3,000 years."



Shells of the three species of murex snails (left to right: *T. haemastoma*, *M. trunculus* and *M. brandaris*)

Today, most scholars agree that the two precious dyes, purple (*argaman*) and light blue, or azure (*techelet*) were produced from the purple-dye mollusk under different conditions of exposure to light. When exposed to light, azure is obtained, and without light exposure, a purple hue is obtained. These colors are often mentioned together in the ancient sources, and both have symbolic and religious significance to this day. The Temple priests, David and Solomon, and Jesus of Nazareth are all described as having worn clothing colored purple. ★



credit: Shahar Cohen, courtesy of Zohar Amar

Demonization of Rabbis by Palestinian “Expert”

BY NAN JACQUES ZILBERDIK (r) PalWatch.org Palestinian Media Watch



Official PA TV “military expert” Wasef Erekat (left): *“The Israelis train their children to carry weapons. Our children don’t carry weapons... They train them with weapons and train them based on the principle: “Kill everyone who is not Jewish.” The rabbis implant this indoctrination in the children of Israel: “Kill everyone who is not Jewish.”*

[Official PA TV, PLO—Conventions and Agreements, Dec. 16, 2020]

To further distance peace with Israel, the Palestinian Authority (PA) continuously demonizes Israel and Jews, convincing the Palestinian population that Jews deserve to be hated.

One example of the libelous messages fed to Palestinians was delivered by a Palestinian “military expert” who taught TV viewers that Israeli/Jewish children are educated by rabbis to “kill everyone who is not Jewish.”

Erekat’s statement echoes the message taught by Hamas and exposed recently by Palestinian Media Watch. In an episode of the Hamas TV series *Self-Sacrificing Fighter (Fida’i)*, Hamas portrayed Jews as inherent haters of all Arabs, suggesting Jewish parents teach this hate to their children. ★

Imprisoned Terrorists Get COVID Vaccine; PA Spreads Libels

BY MAURICE HIRSCH (r) PalWatch.org Palestinian Media Watch



The State of Israel is giving Covid-19 vaccinations to Palestinian terrorists held in Israeli prisons — and is doing so even before millions of Israeli citizens get theirs. The Palestinian Authority (PA) is using the event to raise the recurring libel that Israel is conducting medical experiments on the terrorists.

The claim that Israel is neglecting the imprisoned terrorists, both medically and in other ways, and conducting medical experiments on them is not new. This libel is renewed regularly by the PA and intensifies whenever a terrorist dies of an illness in prison.

Vaccinating terrorist prisoners against the pandemic virus is no different. Ever since the vaccine arrived in

Israel, **the PA and its agents have been demanding that Israel not only vaccinate the terrorist prisoners but also agree to international supervision over the process** due to baseless concerns that Israel will take advantage of the vaccination to conduct “medical experiments.”

“There are still concerns among the prisoners regarding the vaccine, especially in light of the long historical experience on everything regarding the policy of the occupation’s Israeli Prison Service against the prisoners, including the policy of medical neglect (slow murder) and the use of their bodies for experiments.”

[Official PA daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Jan. 21, 2021] ★





The Importance of Sharing Traditions

contributed by J.A. (VA)

An Orthodox Jewish couple asked their 13-year-old son what he'd like for his bar mitzvah gift.

"A Yamaha," he replied.

Their rabbi couldn't imagine what a Yamaha was and referred them to a Conservative rabbi. He also hadn't heard of a Yamaha and sent them to a Reform rabbi.

Upon hearing the bar mitzvah gift request, the Reform rabbi easily explained that a Yamaha is a Japanese motorcycle and even suggested a dealer. As the grateful parents were leaving, they thanked the rabbi who asked, "By the way, what's a bar mitzvah?" ★

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YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE HIM ...
HE'S NEW TO THE FAITH AND
THIS IS HIS FIRST EASTER

Answer Key for April 2021 Crossword (p.25)

Across:

- 5. Noah
- 6. People
- 9. Faithful
- 10. Blessed
- 12. Blessings
- 14. Abraham
- 16. Commandment
- 17. Provide
- 18. Understand

Down:

- 1. Good
- 2. Faith
- 3. Whole
- 4. Hebrews
- 7. Country
- 8. Generations
- 9. Faithfulness
- 11. Mustard
- 13. Departed
- 15. David
- 19. Angel



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TBN Airing Day & Time by zone DirecTV – Channel 372 Dish – Channel 260				
Day	3:30 PM Thursdays	4:30 PM Thursdays	5:30 PM Thursdays	6:30 PM Thursdays
TCT Airing Day & Time by zone DirecTV – Channel 377				
Day	4 PM Sundays	5 PM Sundays	6 PM Sundays	7 PM Sundays

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Grafted-In Messianic Roots Lapel Pin/Tie Tac



An ancient Messianic symbol—believed to have been used as a seal by the first Christians, who were Jewish—combines the menorah, Star of David, and the Christian fish. This unique design with a tie tac back is gold plated and approximately 1.1" long.

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Zola Tours DISCOVER ISRAEL

Experience Israel's beauty & majesty
with David & Kirsten Hart in FALL 2021!



FALL TOUR 2021

Deluxe: Oct. 18–28
(Israel only, \$5,288)

Grand Petra: Oct. 18–31
(Israel & Petra, \$6,488)

Uncertainty in Greece due to the coronavirus prevents us from visiting Greece on our Fall 2021 Tour.

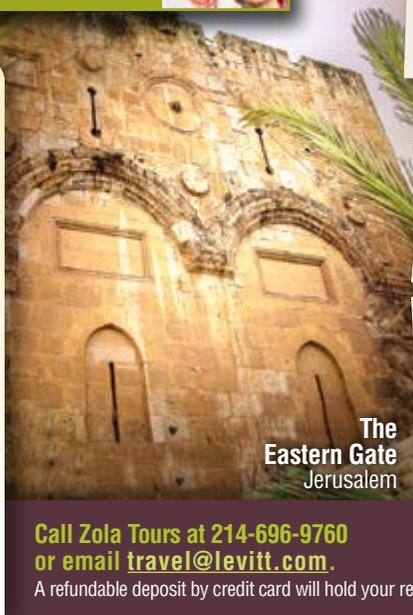
SPRING TOUR 2022

Deluxe: Mar. 14–24
(Israel only, prices TBD)

Grand Petra: Mar. 14–27
(Israel & Petra, prices TBD)

(Dates are tentative)

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



The
Eastern Gate
Jerusalem



The Garden Tomb
Jerusalem



Petra
Jordan



The Temple
Mount
Jerusalem

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Jerusalem!



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