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Enhancing Trust

Dear Reader,

July 2021

As we celebrate American independence this year, history continues to reveal details about our nation's founders and other participants, many of them Jewish. Check out our cover stories and page 8.

John Parsons and Tony offer valuable advice to help us stay grounded and closer to God (4, 16), and Kirsten relates a personal experience that shows how blessed we are to have our Heavenly Father's love and example (6). We also get to see her darling baby granddaughter's sweet face.

The End Times contain specific prophecies. America isn't mentioned in any, but the Temple definitely is. Read about both on pages 7 and 32.

Though Israelis and Jews continue to bless us and work to make the world a better, safer place to live (12, 26, 27), anti-Semitism prominently remains (14, 34). To learn about the recent Israel-Gaza outbreak of violence from a native daughter who lives in Israel, read Sarah Liberman's *Personal Letter* for July. You'll find it posted next to this July *Levitt Letter* at [levitt.com/newsletters](http://levitt.com/newsletters).

If you enjoy reading these accounts of world events that concern Christians and Israel, please consider supporting this ministry. Our newsletters and website are free because, just like our salvation, someone/Someone paid for them. Help us keep offering free newsletter subscriptions and TV programs to nonbelievers, new Believers, prisoners, and others who need to hear solid Bible teaching.

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



Margot

Margot, Editor  
Zola Levitt Ministries

**P.S.** Page 36 includes an ad for my successor as editor. I plan to finish the year, but the sooner we find the right person, the longer they'll have to learn our creative routines. We're also looking for volunteer proofreaders to fill out our editing staff. Having a goodly number keeps us covered when houseguests, vacations, or other aspects of life beckon to one or more. Please prayerfully consider joining us if you feel so called.

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

# JEWES and the American Revolution

By Marnie Winston-Macauley / Aish.com

*Colonel  
Isaac Franks*

inside: Gratitude  
& Worship p.4

Colonel Isaac Franks (1802) by Gilbert Stuart (1775–1828), PAFA (Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts)

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Of the over 2,000 Jews in colonial America, many adult Jewish males took part in the Revolutionary War from fighting to financing. A few were royalists, but most American Jews supported the fight for independence. Some played a decisive role in American Independence. Here's a sampling:

**Francis Salvador:** In 1774, Francis Salvador, a recent arrival from England, was elected to the First Provincial Congress in Charleston, making him the first professed American Jew to hold such a high elective office. When a South Carolina republic was established the following year, he signed and stamped the new currency. A volunteer militiaman participating in an expedition against Indians and Tories, he was also the first Jew to die for his country. He was killed early in the war (August 1, 1776) by Cherokee loyalists in an ambush near the Keowee River. Salvador's

*(continued p.2)*

REMEMBER:  
U.S. Independence Day is on Sunday, July 4

## The Jewish Meaning of July 4<sup>th</sup>

By David Geffen  
JPost.com

University of Pennsylvania professor Beth Wenger, citing the Jewish educator Ben Edidin in his manual on Jewish holidays of which American Independence Day was one, noted, "The Declaration of Independence granted Jews unprecedented freedoms, and therefore, they should celebrate as a sacred occasion the holiday that commemorated the document's adoption." To take it one step further, American Jews should recognize that their "liberties" in the U.S. stem from the birth of the nation, so the Fourth should be celebrated like Passover, our original festival of freedom.

*(continued p.9)*



Independence Day fireworks in San Diego (2004), credit: Jon Sullivan (www.pajphoto.org)

# Jews and the American Revolution *continued from cover*

commander described this scene to South Carolina's President John Rutledge. "With a savage head wound, he asked whether the enemy had been beaten. He was glad... and then said farewell."

**The Jews Company — 1780:** Such a large number of southern Jews wanted to join the Revolutionary cause that Captain Richard Lushington, a Jew from Charleston, S.C., formed "the Jews Company" whose 28 Jews made up half of his men.

**Mordecai Sheftall and Philip Minis:** A merchant and son of a Jewish colonist who arrived in 1733, Mordecai Sheftall chaired the 1775 Savannah, Georgia committee that enforced the decisions of the American patriots against British interests. In attendance was

**Philip Minis**, also a son of one of the original Jewish colonists. In 1778, Sheftall was appointed Deputy Commissary General for federal troops in Georgia and South Carolina.

Late in the year, as Savannah's defenses were overrun

by British troops, many American soldiers escaped by swimming across the Savannah River. British troops captured Sheftall, who had stayed behind with his teenage son, Levi. The following year, Philip Minis, a member of Georgia's patriot committee, and Levi Sheftall were guides to French and American forces in their attempt to recapture Savannah from the British.

In 1782, the Jewish community in Philadelphia had an increased population of Jews from other cities. Under Sheftall's leadership, it built its first permanent synagogue, and



Haym Salomon commemorative  
10¢ stamp (1975)

Haym Salomon, a financier of the revolution, was a major financial contributor.

**Haym Salomon:** It could be said that this Polish-born Jew who came to New York in 1772 was largely responsible for us beating the British.

Salomon acted as a secret agent in British-occupied New York City. After he fled to Philadelphia in 1778 to escape arrest, his financial skills helped rescue the Continental government.

He acted as a supplier to American troops and as paymaster general to French forces assisting the patriots. Along with Robert Morris, he raised funds for the colonial coffers. Salomon also loaned money at nominal rates to members of the Continental Congress in need, among them James Madison. An ardent Jew, in 1782, Salomon made the largest contribution toward the building of the Mikveh Israel Congregation.

In 1784, he stated in print: "I am a Jew; I do not despair that we shall obtain every privilege we aspire to enjoy along with our fellow citizens." At the time of his death, January 6, 1785, he was technically bankrupt. His heirs claimed that the U.S. government still owed him in excess of \$350,000.

**Colonel Isaac Franks:** As George Washington's right-hand man, the two became dear friends when, on November 1, 1793, Franks, a Jewish Christian, provided his Germantown, Pennsylvania home to the future first president. Washington was on his

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"I am a Jew; I do not despair that we shall obtain every privilege we aspire to enjoy along with our fellow citizens."

—Haym Salomon





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way to the Third Continental Congress in Philadelphia when the yellow fever epidemic hit. Washington and Franks remained good friends, and Franks became the first Jew to have his portrait painted by Gilbert Stuart.

**A Family Affair:** Isaac Frank’s sister Rachael married ... Haym Salomon!

**David Salisbury Franks**, a distant relation to Isaac, had a checkered but colorful career. In 1780, when Benedict Arnold committed treason by offering to turn over the fort at West Point to the British, his aide-de-camp was none other than David Franks. He and Arnold’s other aides were arrested. He was acquitted, but outraged, and requested an additional court inquiry to completely clear his name.

Franks was promoted and given 400 acres of land. He became a diplomatic courier carrying documents to Benjamin Franklin in Paris and to John Jay in Madrid. In 1784, he was appointed vice consul in Marseilles, France, becoming the first Jew to serve in a U.S. diplomatic post.

And so, **the United States of America owes a great debt to U.S. Jews**, and U.S. Jews owe a great debt to the USA. On this July 4<sup>th</sup>, let’s remember the debt that’s been paid ... and the debts to come that will ensure the independence of our two significant nations: America and Israel.

Students missing school would benefit from reading about these patriotic, revolutionary Jews! —David ★

# Gratitude and Worship—Psalm 63

Tony Derrick  
Theologian for  
Zola Levitt Ministries



In our busy world, almost everyone deals with keeping appointments and meeting deadlines. Add in the complexity of keeping up with taxes, insurance, and an active spiritual life, and the routine becomes, as American rock band the Eagles sang, “Life in the fast lane.”

Shepherd and soon-to-be-king David calls us Bible readers to step aside from the stresses of life to focus on God. The subheading in my Bible reads, “A psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah.” **It is important to be alone with God and to make Him your focus.** Corporate worship is wonderful — getting swept up in the music and enthusiasm of fellow Believers.\* But the need for personal, private worship has equal value. David’s advice in Psalm 63 can instruct all of us today.

Verse one sets the tone for the remainder of this psalm, making it clear that David is longing for close fellowship with God. *“O God, You are my God, early will I seek You: My soul thirsts for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.”* David is speaking spiritually: He is in a spiritually dry place in life, and he wants fellowship that will quench his spiritual thirst.

## 1. David focuses his mind on God (63:2)

David gives instructive thoughts on how to conduct personal worship. We must become fixated, not on the world around us, but on God. David is in the wilderness alone. Perhaps your “wilderness” is a prayer room or a quiet space on your porch — you get the picture. What do we do? I can think of several verses to use as a guide, but Philippians 4:8 comes to mind in this instance. *“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”*

David doesn’t enter a mindless state, but specifically thinks about the power and glory of God.

## 2. David offers his praise to God (63:3–5)

These verses tell us that we praise God with our lips and our hands, and we do it all of our lives. By the way, verses 4 and 5 say to lift our hands

*(continued next page)*



*An Aging David Strums His Harp, Reciting Psalms,*  
engraving by E. van Panderen, c. 1620,  
after Giuseppe Cesari, il cavaliere d’Arpino

credit: Wellcome Collection



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\* “Believers” is short for “believers in Yeshua/Jesus as Messiah.”



and praise Him joyfully. Some of us are reluctant to raise our hands during corporate worship, and that's a personal choice. David simply says that when he lifts his hands to the Lord, he is offering his entire being.

Our *praise* life should coincide with our *prayer* life. **Someone once observed that Christians have PDD—prayer deficit disorder.**

Let's talk about prayer for a moment and answer a few questions.

We don't have space to print all the Scripture noted, so please take the opportunity to do a little reading at your leisure.

**When should we pray?** Luke 18:1 says, *"Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart."* We should pray when we feel like it and when we don't.

**How should we pray?** We should pray with confidence in God. Jeremiah 33:3 says, *"Call unto Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know."*

**How long should we pray?** Again in Luke 18, the parable is about a persistent widow whose persistence hastened the answer to her request. There is no time frame in praying, but our praise and prayer lives should be persistent.

**For what should we pray?** Spiritual wisdom tops the list. Most likely, any urgent issue at hand can be resolved with spiritual wisdom. Please read Ephesians 1:15–19.

### 3. David rests in God at night (63:6)

Have you ever spent a night tossing and turning because of a big decision or a contentious run-in with a colleague? David counsels meditating on God in those quiet, troublesome moments. Lamentations 3:22–23 encourages us: *"Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: Great is Your faithfulness."* David understood.

### 4. David lifts his voice in praise (63:7–8)

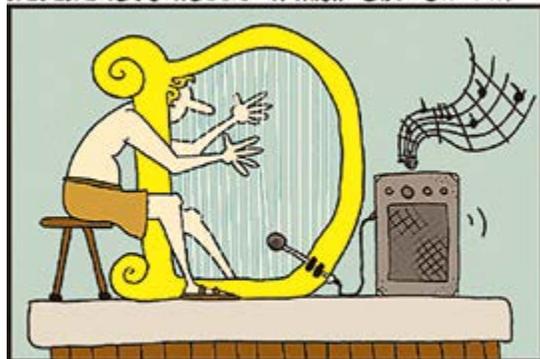
David in the wilderness could lift his voice as loudly as he wished. Some of us are vocalists, and some are not. It doesn't matter; singing brings joy to the hearts of mankind. I am not a musician, but I cannot imagine life without music. Whether you sing in a choir, in the shower, or alone in your car, music gives all of us pleasure and joy. So, lift your voice!

### 5. David celebrates God (63:9–11)

David admits in these final verses that he isn't alone. There may be people seeking to destroy him. He has his enemies and critics. But he vows to trust in God for his protection. He will not stop his worship and praise of the One and only Yahweh.

Let's give two thumbs up to David for writing an encouraging psalm of gratitude and worship and adopt his attitude in our lives of praise and prayer. ★

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AFTER HIS BIG GIG WITH KING SAUL,  
DAVID TOOK HIS HARP ON THE ROAD

# “Daddy, will you forgive me?”

**Kirsten Hart**  
Studio co-host of *Our Jewish Roots*



The Hart family has been busy. Our oldest son’s family sold their house and needed a place to live for two and a half months. As any loving parents would do, we invited them, including two grandbabies (Ty, 11 months, and Bella Rose, now 3 years) to stay with us in our lake cabin. It’s been a complete joy, getting a good night’s sleep after playing all day!

Having our oldest son, 29, parent his two children under our roof has proven a treat. (David Hart, you taught our sons well!) Recently, Bella misbehaved and needed a few minutes of quiet time to contemplate her actions. About five minutes later, her daddy went to her and, from the kitchen, I heard Bella ask, “Daddy, will you forgive me?”

Our son responded as a loving father, “Of course! You know that I love you more than the whole world.”

**Do you ever have those moments in ordinary days that take your breath away?** The simplicity of Bella’s question and her daddy’s tender response, gave me a powerful glimpse into our Heavenly Father’s heart. Regardless of our actions, words, or thoughts, He loves and forgives us unconditionally!

Bella knew that she had misbehaved and needed forgiveness. Our current culture seldom asks for forgiveness.

We feel entitled and often disregard responsibility for our actions. In Luke 11, the Disciples asked Jesus how they should pray. In The Lord’s Prayer, Messiah instructs us to seek forgiveness. Once we ask for our own forgiveness, Believers are to forgive others.

How beautiful that when Believers seek forgiveness, we are forgiven instantly! Psalm 103:8–12 tells us, *“The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will He harbor His anger forever; He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”* (NIV)

**Many of us carry guilt and shame for what we’ve said and done.** The Gospel freely offers forgiveness (something everyone needs). The gift of a forgiven soul is life-changing and free for the asking.

*Our Jewish Roots* provides viewers with captivating Bible teaching. At our ministry’s core, we care about rescuing souls around the world. We want you to be free and to walk in the peace of the Savior who frees captives from sin and forgives them.

“Daddy, will You forgive me?”

“Yes, My child.” ★



Bella Rose (age 3)



# What Matters at the End of Time

Classic Zola Levitt  
from 1983  
38 years ago



Many Christians live in this land that we love. The United States of America may be the most Christian country in history; we can't be sure. But this is indeed a land of churches and Bibles. We produce and consume intricate and various Bible translations, devotional books and prayer guides, doctrinal lessons, and all the rest. Indeed, I suspect that the Kingdom will contain a great many Americans. But being an American doesn't save you; believing in Jesus Christ/*Yeshua HaMashiach* does.

I'm glad to be an American. But as a Bible student, I would be remiss to speak of this nation without addressing the End of Time. To be an American is to be in the very thick of a gathering storm. As long as we remain the world's greatest power, we cannot help being one of the actors in its very ending. But **while being a good American gives you the best chances to survive the upcoming series of troubles, being a Christian allows you to avoid them altogether.** So my message is the same as it is each year: If you're a good American, I commend you; and if you're a good Christian, I look forward to being with you forever. ★

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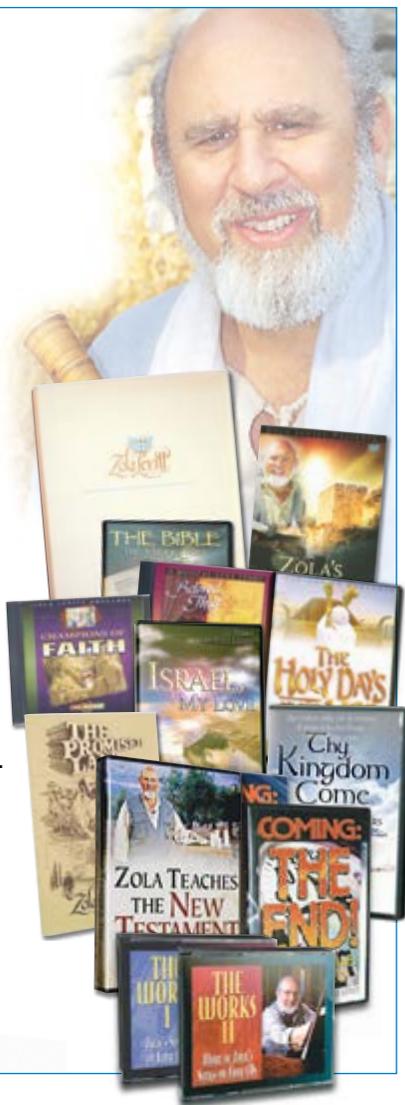
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Please see Letters "Comments from [www.levitt.com](http://www.levitt.com)" on [p. 22](#)



# Benjamin Franklin Not an Anti-Semite

BY SHAI AFSAI (r) JewishBoston.com

The myth that American founding father Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) was anti-Semitic first emerged 87 years ago — 144 years after his death. It began with the publication of a fraudulent, and since then repeatedly discredited, text known as the “Franklin Prophecy.”

In February 1934, William Dudley Pelley, the occultist head of the pro-Nazi Silver Legion of America and of the fascist publication *Liberation*, ran an article “Did Benjamin Franklin Say this about the Hebrews?” It contained a supposed excerpt from the previously unknown diary of Charles Coatesworth Pinckney, South Carolina’s delegate to the Constitutional Convention.

As presented by Pelley, the “Private Diary of Charles Pinckney” (or “Charles Pinckney’s Diary”) recorded a lengthy diatribe against Jews during the Convention, with Franklin describing them as “a great danger for the United States of America,” as “vampires,” and with his calling for the Constitution to bar and expel them from the country, lest in the future they adversely change its form of government.

By August 1934, Pelley’s “Franklin Prophecy” was already being republished in Nazi Germany. **Nazi leaders and sympathizers helped disseminate the fraud in German, French, and English, and in Germany, Switzerland, and the United States.**

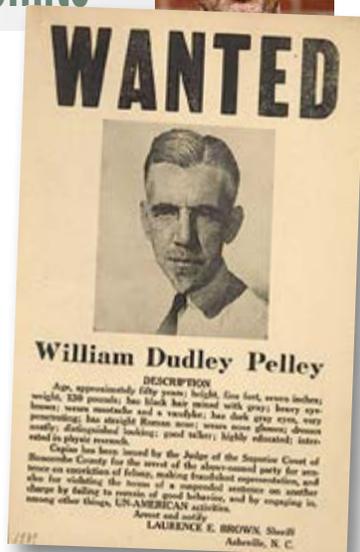
In September 1934, the “Franklin Prophecy” reached American historian Charles A. Beard, best known for his 1913 work *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*. Beard began searching for an original source for the “Franklin Prophecy,” in the process consulting with other scholars such as the chief of the Library of Congress Manuscript Division.

In March 1935, Beard’s conclusions were published in *The Jewish Frontier*, which then reprinted his essay as a pamphlet titled *Charles Beard Exposes Anti-Semitic Forgery about Benjamin Franklin*. Summing up the results of his investigations, Beard wrote:

All these searches have produced negative results. I cannot find a single original source that gives the slightest justification for believing that the “Prophecy” is anything more than a bare-faced forgery. Not a word have I discovered in Franklin’s letters and papers expressing any such sentiments against the Jews as ascribed to him by the Nazis — American and German. His well-known liberality in matters of religious opinions would, in fact, have precluded the kind of utterances put in his mouth by this palpable forgery.

Henry Butler Allen, director of the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, also weighed in on the fanciful Pinckney diary, stating: “Historians and librarians have not been able to find it or any record of it having existed.” Beard, Allen, and several other scholars’ responses were collected into the pamphlet *Benjamin Franklin Vindicated: An Exposure of the Franklin “Prophecy” by American Scholars*, issued jointly in 1938 by the International Benjamin Franklin Society, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, and the Jewish Labor Committee.

Nian-Sheng Huang’s *Benjamin Franklin in American Thought and Culture, 1790–1990* (1994, American Philosophical Society) shows the “Franklin Prophecy”



The “Wanted” poster for William D. Pelley. In his final years, Pelley dealt with charges of securities fraud. He also developed an elaborate religious philosophy called “Soulcraft,” based on his belief in UFOs and extraterrestrials, and published *Star Guests* in 1950. Pelley died on June 30, 1965.



(continued next page)



to be an extreme case of exploiting, vulgarizing, and distorting Franklin's legacy. The ease with which it has spread, and **its staying power among anti-Semites and anti-Zionists, demonstrate how successful bigots worldwide have been** in misappropriating the American founding father's good name and fame for their abhorrent purposes.

Throughout his life, Franklin saw a positive societal role for faith and public worship, and generally advocated religious tolerance and inclusivity. In his posthumously published *Autobiography*, he professed a lifelong interest in projects "serviceable to People in all Religions." Despite his famous liberality in matters of religious opinions, on a few occasions he did use offensive language about Jews in his private correspondence, though that language does not come close to the anti-Semitic vitriol he is said to have uttered in the "Prophecy." Franklin, who owned slaves and featured slaves for sale in his newspaper prior to becoming an abolitionist, was not at all times free of prejudice.

**Today's popular culture seems to have room for only saints or villains. Franklin was neither.** He was a complex person whose ideas and actions evolved as he matured, as he confronted new situations, and as he grew older. One example of this seems especially relevant during the present pandemic: Franklin was initially skeptical of smallpox inoculation, an "anti-vaxxer" in the current parlance. After his 4-year-old son, whom he had not inoculated, died of smallpox in 1736, Franklin reversed his position and encouraged other parents to inoculate their children.

Later in life, Franklin became an anti-slavery activist and accepted the ceremonial presidency of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society in 1787.

In 1788, after difficult economic conditions plunged Philadelphia's Congregation Mikveh Israel into debt, its members turned for assistance to their neighbors, "worthy fellow Citizens of every religious Denomination." Franklin, who had never been hostile to Jews, led by example and donated five pounds to help ensure the continued presence of Philadelphia's oldest formal Jewish congregation.

When Franklin—who tried hard to be "serviceable to People in all Religions"—died two years later, the press reported that his funeral procession in Philadelphia was led by "all the Clergy of the city, including the Ministers of the Hebrew congregation."

Remarkably, Franklin eventually influenced Jewish thought and practice.\* The "Franklin Prophecy," however, shows no signs of going away. It is too useful for those who want to hate. ★

Please see *America's Godly Heritage* on [p.31](#).

\* This influence occurred posthumously, primarily through his *Autobiography* and by way of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Lefin's *Sefer Cheshbon ha-Nefesh* (*Book of Spiritual Accounting*, 1808), which introduced Franklin's method for moral perfection to a Hebrew-reading Jewish audience.

## The Jewish Meaning of July 4<sup>th</sup> *continued from cover sidebar*

Tracing the history of Jewish observance of American Independence Day, Wenger pinpointed the origin:

As early as 1858, prominent Reform leader Isaac Mayer Wise declared, "Next to the Passover feast, the Fourth of July is the greatest, because

it is a memorial of the triumph of liberty." Always a champion of the notion that the freedoms of the United States constituted a fulfillment of Biblical principles, Wise referred to Independence Day as "the second redemption of mankind from the hands of their oppressors." ★



# Is a Long-Dismissed Forgery Actually the Oldest Known Biblical Manuscript?



ARCHAEOLOGY: BY JENNIFER SCHUESSLER (r) NYTimes.com



credit: The British Library

The fragments—seen here in an 1883 drawing prepared in consultation with Christian David Ginsburg

In 1883, a Jerusalem antiquities dealer named Moses Wilhelm Shapira announced the discovery of a remarkable artifact: 15 manuscript fragments discovered in a cave near the Dead Sea. Blackened with a pitch-like substance and their paleo-Hebrew script nearly illegible, they contained what Shapira claimed was the “original” Book of Deuteronomy, perhaps even Moses’ own copy.

The discovery drew newspaper headlines around the world, and Shapira offered the treasure to the British Museum for a million pounds. While the museum’s expert evaluated it, two fragments were put on display, attracting throngs of visitors, including Prime Minister William Gladstone. Then disaster struck.

Charles Simon Clermont-Ganneau, a swashbuckling French archaeologist and longtime nemesis of Shapira, had been granted a few minutes with several of the fragments, after promising to hold his judgment until the museum issued its report. But the next morning, he went to the press and denounced them as forgeries.

The museum’s expert, Christian David Ginsburg, agreed, and a distraught Shapira fled London. Six months later, he committed suicide in a hotel room in the Netherlands. The manuscript was auctioned for a pittance in 1885, and soon disappeared altogether.

Since then, the Shapira affair has haunted the edges of respectable Biblical scholarship, as a cautionary tale. But now, a young scholar is staking his own credibility by asking if this notorious fake was real.

In a scholarly article and companion book, Idan Dershowitz, a 38-year-old Israeli-American scholar at the University of Potsdam in Germany, marshals a range of archival, linguistic, and literary evidence to argue that the manuscript was an authentic ancient artifact.

But Dershowitz makes an even more dramatic claim. The text, which he has reconstructed from 19<sup>th</sup>-century transcriptions and drawings, is not a reworking of Deuteronomy but a precursor to it, dating to the period of the First Temple, before the Babylonian Exile. That would make it by far the oldest known Biblical manuscript and an unprecedented window into the origins and evolution of the Bible and Biblical religion.

Dershowitz’s research has yet to get broad scrutiny. Scholars who previewed his findings at a closed-door seminar at Harvard in 2019 are divided, and fierce debates are likely to come.

But if Dershowitz is correct, some experts say, it will be the most consequential

(continued next page)





Bible-related discovery since the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947.

“Qumran was a massive shift,” said Na’ama Pat-El, an expert in classical Semitic languages at the University of Texas in Austin, referring to the area where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. “What Idan is offering is something that’s at least equivalent, if not more. It’s pretty incredible if he’s right.”

For Dershowitz, the dismissal of Shapira’s manuscript nearly 140 years ago was not just a mistake, but “a tragedy” — and not just for Shapira. “It’s mind-boggling that for almost the entire existence of the discipline of Bible studies, this text that tells us more than any other manuscript discovered before or since hasn’t been part of the conversation,” he concluded.

Archaeological discoveries await those who journey to the Holy Land with us! Imagine experiencing the incredible Qumran site on our tour. See also the *Secrets of the Scrolls* series on p. 20. —David & Kirsten ★

## Interview with Idan Dershowitz

ARCHAEOLOGY: [Blog.DeGruyter.com](http://Blog.DeGruyter.com)

**DeGruyter:** *What got you interested in the Shapira scroll in the first place?*

**Idan Dershowitz:** For several years, I had seen occasional discussions in the popular press about this intriguing character and his famous forgery. There was a lot of drama in the story that drew me into it. At one point, I just realized that all of these discussions about whether the manuscripts are authentic or forged were talking about the individuals and the circumstances of the alleged discovery, and what the leather looked like and things like that, but not about the *text*.

I’m trained in philology and studying texts and relationships between texts. So I was just really curious to see the text of these manuscripts, which at the time wasn’t so easy to find. But once I did start finding 19<sup>th</sup> century transcriptions of the manuscripts, I felt almost immediately that it can’t be the forgery that people have said it is, and furthermore that it can’t be a text that is inspired by Deuteronomy or based on Deuteronomy, but actually the other way around.

**DG:** *Was there a specific moment when you realized that you were on to something special?*

**ID:** Yeah, I think it was in the initial 48 hours. I became quite obsessive about the text and I just kept on reading it, comparing it to Deuteronomy and also making tables, aligning the two texts. I felt almost immediately that it

Idan Dershowitz argues that the fragments are authentic.



credit: Amanah Willett for The New York Times

had to be authentic, and that it had to be proto-Deuteronomic. But I realized that that was a crazy thing to say. So, at first, I told a couple of people about it and asked to speak to them in confidence, but I didn’t want too many people to think that I was a crackpot (*laughs*).

**DG:** *Your research has received quite some pushback in the past. How do you deal with that?*

**ID:** In the beginning, people were pretty skeptical. But the more I heard the critiques, the more I felt like there were answers for them and that it all made sense to me. One of the things about my background — the time I spent in the *yeshiva* [Orthodox Jewish school], but also the culture I come from more broadly — is that the way that I have been trained to think is through argumentation. I enjoy arguments; I enjoy people saying, “*What you’re saying makes no sense, it’s definitely wrong because of...*” and then responding to those reasons. I feel that has sharpened my thinking and that it has improved my argument immensely. Many critiques that I heard along the way were things that I hadn’t thought of before. Finding explanations for those points helped me improve my work, so I did enjoy it. ★



### Q. Why did Matthew write his Gospel?

Dr. Todd Baker  
Zola Levitt Ministries  
Staff Theologian  
[staff@levitt.com](mailto:staff@levitt.com)



A. Matthew was one of Yeshua's twelve Jewish Apostles and was thus an eyewitness who followed the Savior during His three-year ministry in Israel. The Jewish texture and tone of Matthew's Gospel makes it obvious to readers that **Matthew wrote his Gospel to a Jewish audience, providing apologetic proof that Jesus/Yeshua of Nazareth was the long-awaited Messiah of Israel.**

To reinforce this fact, Matthew quoted First-Coming Messianic prophecies from the Old Testament (OT), prophecies that Jesus fulfilled in His earthly life. **Over 60 times the Book of Matthew quotes Old Testament prophecies that Jesus alone fulfilled.**

Out of deep love and a heavy burden for "the lost sheep of the House of Israel," Matthew went into detail to prove that by fulfilling the Messianic prophecies, Jesus of Nazareth was the One and only Messiah promised to come to the Jewish people from the region of Galilee (Isaiah 9:1–2 with Matthew 4:13–19).

As a tax collector for Rome in Judea, Matthew wrote shorthand for the Roman authorities, so he may have recorded what Jesus taught and did as events occurred and later collected his notes to write his Gospel. Matthew's Gospel is a clear and concise historical record that documents the life and times of Jesus from His



St. Matthew and the Angel (1661), painting by Rembrandt

virgin birth to His ascension into Heaven. Because Yeshua is the King Messiah, Matthew wrote about matters pertaining to the Messianic kingdom. This explains why **the phrase "the kingdom of heaven" is found 32 times in Matthew's book.**

Matthew's Gospel provides an excellent example of how the Christian faith is solidly grounded in Biblical Judaism. The roots of Christianity are Jewish through and through, squarely based on the Jewish Scriptures from Genesis to Malachi. (Please see our Abraham to Jesus Genealogy Chart on p. 23.)

Matthew lists the genealogy of Jesus (Matthew 1:1–17) to provide proof that Jesus is the Jewish descendant of Abraham and King David that Messianic prophecy mandates for the Messiah. Pastor and Bible commentator John MacArthur summarizes the overall purpose for Matthew writing his inspired Gospel. MacArthur writes of Matthew: "His purpose is clear: to demonstrate that Jesus is the Jewish nation's long-awaited Messiah. His voluminous quoting of the OT is specifically designed to show the tie between the Messiah of promise and the Christ of history."

If you don't personally know this marvelous Messiah of Matthew's Gospel, take up Yeshua's offer to all weary and overburdened sinners that Matthew quotes in 11:28–30.

*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*

In this Yeshua/Jesus of Matthew's Gospel, you will surely find spiritual satisfaction and permanent rest for your weary, restless soul. ★



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Wise As A Serpent  
by Mark Levitt  
ZLM Director



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**Vanguard (877-662-7447)**  
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**Fidelity (800-343-3548).**

**Since January**, this ministry has requested that stolen funds be replaced and our E\*TRADE account be restored to normal after two fraudulent withdrawals totaling \$6,500 last December 7. We continue, vigilantly. We now have a new brokerage account to receive stock donations via Vanguard (see left column). ★



"Trickle down economics...that's when you check your investments and something starts to trickle down your cheek."



# No “Heil” for Miss Hitler

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



African Americans are more prone than their White counterparts to serious disease and premature death. That’s according to Dr. David Williams, a Professor of Public Health at Harvard who offered convincing evidence on April 18’s *60 Minutes* segment “Race and Health.” He explained that racism around the world has a “weathering” effect on Blacks, be they rich or poor, educated or not.



Miss Hitler 2020 contest poster

For thousands of years, many Jews have experienced similar “weathering” in the form of the oldest hatred: anti-Semitism. I recently felt a certain sense of such erosion when learning about the illegal but resilient “Miss Hitler” pageant. Featuring SS regalia donned by “beauty” contestants, it’s an annual, online neo-Nazi event. “Miss Buchenwald,” an attendee of rallies with banners reading “Hitler was Right,” was sentenced to three years in prison in the UK for belonging to the neo-Nazi terrorist group National Action.

*Vkontakte* [VK], Russia’s Facebook equivalent, had a page for Miss Ostland (from the Eastern European region the Nazis occupied). The pageant’s 14 entrants explained with their photo submissions why they love and revere

the Third Reich of Adolf Hitler. **These young women submitted photos of themselves performing Nazi salutes, demonstrating at neo-Nazi rallies, and posing with Nazi memorabilia.** The Russian government banned the online event — and VK took down the pageant’s page from its website.

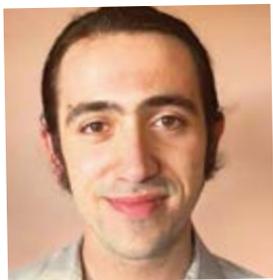
Don’t *miss* the double entendre of *missing* Hitler and his Holocaust. Jew-haters and others who feel a sense of nostalgia about the Third Reich would swear on a stack of *Mein Kamps* that they *miss* Hitler — and probably have a compulsion to give a hearty *Sieg Heil* (Hail Victory) whenever they hear his name. Meanwhile, non-neo-Nazis (ordinary citizens?) may *miss* the anti-Semitism that festers behind the scenes of normal life.

Directed by Ella Marks and Yael Roth, *Miss* is the title of a 12-minute film that debuted this past Yom HaShoah (Israel’s Holocaust Remembrance Day, April 8). Once available for free viewing on Vimeo, it has been taken down in anticipation of being reintroduced at a festival later this year. It’s worth watching from start to finish, which I did more than once. Rest assured: If it resurfaces, a future *Levitt Letter* will share the link in a Bulletin Board announcement entitled, “Do Jewish Lives Matter?”

*Miss*’s plot involves two young, female roommates in a London apartment. Olive is a photographer who looks Jewish, and Nina is a slender blonde who is under time pressure to enter photos of herself in the online “[We] Miss Hitler” “beauty” contest. Nina borrows Olive’s clothes and cons her into taking the pictures without divulging their destiny. The point of the production, director Ms. Roth explained, “was really to raise awareness — anti-Semitism on social media is just so crazy online.” Yes, it’s insidiously crazy offline, too — and it’s taking a cumulative toll on God’s Chosen. (Matt. 25:40) ★



# ZLM Bulletin Board



Aaron Bendich

## Back to the Borscht Belt

Aaron Bendich, 27, lives in Brooklyn and hosts “Borscht Beat” on WJFF Radio Catskill. That’s a weekly hour of Yiddish music recalling the heyday of Jewish vacationland in upstate New York. To enjoy six of Aaron’s favorite songs that reflect the region’s rich Jewish cultural history in the early 1900s, see [this Jerusalem Post article](#). The article’s

YouTube links will treat you to “Mein Shtetl Yaass,” “Birds Chorus,” “Ot Azoy,” “Coney Island,” “A Chazandl in Amerike,” and “Mentshn Zenen Mishigge.”



## ZLM’s Online Store

Kirsten Hart and Andrea Davis introduce ZLM’s free monthly newsletters. Go to: [Andrea and Kirsten – ZLM Online Store](#)

## From Breadbasket to Armageddon

How can the gorgeous, fertile “breadbasket of Israel” — the Jezreel Valley — figure in the final battle of Armageddon? To learn more, see Sarah Liberman’s newsy, [June Personal Letter](#).



Jezreel Valley as seen from Mount Gilboa

credit: Iai Oz

## FREE ITEM

### Pamphlet of the Month

Making an estate plan often requires legal assistance and a few hours of careful planning. Our free brochure ***Eleven Things to Remember ...***

*As You Plan for Your Future* describes 11 steps that include: 1) Make a Will and Other Plans, 3) Consult an Attorney, 5) Name Final Beneficiaries, and 7) Keep Plans in Balance. To receive this pamphlet at no charge, email us at [staff@levitt.com](mailto:staff@levitt.com) or write to: Zola Levitt Ministries  
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## “Come Home!”

Zola  
Tours  
to Israel



See page 36  
for details





## The Blessing of Self-Control

“Like a city that is broken down and without walls  
 is a man without control over his own spirit.” (Prov. 25:28)

|                 |                 |         |           |       |                    |             |                 |      |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------|-----------|-------|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|------|
| לְרוּחֹ         | מֵעֲזָרָ        | אֵין    | אֲשֶׁר    | אִישׁ | חֹמָה              | אֵין        | פְּרוּצָה       | עִיר |
| (3)   (2)   (1) | (3)   (2)   (1) | (1)     | (2)   (1) | (1)   | (2)   (1)          | (1)         | (3)   (2)   (1) | (1)  |
| le-ru-cho       | ma-a-tzar'      | ein'    | a-sher'   | eesh' | cho-mah'           | ein'        | pe-ru-tzah'     | eer' |
| for his spirit  | restraint       | without | who is    | a man | without walls (is) | broken down | a city          |      |

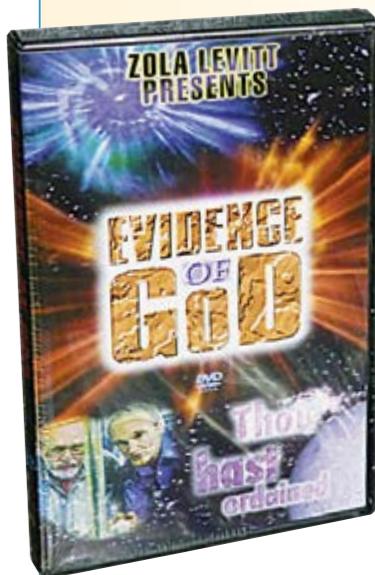
**Do you sometimes feel out of control with your emotions?** Have you ever felt overwhelmed by fear, anger, or inordinate desire? Yeshua said, “out of the heart come evil thoughts” (i.e., διαλογισμοί πονηροί, literally, evil “dialogs”) that result in bad feelings, wicked actions, and despair. Therefore, we must understand the connection between how we think (and what we believe) and the emotional condition of our inner life.

**Have you heard the saying “Hurt people hurt people”?** The word for “evil” in Hebrew (ra’: רע) comes from a verb (רעע) that means to injure or harm others, though the word also connotes a despair of the heart that gives up and chooses to turn “hard” and difficult (קשה). Evil is also connected with cowardice, since the conscience (i.e., moral awareness) reveals judgment for sin. Evil thinking leads to rationalizations, self-deception, and a running away from the truth about who we are.

The Scriptures say that a person without self-control, or “rule over his spirit,” is like an ancient city without walls — vulnerable to attack and easily overcome by hostile forces (our verse above). **If you are impulsive or easily agitated, you are rendered defenseless before the enemy of your soul.** It is essential to repair any breach within your heart and to become unified in your thinking and resolve. The Holy Spirit is called the “Comforter” because He imparts strength that fortifies the heart. The fruit of the Spirit is “self-control” (ἰγκρίτεια), a word that means “inner strength” (from εν-, “in” + κρίτος, “power”) referring to mastery over one’s desires and passions.

The Scriptures instruct us to take *“every thought captive”* so that we will not be brought into bondage to alien passions and obsessive thinking (2 Cor. 10:4–5). This is the way we overcome addiction and self-destructive behavior in our lives. God has not given us the spirit of fear but of *“power and love and self-control”* (2 Tim. 1:7). Therefore, we confess: *“I can do all things through the Messiah who strengthens me”* (Phil. 4:13). **Yeshua is the Source of all our strength; He is the healer of our fractured lives who makes us whole.** Amen, and *“may you be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being”* (Eph. 3:16). ★





## [Evidence of God](#)

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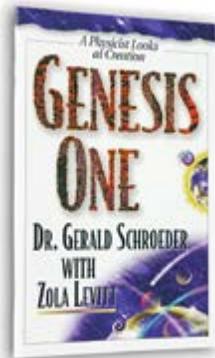
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By Dr. Gerald Schroeder with Zola Levitt

The *Genesis One* study booklet is a transcription of the first two programs from the *Evidence of God* TV series, described above.



Please see "Young Earth question" on [p. 25](#)

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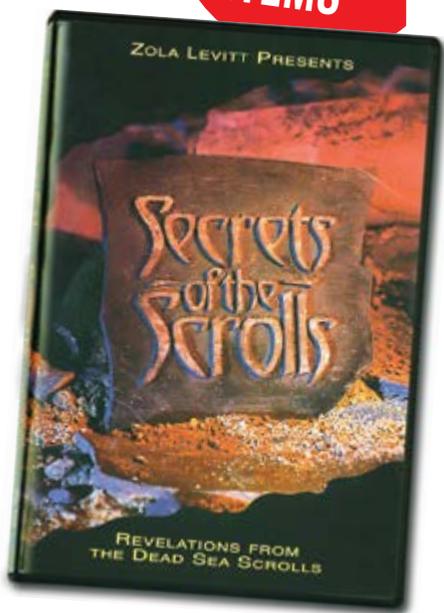


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## [Secrets of the Scrolls](#)

[DVD Set](#) (also available as  
[a Transcript](#) — [eBook only](#))  
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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 H. Eisenman and James M. 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.**

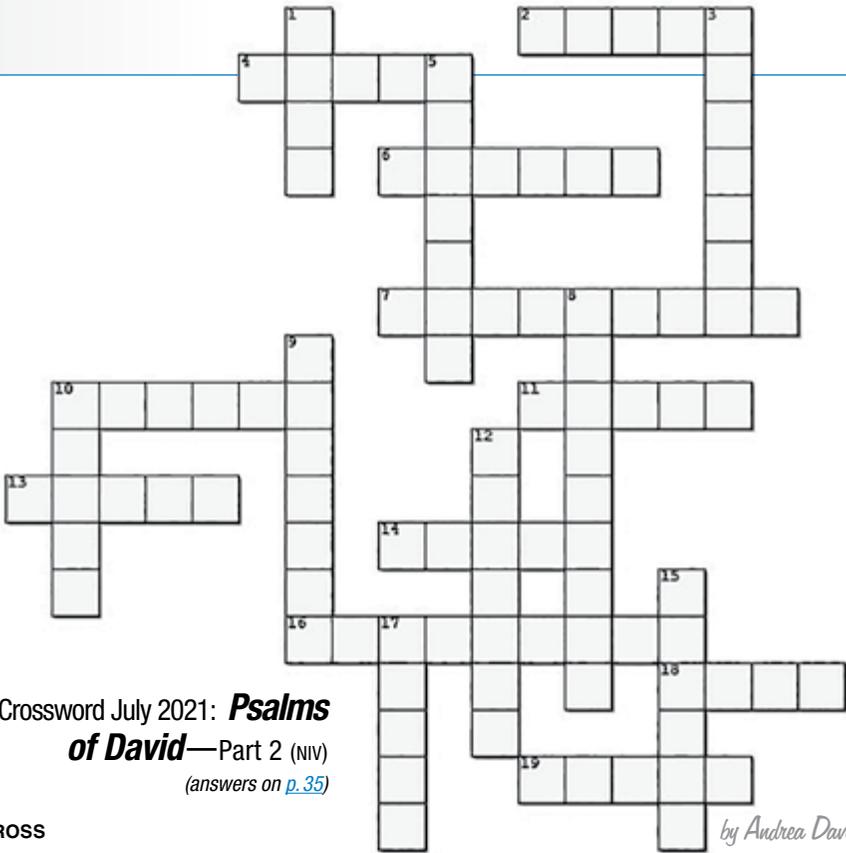
**The Wilderness Group** Michael Baigent, an English author, lectures in Qumran about the Scrolls. Dr. Tabor describes various approaches to excavation and how they pertain to the Scrolls. Dr. Robert Eisenman, a professor of Middle East religions at California State University at Long Beach, discusses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

**In Search of Answers** Dr. Eisenman recaps 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.

Please see a related archaeology article “Is a Long-Dismissed Forgery Actually the Oldest Known Biblical Manuscript?” on [p. 10](#).





Crossword July 2021: ***Psalms of David***—Part 2 (NIV)  
(answers on p.35)

**ACROSS**

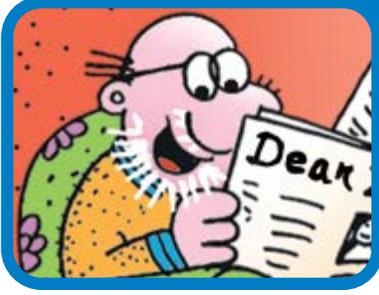
2. In God have I put my \_\_\_\_ (Psalm 56:11)
4. ...let us go into the \_\_ of the Lord. (Psalm 122:1)
6. I will worship toward Thy holy \_\_\_\_ (Psalm 138:2)
7. Pray for the peace of \_\_\_\_ (Psalm 122:6)
10. Let the heaven and earth \_\_ Him... (Psalm 69:34)
11. Thus will I \_\_ Thee while I live... (Psalm 63:4)
13. ...\_\_ is that people, whose God is the Lord. (Ps. 144:15)
14. Create in me a clean \_\_\_\_ (Psalm 51:10)
16. The \_\_ shall be glad in the Lord... (Psalm 64:10)
18. ...lead me to the \_\_ that is higher than I. (Ps. 61:2)
19. But I will sing of Thy \_\_\_\_ (Psalm 59:16)

**DOWN**

1. Bless the Lord, O my \_\_\_\_ (Psalm 103:1)
3. In the day of my \_\_ I will call upon Thee... (Ps. 86:7)
5. Deliver me, O Lord, from mine \_\_\_\_ (Psalm 143:9)
8. He is my rock and my \_\_\_\_ (Psalm 62:2)
9. ...because Thy mercy is good, \_\_ thou me. (Ps. 109:21)
10. He hath delivered my soul in \_\_\_\_ (Psalm 55:18)
12. Be thou \_\_, O God, above the heavens... (Ps. 57:5)
15. ...Jacob shall rejoice, and \_\_ shall be glad. (Ps. 53:6)
17. \_\_ is the Lord, and greatly to be praised... (Ps. 145:3)

*by Andrea Davis*





# Letters to ZLM

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

## Comments from [www.levitt.com](http://www.levitt.com) and YouTube

- Thank you so much for [this Bible teaching](#)! Very enlightening. God bless. Shalom from Ohio.
- Ah-h-h ... Zola! A legend. He is greatly missed. His show is still gold.
- Zola was unsurpassed in his teaching of the Scriptural symbolism in the traditional Jewish wedding ["The Marriage Supper" from *Israel, the Church, and the Future*]. His study provides amazing insights that will certainly bless those seeking a closer walk with the Lord.
- *Return To Galilee* is a superb television series, and Zola's music is extremely moving. I encourage everyone to visit [levitt.tv/media/series/VRTG](http://levitt.tv/media/series/VRTG) to watch it and many others. In memory of Zola, *Shalom!*
- I rediscovered Dr. Levitt just recently after many years. How could I forget this treasure of faith and knowledge! May I always remember him and the wonderful blessing of Jewish roots in my life.

(For a cornucopia of Zola's teaching, see our "Classic Zola Collection" on [p. 7](#).)

## Fully God, fully man

Dear ZLM,

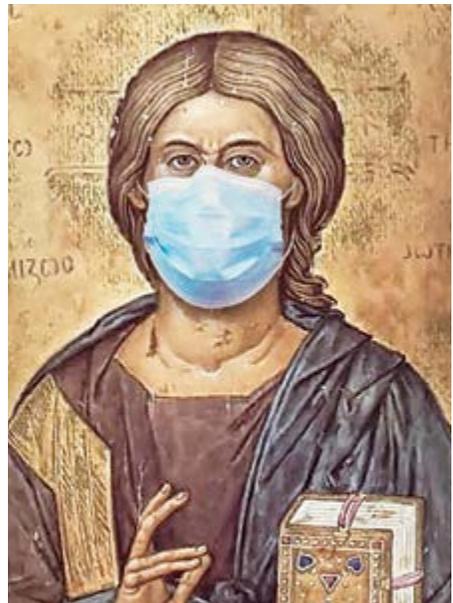
Your response to my letter (thank you) in the [March issue \(p. 22\)](#) left me perplexed. I stated that Jesus would not need to wear a mask because of His perfect health. You responded that Jesus could indeed get sick.

If Jesus had even a single cough or snuffle, He would not have been perfect or spotless. All sickness affects the blood, but the blood of Jesus was perfect. Only perfect blood can forgive sin (1 Peter 1:19) and thereby justify us from God's wrath (Romans 5:9). — K.W.

Dear K.W.,

When we get to Heaven, we can ask what "percentage" of humanness Jesus embodied. From what I have studied, He was *fully human* (Matt. 21:18, John 19:28, John 11:35, Mark 4:38, John 4:6-7).

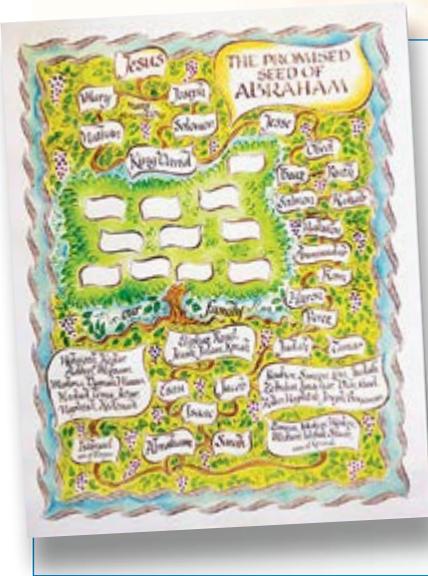
This caused us to infer that he probably scraped his knees as a youngster and had colds and sniffles. — David



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

(continued next page)





## Abraham to Jesus

### Genealogy Chart

Full Color, 16"x20" chart, mailed in a sturdy tube.

A personal work of art and a visually fresh Messianic poster that will be at home in the living room, office, or classroom. A novel gift idea. The tree roots connect the lineage of Isaac and Jacob through Abraham. The leaves include Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and spaces for you to write in your family members, grafted into the Commonwealth of Israel.

(Please see Todd's "Why did Matthew write his Gospel?" on [p.12.](#))

## Empathy

Dear ZLM,

"An Unkind Response to a Plea for Kindness" ([April Levitt Letter, p. 14](#)) brought tears to my eyes — not because of righteous anger but because of simple empathy.

I admire your steadfastness in and devotion to Messiah Jesus and His Kingdom. My wife and I have been longtime supporters of ZLM and will remain, Yeshua-willing, for decades more. I thank God for allowing me to discover ZLM.

Reading "U.S. Embassy Stays in Jerusalem" ([p. 31](#)) made me lift my arms in agreement with your comment, "May it remain there until the 1,000-Year Kingdom!" — J. and L.A.

Dear J. and L.A.,

We appreciate your empathy. Solomon was correct when he wrote, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but hard words stir up anger" (Proverbs 15:1). We rejoice with you about America's embassy finally being in Jerusalem after many decades of waiting! — Kirsten

## Friendly donations

Dear ZLM,

Your website is NOT user friendly for donations. Please make it easier to donate with a debit or credit card. —D.F.

Dear D.F.,

At [levitt.com](#), when you click on the [Donations button](#) (in the upper-right corner of every page), a new page opens and offers ways in which you can financially help this ministry. You may donate via text (469-615-2009) or using our **secure** donation form. Because *Money* is preselected, you might choose \$18, \$50, or a Custom Amount before clicking on *Credit, Debit, or PayPal*.

Clicking on *Give Now* opens the payment form for your name and other billing details. Once your information is complete, click on the *Give \$ \_ Now* box at the bottom. Options other than *Money* include *Vehicle, Assets, Gift Card, and Other*. Thanks for expressing your eagerness to help. —Mark

(continued next page)



## Solid teaching, inspiring music

Dear ZLM,

Many programs have “happy talk” and entertaining music. Dr. Seif’s in-depth teaching is what makes *OJR* special. I want to *learn*. —K.F. (IL)

Dear K.F.,

We find that Zola’s classic songs lift the soul while being enjoyable. They help us fulfill the Psalm’s call to “Sing to Him, sing praise to Him; tell of His wonderful acts” (Psalm 105:2). We also love Dr. Seif’s teaching. We are blessed to have both! —David and Kirsten



Dr. Jeffrey Seif

## To the Jew first

Dear ZLM,

I’ve been giving teaching material from your ministry to my Jewish doctor, with his permission. I put him in touch with a Messianic Jewish friend; they both served in the IDF (Israel Defense Forces). This relationship is how the Lord works. If I had not been his patient or sent along my friend, the doctor might not have been saved.

My doctor recently died from a heart attack and is now in Heaven. Thank you for your monthly mailings. —F.A.S. (NV)

Dear F.A.S.,

The Gospel was intended to go “to the Jew first” (Romans 1:16). You are a shining example of fulfilling that Scriptural mandate as well as The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20)! —David



[The Prophesied Messiah bookmark](#)

—an excellent gift to help share the Gospel with a Jew



To  
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## Messianic vs. Christian music

Dear ZLM,

Searching “Messianic” on YouTube pleasantly surprised me with uplifting praise music — definitely different from mainstream Christian music ... in a good way!

I would love to see Joshua Aaron or Sarah Liberman on *OJR*. I think their music would please mainstream Christians. —R.P. (CA)

Dear R.P.,

Sarah and Joshua are personal friends of ours. Isn’t their music uplifting and inspirational! *OJR* has featured Joshua Aaron before, and Sarah Liberman has taught Hebrew to our viewers. Sarah writes our monthly *Personal Letter*. Visit [levitt.com/levletter](http://levitt.com/levletter) to read what she is doing as this ministry’s “Sabra on the ground in Israel.” You can sign up there to receive free hard copies. —David and Kirsten



Joshua Aaron



Sarah Liberman

(continued next page)

## Young Earth question

Dear ZLM,

“Earliest Human Symbol?” ([May Levitt Letter, p. 32](#)) states: “At approximately 120,000 years old, the fragment is possibly the earliest evidence of human use of symbols ever found.” How does this article not contradict the Biblical account of creation? Creationists believe that the Earth is not hundreds of thousands of years old. —M.H.

Dear M.H.,

The article in question originated from the Biblical Archaeology Society. I have two possibilities for you.

- 1) Many sincere Creationists believe that God fabricated fossils in order to occupy evolutionists.
- 2) Science explains through time dilation how the Earth can be billions of years old AND created in six days. Following our reprinting of Dr. Tiscareno’s thesis on scientific evidence for a Young Earth ([August 2020, p. 24](#)), we addressed this issue in the letter sections of September–November. Check out physicist Gerald Schroeder’s in-depth explanation to Zola in our [Evidence of God DVD](#) series or the booklet [Genesis One](#), both described on [p. 17](#).

**No matter how you personally believe Creation occurred, the Bible remains inerrant.** — Editor

## Biased news?

Dear ZLM,

I have been donating to ZLM ministries for years and have enjoyed watching the programs on television even longer. Now it is getting difficult to read the newsletter with its one-sided stories regarding eating red meat and wearing masks. Thank you. —H.T.

Dear H.T.,

Now that the Covid debate is progressing from masks to vaccines, you might consider reading NYTimes.com article [“The Impotence of Getting Fully Vaccinated.”](#) The article details how COVID-19 is much more contagious and deadly than previous viruses — not just for people “in the upper decades of life but for almost anyone, no matter how young and healthy.” Incidentally, Dr. Kenneth Cooper of Dallas’s Cooper Aerobics Center advises, “If you cannot find the time to exercise, then you’d better find the time to be sick.” In March, he turned 90 and is still both working and working out! —Mark

Dear H.T.,

You’re referring to the articles we reprinted in [February 2021 \(p. 28\)](#) from [Israel365News.com](#) and [December 2020 \(p. 7\)](#) from [The Dallas Morning News](#). I won’t rehash the mask issue as we have dealt with it almost every month since.

However, in every *Levitt Letter*, we include articles about the contributions of Israeli scientists and doctors. The “Link Between Cancers and Meat, Dairy” was one. We’ve also reported on predicting epileptic seizures (January), 3D eye surgery (March), car batteries (April), and night-vision technology (May). If ever a subject doesn’t appeal to you, please turn the page. You might not find advances in prenatal care (May) interesting, but other readers may.

In her [October 2020 Personal Letter](#), our *Sabra* on the ground in Israel, Sarah Liberman, confessed to following a plant-based diet. If that disclosure offended you, please recall that her discussion centered on fasting and addiction and **what worked for her**. — Editor ★



# Bioplastic vs. Regular Plastic



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



photo: Dustan Woodhouse on Unsplash

Photographer Dustan Woodhouse says, "Take a walk a few miles from your next resort; here is what the beaches of the world really look like these days." Punta Cana, Dominican Republic

Many people around the world are concerned about the danger to the environment (and to human health) of plastics in the sea. Marine creatures (from large marine mammals down to coral, small fish, and microscopic algae) are killed when they ingest plastic microparticles with toxic additives from the growing debris of petroleum-based plastic that don't decompose in years or even decades.

Stores are filled with single-use plastic plates, bottles, and cutlery made from petroleum and also with "bioplastics" that are made from renewable, biomass sources, such as vegetable fats and oils, corn starch, straw, woodchips, sawdust, and recycled food waste. Bioplastics cost more but have been considered safer for the environment.

According to various assessments, around 350 million tons of plastic goods are produced around the world every year. Half of these goods are disposable dishes and cutlery, convenience items to avoid dishwashing ceramic, glass, or metal utensils. A significant proportion ends up in landfills as well as in the water.

## Saving the Environment?

Now, a worrisome new study from Tel Aviv University (TAU) that compares regular disposable plastic utensils with bioplastic counterparts finds no significant difference between them in the harm they cause to marine animals.

At least in the short term, both types of plastic have a similar detrimental effect. "Bioplastics are made of natural materials and, in that sense, they are more beneficial environmentally speaking. But they may also contain toxins just like regular plastic dishes, and they do not biodegrade quickly in the aquatic habitat," explained Prof. Noa Shenkar of TAU's School of Zoology at the George Wise Faculty of Life Sciences and the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History, Israel National Center for Biodiversity Studies.

"In fact, the standard appearing on the [government] label is dated, omitting several kinds of plastic additives. It specifies biodegradability within 180 days, but that is under conditions available only in industrial composting settings. These conditions are rarely found in nature — certainly not in the marine environment and not in the landfills in which our waste is generally buried," she added.

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photo:  
Nariman  
Mesharrafa  
on Unsplash

“In recent decades, substances called ‘bioplastics’ came on the market. Bioplastics are made of natural, renewable materials, and biodegrade relatively fast under certain conditions” explained lead research student Guillermo Anderson.

“Disposable dishes and utensils made of bioplastics were granted various international standard seals (such as the EN from the European Union and the ASTM) and are marketed to consumers as environmentally friendly. **We wanted to test the disposable plastics to see if they do, in fact, meet expectations,**” he continued.

## Study Stages

**The first stage of the study** compared disposable cups made of regular plastic with bioplastic cups that meet the European standard. The test showed that both plastics contain chemical additives, some of which are known to be toxic to both animal and human cells. Then, the scientists ground both types of disposable cups into microparticles and examined their effect on ascidians, a type of a marine invertebrate also known as sea squirt, that feeds by filtering seawater through its body.

“The microparticles of both plastics caused similar damage to the ascidia’s reproductive system, compared to a control group that was not exposed to microparticles,” said Anderson. “The damage worsened as the microparticle concentration increased, but no significant difference was observed between the accumulation of regular plastic versus the accumulation of bioplastic.”

**In the second part of the study**, the scientists examined whether these marine invertebrates were capable of digesting particles of either plastic. The examination revealed that just like regular plastic, bioplastic does not biodegrade and is not digested in the ascidia’s body.

Next, the scientists examined the appeal of the plastics to marine organisms. They placed disposable plates made of regular plastic and bioplastic in two locations and depths in the Gulf of Eilat. “After three months, we checked the plates and noted the differences. We discovered that marine animals preferred the regular plastic plates and grew on them, similar to how they grow on artificial underwater structures like buoys and pipes. They exhibited less growth on the bioplastics plates, which absorbed water and swelled up but showed no signs of breaking down,” the researchers continued.

## What This Means

“The explanation for our findings may lie in the dated standards that categorize bioplastics as ‘environmentally friendly.’ These standards define bioplastics as materials that biodegrade within 180 days in composting facilities, where the temperature is kept at 50 degrees Celsius (122° F) and the levels of moisture and oxidization are closely monitored and specifically adjusted. These conditions are generally not found in nature, especially not in the marine environment, which is cold, salty, and may be poorly oxygenated,” they wrote.

“Furthermore, these standards say nothing about the toxic additives that might be present in bioplastics. **Our study demonstrates the urgent need to update standards for ‘environmentally friendly’ disposable utensils and for clearer consumer explanations.** But, until that happens, this is an important consideration when spending good money on disposable dishes with bioplastics seals. While you may be calming your conscience, you’re still liable to be polluting the environment. **Multi-use dishes are always the safest choice!** ★



# From Refugee Child to World-Renowned Scientist

WEIZMANN  
INSTITUTE  
OF SCIENCE



MEDICINE: Wis-Wander.Weizmann.ac.il



credit: lab of Prof. Ed. Bayer

Prof. Meir Wilchek in 1972

Prof. Meir Wilchek still remembers the day in the 1950s when he overheard a mother yelling to her young son: “If you don’t go to school, you’ll end up like him!” Wilchek — the “him” referred to — was at that moment disheveled, having risen early to complete his bike paper route before getting to his university classes. He chuckles when he thinks that the boy could have done much worse than becoming a world-class scientist, inventor of methods used today around the globe for protein purification and biotechnical and biomedical applications.

## From Siberia to Israel

Until he was four years old, Meir had an idyllic existence in the town of Ostrów Mazowiecka, Poland. He and his older sister were reared by their mother, while their father, a rabbi, worked during the week in Warsaw. That all changed in 1939, when the German army entered their town — one of the first to be conquered in Poland. Meir fled with his sister and mother to the Russian zone, trying to reach the children’s father in Warsaw, but they were caught and sent to Siberia with other stateless refugees. Their father remained in the Warsaw Ghetto and joined the resistance. After the uprising, he was imprisoned and later transferred to a camp in Germany, where he was executed two weeks before the end of the war in April, 1945.

Wilchek’s mother kept her family alive by finding small items in one town to sell in the next, and by cooking and sewing. Sometimes they subsisted on the potato peels — peeled extra-thick — from the meals she prepared for others. Still, she managed to teach her children reading, writing, and math.

The family made *aliyah* to the new State of Israel in 1949, when Meir was 14. They ended up in a *ma’abara* (a refugee camp) in Rehovot, as they had a relative there. For the first time, Meir found himself in an educational framework: He was placed in sixth grade in a religious school but quickly skipped to the upper grades.

Meir, who was told at the state high school that he could only wear his kippa [yarmulke] during religious classes, decided to start his own high school. That religious high school still exists, and when it celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in

(continued next page)





credit:  
Weizmann  
Institute of  
Science

2000, Wilchek was honored by the city of Rehovot.

Excellent students tended to get tracked into army study programs and from there into academic life. But Wilchek, ever mindful of the need to make a living, completed his compulsory service in a regular air force unit, hoping to be accepted into the postal service. It was only when he was not accepted for a postal job that he looked to his fallback plan: studying chemistry.

## Studying Chemistry

Wilchek received a scholarship to Bar Ilan University, founded by an American rabbi as a religious Zionist university. He was in Bar Ilan's first graduating class, receiving a BSc in chemistry and physics. In addition to his paper route, Wilchek headed the Bar Ilan student union and served as a youth aid to the Knesset Minister of Education. Wilchek met his future wife, Esther, during his studies, and they married right after he graduated.

Bar Ilan had no graduate studies, and The Hebrew University would not accept his degree from the not-yet-accredited Bar Ilan. Wilchek worked as a lab assistant in the Weizmann Institute of Science's Biophysics Department. Two professors there encouraged him to continue his studies in another brand-new institute—the Feinberg Graduate School on the Institute campus, where he entered a direct PhD program.

Wilchek's defining moment came during his postdoctoral research in the lab of Prof. Christian Anfinsen (who would go on to receive a Nobel Prize in Chemistry), at the National Institutes of Health in Maryland. Initially, he was given the painstaking task of protein separation, a process performed in a ceiling-high column that could take weeks or months. Once the work became routine, he piled his family into the car for a tour of the United States but made a U-turn and headed back to the lab. He'd had a brainstorm: Use proteins that bind to other molecules to fish them out of solution. After a few experiments, he developed a separation method that could be accomplished in just a few hours.



Prof. Wilchek, on left, in 1979

The new method, dubbed "affinity chromatography," was an immediate hit with scientists; one group reported that they had worked for 25 years to purify a particular protein that they could now separate from blood in barely half a day. Affinity purification has been used recently in the process of developing mRNA vaccines.

## Weizmann Institute of Science

Wilchek returned to Israel in 1968 and joined the Weizmann Institute of Science. With his student and later colleague Ed Bayer, he worked on two molecules—a protein called avidin and the vitamin biotin. These molecules bind together so closely they were eventually nicknamed the "strongest biological glue." Their findings on the avidin-biotin system became the basis of thousands of studies in biology, chemistry, and even physics, as well as of applications in several fields, from the diagnosis of genetic disorders to biomedicine and cancer treatments.

Prof. Wilchek has received many awards and honors for his contributions to science and humanity and has served in posts at the Institute and outside of it. He has guided numerous students who are making outstanding contributions to science at universities around the world.

When asked whether he has ever experienced conflict between his science and his religious beliefs, Wilchek quotes Deut. 29:29: *"The secret things belong to God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever."* ★





Overview of the Human Rights Council at the United Nations in Geneva

## SELECT MEDIA BRIEFS

### UN Probes Israeli “War Crimes”

By Tovah Lazaroff / JPost.com

The United Nations Human Rights Council voted 24-9 in late May to launch an investigation against Israel. It alleged war crimes, including during Operation Guardian of the Walls, the recent war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip, and called for an arms embargo against the Jewish state.

The decision to call for such a probe was sparked by the 11-day IDF-Hamas war and was submitted by the Palestinian Authority and Pakistan on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The UNHRC already calls annually for an arms embargo against Israel.

The probe marks the first time that the UNHRC created a permanent fact-finding mission with respect to any UN member state. Israel’s Foreign Ministry immediately stated that it had no intention of cooperating with the probe. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated: “Today’s shameful decision is yet another example of the UN Human Rights Council’s blatant anti-Israel obsession.”

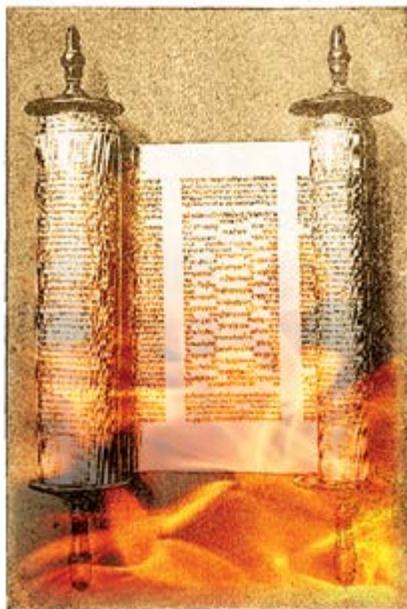
### Rabbi Saves Torah From Burning Inferno

JPost.com

A campus rabbi at the University of Cape Town, South Africa ran into a burning building to save a Torah scroll from being engulfed by the flames, according to Chabad.org.

Rabbi Nissen Goldman went in to save

the Torah as well as other objects after the school’s Jewish student center caught fire from sweeping wildfire that destroyed a number of historical buildings and spread to the campus.



Evacuation orders were issued for the entire area, and roads had been blocked to and from the campus and the Chabad Samson Student Center where Goldman works. Chabad noted that the building was not on fire at the time the rabbi entered, but some nearby structures were, such as the library and dorms.

“In retrospect, I realize how dangerous it was. But I felt that there really was no other option. I had to make an effort to salvage what I could,” said Goldman.

*(continued next page)*





## Israel Close to Herd Immunity

By Gadi Zaig / JPost.com



credit: Amir Cohen (Reuters)

An ultra-Orthodox Jewish man getting a vaccination

Dr. Anthony Fauci, chief medical advisor to U.S. President Joe Biden, recently described for Israeli TV his work fighting COVID-19 alongside former President Donald Trump and currently under Biden.

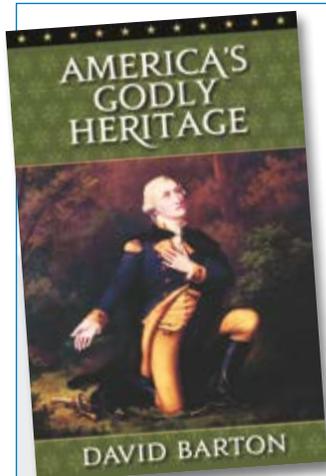
**"I often use Israel as the prototype example of what actually goes right"** he said, acknowledging Israel's success in the fight against the novel coronavirus. He added that because of Israel's size and political circumstances, the country "knows how to stick together as a single unit."

He stated clearly that he

strongly believes Israel will achieve "herd immunity" — the situation in which a sufficient portion of a population is immune from a contagious threat through vaccination or recovery, so that the disease won't spread significantly to the rest of the population. But he also believes that other countries that have suffered greater difficulties against the virus will eventually learn to control it.

"I believe it's likely that we will have to continue vaccinating over a period of several years," he predicted.

Fauci urged young people and children to get vaccinated, stating that they could be "an important vehicle for vaccinating the community." ★



## [America's Godly Heritage](#) book

By David Barton

*America's Godly Heritage* sets forth the beliefs of many well-known Founding Fathers concerning the proper role of Christian principles in education, government, and the public affairs of the nation. The beliefs of Founders such as Patrick Henry, John Quincy Adams, John Jay, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, George Mason, and many others are clearly presented.

(Please see Ben Franklin article on [p.8.](#))

(Many titles are also available as eBooks.)

# Historic Jewish Temple Not at Dome of The Rock?



**PART 2** ARCHAEOLOGY: BY BRANDON SHOWALTER (r) ChristianPost.com

[Last month](#), we looked at a case for the original Temple being located near to, but not on the exact spot of, Islam's Dome of the Rock shrine.



The Second Temple Jerusalem Model at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem

## A Question of How Soon

The question then becomes how soon the Temple could be rebuilt and sit in its original location given the region's political dynamics, known for being a tinderbox of ethnic and religious conflict. This tension is especially the case because the Temple Mount is arguably the most bitterly contested piece of real estate on the planet.

Organizations like the Temple Institute, the Temple Mount, the Eretz Yisrael Faithful Movement, and other like-minded Jewish groups have already made considerable preparations to rebuild the Temple should a window of opportunity arise.

"They absolutely have all that they need. They have plans drawn. They have materials cut and prepared, very much like David did in his time before Solomon," author Christian Widener said.

## Geopolitical Changes

He believes that **recent geopolitical developments in the Middle East** — particularly the Abraham Accords, which are the trade agreements between Israel and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain — **could bring about the circumstances in which the Temple might be reconstructed.**

"Some Islamic scholars, Sunni scholars, are questioning, for example, whether Jerusalem truly was the furthest mosque, because that was something that came several decades after the death of Muhammad, and it became the lore," he said. "Islamic scholars are making arguments like: 'We should let the Jews do what they do', and 'We have Mecca and Medina, and that's our holy place.'"



Christian Widener, author of *The Temple Revealed*

*(continued next page)*



Such a pivot in political and religious thinking is tremendous, Widener maintains. If it continues, the Temple Mount could decrease in significance for people other than the Jews. When Jerusalem's spiritual status is lowered in the Islamic mind, it elevates Mecca and Medina. This might be seen more visibly if Saudi Arabia decides to sign on to the Abraham Accords.



## Prophecies Possibly Fulfilled

Widener believes that prophecies have been fulfilled in recent decades. For example, almost 20 years after the birth of the modern State of Israel, the Jews recaptured the ancient city of Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, in the 1967 Six-Day War. Yet, ten days after that victory, the Jews returned control of the Mount to their enemies. To this day, the Waqf, an Islamic religious trust, controls and manages the Temple Mount's affairs.



The Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem

"Ezekiel 44:8 says, *'instead of carrying out your duty in regard to my holy things, you put others in charge of my sanctuary,'*" Widener explained.

"That definitely happened in 1967. Israel got control of the Temple Mount and then gave it back to the country that had just invaded them and tried to wipe them out. It's the holiest place on Earth for [the Jews], and I think for us [Believers], too, because God's Word says that that place is important."

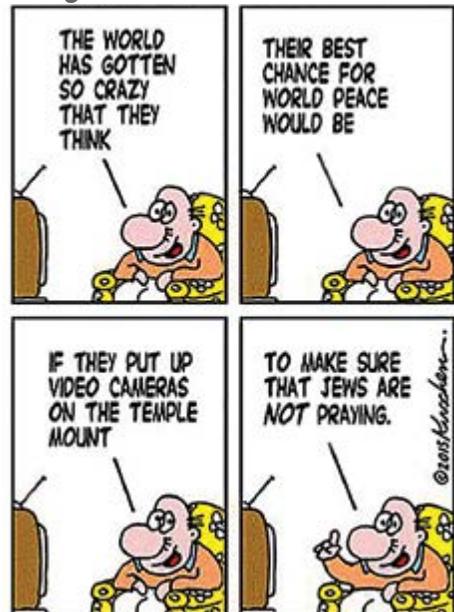
Ezekiel 43:6–7 describes the Temple as the place of God's throne, where He will dwell among Israel forever. **That the Jews gave up that holy site to their enemies makes no sense except for the fact that it was prophesied,** Widener reiterated.

"If you're feeling like your Bible reading is not invigorated lately, reading the Scriptures with the recognition that prophecies are beginning to happen will change how you read the Bible," Widener suggested.

[Articles about the Temple Mount and its prophecies should remind us Believers to daily pray for the peace of Jerusalem.](#) — Kirsten ★

## Dry Bones

Video Cameras



# The Difference Between Anti-State of Israel and Anti-Semitism



BY RAHELI BARATZ-RIX (r) JPost.com



credit: Anas Babir/AFP

Rockets from Gaza, on right, are seen in the night sky fired toward Israel from Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip on May 14, 2021, while Iron Dome interceptor missiles, on left, rise to meet them.

In these fraught and stressful times for all Israelis, criticism of the State of Israel and its government can be found across the globe. As a democracy that respects freedom of expression, Israel is home to much social and political dissent. But how tolerant can one be?

Much criticism comes from within Israel. But when condemnation of Israeli actions originates outside Israeli discourse, a thin line separates legitimate critique from an onslaught of anti-Semitic rhetoric, which is often, but not always, masked as anti-Zionism. **Objecting to Israeli policy in Gaza and the disputed West Bank is not anti-Semitism. Denying Israel's right to exist and defend its citizens is.** Proclaiming support for an independent Palestinian state is not anti-Semitism. Calling for the destruction of Israel and the death of Jews is. Equating the defensive counteractions of a sovereign military with indiscriminate attacks by a terrorist organization toes the line at best. Hamas leadership's calls for

beheading Jews has no legitimacy in warfare and meets every criterion of anti-Semitism.

Among the reasons Hamas terrorists may be emboldened to attack Israel with such brazen volume is that they view the politically fragmented population as vulnerable. However, this is an incorrect assessment.

In the span of an hour on a May night, as hundreds of rockets rained down on Israeli civilians who were sent scurrying for bomb shelters, Israel was unified against a common threat. **Hamas terror targets all of Israel — religious and secular, Jewish and Arab, all citizens alike.** In fact, among the tragic fatalities of Hamas's overnight campaign were an Arab-Muslim Israeli man and his child. Israel mourns these victims and will remain resolute in its own defense until the peace and security to which every Israeli citizen is entitled are restored. ★





## Little Girl on a Plane

An atheist was seated next to a little girl on an airplane. He turned to her and asked, "Do you want to talk? Flights go quicker if you strike up a conversation with your fellow passenger."

The child, who had just started to read her book, replied to the stranger, "What would you want to talk about?"

"Oh, I don't know. How about why there is no God, no Heaven or Hell, or no life after death?" he suggested smugly.

"OK," she answered. "Those could be interesting topics. But let me ask you a question first. A horse, a cow, and a deer all eat the same stuff—grass. Yet a deer excretes little pellets, while a cow turns out a flat patty, and a horse produces clumps. Why do you suppose that is?"

The atheist, visibly surprised by the little girl's intelligence, thought a moment and offered, "Hmmm, I have no idea."

To which the youngster replied, "Do you really feel qualified to discuss why there is no God, no Heaven or Hell, or no life after death, when you don't know poop?"

And she returned to reading her book. ★



courtesy: The Israeli Cartoon Project/Yossi Shahaar

A cartoon by Yossi Shahaar posted on the Israeli Cartoon Project Facebook page

### Answer Key for July 2021 Crossword (p.21)

*Across:*

- 2. Trust
- 4. House
- 6. Temple
- 7. Jerusalem
- 10. Praise
- 11. Bless

*Down:*

- 13. Happy
- 14. Heart
- 16. Righteous
- 18. Rock
- 19. Power
- 1. Soul
- 3. Trouble
- 5. Enemies
- 8. Salvation
- 9. Deliver
- 10. Peace
- 12. Exalted
- 15. Israel
- 17. Great



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| <b>Daystar Airing Day &amp; Time by zone</b><br>DirecTV – Channel 369    Dish – Channel 263 |                      |                      |                       |                       |
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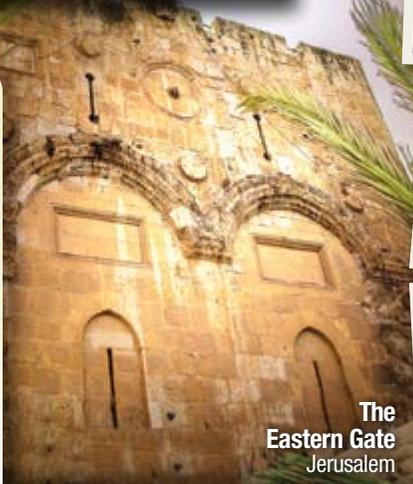
*Uncertainty in Greece due to the coronavirus prevents us from visiting Greece on our Fall 2021 Tour.*

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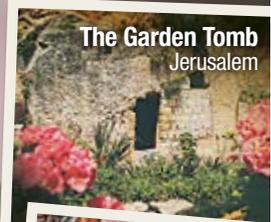
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See you in Jerusalem!



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