



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

Purim— We Need Modern-Day Esthers

By Yael Eckstein
ChristianPost.com

inside: The Sign of the
Prophet Jonah p.10

This month, Jews around the world will celebrate Purim. It is perhaps the most festive holiday on the Jewish calendar, and though Christians do not usually celebrate it, many know the story behind it, as do Jewish children who grow up hearing it every year.

Purim recalls the deliverance of the Jewish people from their enemies nearly 2,400 years ago. **The king of Persia chose a beautiful young woman named Esther to be his queen, unaware that she was Jewish.** Esther heard from Mordecai, her uncle, that the king had entrusted the fate of Persian Jews to Haman, the king's top adviser. Haman may have been one of history's earliest anti-Semites: he hated the Jews and issued an order to kill them all.

At great risk to her own life, Esther revealed to the king that she was Jewish and pleaded with him to save her people. He agreed to do so, and, in a fitting twist, decreed for

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REMEMBER:

Purim: Sunset March 6 to sunset March 7

"Christian Birthright" Celebrates 10,000 Participants

Israel365News.com

A program that brings Christian college students from the U.S. to visit Israel recently celebrated its 10,000th participant. Dubbed the "Christian Birthright," the group Passages organizes subsidized trips to Israel to present to the participants "both the ancient roots of their Biblical faith and a modern and thriving Israel firsthand."

The initiative was established in 2016, after its founders noted that most tours to Israel cater to older generations. Organizers wanted to create a project for younger Christians, among whom support

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source: Israel365News.com

Purim... *continued from cover*

Haman the death sentence Haman himself had planned to carry out on the Jews.

Relevant Lessons

Esther's story, though thousands of years old, teaches us several lessons that are relevant today.

The first is that, sadly, Haman is more than just a historical figure. In fact, it is not hard to find modern-day Hamans who are bent on causing harm to the Jewish people. Haman's presence lingers among current Iranian leaders who frequently call for Israel's destruction. [Recall that modern-day Iran encompasses most of ancient Persia.] We feel Haman's influence when we read about terrorists who carry out murderous attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions — as well as on Christians — around the world.

We sense it in the rising tide of anti-Semitic attacks. Not long ago, we saw it when an armed man barged into a synagogue in Colleyville, Texas, and held four hostages — including the rabbi — at gunpoint.

Considering the war in Ukraine, I realize that the Jewish community there is also suffering under the specter of Haman. Their plight has worsened during this precarious time of war and violence.

Yet the most important lesson from Esther's story is that God still calls brave men and women to protect others. Esther could have kept quiet and lived a comfortable life of luxury as the wife of the most powerful man in the world. But she willingly put her life on the line to save her people.

Others First

In our world, most people first look out for their own interests. Self-preservation is deeply ingrained in our human psyche. At times this instinct is beneficial as it helps us avoid danger, but it too can tempt us to survive at the expense of others.



Detail of *Esther and Mordecai*, painting by Arent de Gelder (1645–1727), National Museum of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires

Esther reminds us that God does not work that way. Often, He calls us to put the needs of others before our own. As I write, the faces of several brave women in Ukraine come to mind. One friend, Malcki Bukiat — who had five children of her own to care for and protect from the horrors of war — helped lead 60 orphan children west, on a dangerous journey through an unpredictable war zone to find shelter and flee Ukraine. As food and fuel were lacking, and chaos consumed her world, she found an Esther-like courage to think of others' safety and put the vulnerable and helpless before herself.

As we celebrate Purim this year in a world with no shortage of "Hamans," I pray that more "Esthers" will rise to protect the vulnerable. As Esther reminds us, even one brave person could save an entire nation.

Perhaps you, dear reader, were born for such a time as this to speak out against anti-Semitism today. —Kirsten

Please see the DVD series, *Esther: For Such a Time as This*, on [p.17](#) ☆



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Heaven and Earth book

Ken Berg's favorite Holy Land photographs and stories

For four decades, the producer of ZLM's television programs has traversed the Bible Lands with his camera ready. Now this well-organized, full-color portfolio of Ken's most inspirational shots chronicles key appointed places that God chose as backdrops for His Holy Writ, the Bible, to unfold. From the mountaintops to the rivers and seas, deserts, and archaeological excavations, Ken's narrative lets the reader commune anew with Scriptures written thousands of years ago.

Who are the True Jews? (part 2)



OneForIsrael.org



[Last month](#), in the wake of anti-Semitic comments and actions by Kanye (aka Ye) West and Kyrie Irving, the first part of this article noted the renewed focus on the “Hebrew Israelites” cult who claim that they are the only legitimate Jews, along with some long-standing, shameful accusations against Jewish people. Here is the conclusion of the article that looks at the true identity of God’s Chosen People. — Editor

While all Believers* have been included into the commonwealth of Israel and the family of God, the New Testament maintains that Jew and gentile are distinct, just as male and female are. Being Jewish is an ethnicity and a people group with a communal history of faith, even though only a minority would call themselves observant today.

In the Bible, Jewish ancestry came through the paternal line. Today Jewish people consider the mother’s line the way to determine a person’s Jewishness, partly due to the Roman Era where rape was commonplace and paternity hard to determine. Either way, genetically we know that all varieties and colors of Jewish people (Sephardic, Mizrahi, Ashkenazi, etc.) have similar genetics to one another and much in common with the Levantine area from where they originally came. Some have the “Cohen” gene of the priests that can be traced all the way back to the Aaronic priesthood. More importantly, God sees all our genes and knows who’s who.



credit: photo by Jared Heller on istockphoto.com

Anyone saved by the Jewish Messiah is included in the commonwealth of Israel, but the Apostle Paul made it clear in his Letter to the Romans that Israel is

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



Israel, and the Church is the Church. Jesus said that He came for the *"Lost sheep of the house of Israel"* (Matt. 15:24), but He also stated that there were many more sheep He would include:

"I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to My voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd." — John 10:16

There is already a great overlap of the remnant of Israel and the billions of Believers in the nations, but one day all Israel will be saved. There will be one Bride brought before the Son of God, and a great wedding will take place.

God's plans will come to pass. They cannot be thwarted. **This is what God says will happen at the end of time:**

"For on My holy mountain, the mountain height of Israel," declares the Lord GOD, "there all the house of Israel, all of them, shall serve Me in the land. There I will accept them, and there I will require your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your sacred offerings. As a pleasing aroma I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered. And I will manifest My holiness among you in the sight of the nations. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the country that I swore to give to your fathers. And there you shall remember your ways and all your deeds with which you have defiled yourselves, and you shall loathe yourselves for all the evils that you have committed. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I deal with you for My name's sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt deeds, O house of Israel," declares the Lord GOD. — Ezekiel 20:40-44 ☆



Detail of *The Predication of Saint Paul*, painting (circa 1779) by Joseph-Benoît Suvée (1743–1807), Los Angeles County Museum of Art



Broken Branches — **Has the Church Replaced Israel?** booklet

Zola Levitt on Replacement Theology

What can replace Israel and the Jews in God's plan? Certainly not America and not the Church. Nonetheless, some denominations seem to be wearing blinders to their Jewish heritage, the very roots of their Christianity. Let us restore the foundation to our Christianity and quit using grace as an excuse to cast away the Jews and the Promised Land. A must-read book for Believers, seminaries, churches, and anyone else willing to celebrate the Promised Land and the Chosen People.

Please see "What is Replacement Theology?" — [part 2](#) on [p. 12](#)



(This and most titles also available as eBooks.)

If You Were Born Muslim

Kirsten Hart
Studio co-host of
Our Jewish Roots



left: Kirsten Hart
in Petra, Jordan



March is ZLM's tour month in Israel. Traveling to the Holy Land is the Bible study trip of a lifetime. It's also a wonderful opportunity to meet people from cultures that you may not often experience in the U.S. The Middle East opens your eyes to how people on the other side of the world live. Surprisingly, daily living there is not so vastly different from your everyday life at home.

I've often wondered, "Who would I be if I had been born in a different country to people of a different religious background?" Would I be the "me" that I am now? If I had been born in Iraq or Syria, would I still love Jesus without the years of involvement in Bible studies and Christian camps? Probably not!

Not So Different

When we take the Zola Tours extension into the country of Jordan, I always anticipate meeting our new bus driver and tour guide, because I have a unique opportunity to connect with people from a different culture. Between our guide sharing wonderful insights about the land that we are viewing from our bus windows, I ask questions about their personal lives: "Are you married? Do you have kids or grandkids?" What I typically discover is that most people everywhere basically want very similar things: to have a comfortable home for their families, for their children to succeed, and for their children *and grandchildren* to have better lives than they do.

Most, if not all, of our guides and drivers in Jordan are Muslim. Islam is what they know and practice most likely because that is how they were raised.

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above: A Muslim mother and daughter from Indonesia
credit: photo by Ivan Andriavani on Unsplash





credit:
photo by
Adrien Taylor
on Unsplash

They followed the religion of their parents. In the same way, I came to know and believe Christianity largely because of my parents' beliefs and how they raised me.

Leaving Everything

But what if you had been born to Muslim parents? How would you come to know the saving grace of Yeshua (Jesus)? Would you decide to go against your family and their practices, and perhaps leave your community to embrace a different religion? It would likely take a miracle for you to do so. But that decision would change everything for you.

If (or when) you meet someone of a different religious background, would you extend extraordinary kindness and generosity to them? Would you perhaps show them something *different*—the supernatural love of Christ? Loving and showing, not simply *telling*, is essential as we share the Gospel with those whom Jesus loves dearly, but have yet to experience His saving grace. ✨

"Christian Birthright" ... *continued from cover sidebar*

for Israel is waning. The group partners with Christian universities and colleges and plans to start working with public schools soon.

"We are at a unique moment in history, where Jews and Christians can come together for the first time and create positive and impactful experiences," said Rivka Kidron, co-founder of Passages. "Now more than ever, Jews and Christians have to come together around our shared values and stand up for what's right in this world."

Passages is an initiative by the Philos Project, an organization that seeks "to promote positive Christian engagement in the Near East by creating leaders, building community, and taking action in the spirit of the Hebraic Tradition."

This past winter, the organization brought 450 students to Israel from dozens of universities including the University of Chicago, Patrick Henry College, The King's College, Hannibal-LaGrange University, and Regent University.



Participants in the Passages program that enables Christian college students to visit Israel

"Unfortunately, anti-Semitism is on the rise, and I think we need each other now more than ever," Kidron added. "I feel very blessed to be here and living here at this moment and share it with you."

Believers should appreciate the grafted-in bond between Jew and gentile. How fortunate that these students have a chance to visit the Holy Land! —David ✨



Hispanic MLB Players Visit Israel to Promote Christian-Jewish Relations



BY HILLEL KUTTNER / JTA.org

Several U.S. Major League Baseball (MLB) players and their entourage traveled to Israel in November. **Nelson Cruz, Cesar Hernandez, and Jeimer Candelario** visited through the Philos Project, a U.S.-based nonprofit that promotes Christian relations with Israel and other Middle Eastern countries. The Philos Project's Jesse Rojo said that the group toured Christian sites in Jerusalem and the Galilee and ran a baseball clinic for Jewish and non-Jewish youth in Ra'anana.

Rojo noted that the visit also aimed to "proactively" combat anti-Semitism, "to show our baseball players that they can make a difference, not wait for someone to come out with an anti-Semitic tweet to do something."

Cruz, from the Dominican Republic, is 39th on the MLB's all-time home run list. He recently signed a one-year contract with the San Diego Padres. Hernandez, with the Detroit Tigers, hails from Venezuela and is a former Gold Glove winner. Candelario, born in New York but raised in the Dominican Republic, recently signed with the Washington Nationals after playing six seasons for the Detroit Tigers. Cruz and Hernandez played together for the Washington Nationals last season.

On a minibus, before leaving for a day of touring, Cruz led a prayer of gratitude. In Jaffa, Candelario was excited to learn that the Prophet Jonah had departed by ship from the ancient city's port before being swallowed by a huge fish. At lunch, Candelario led the table in grace.

The players noted they had never heard anti-Jewish or anti-Israel views expressed by relatives, friends, or acquaintances. Most of their compatriots, they said, think that Israel is constantly under enemy attack, a view they added was dispelled by



(l-r) Candelario, Cruz, and Hernandez at a baseball field in Ra'anana, Israel

their experience traveling around the country and feeling safe.

All attributed pro-Israel inclinations to their strong Christian beliefs, including regularly attending church services. They noted that their mothers were devout women who raised them with Bible stories.

"We love God and the Word of God. This is the land of our fathers," said Candelario. "Whoever blesses Israel will be blessed," he added, paraphrasing God's promise to Abraham.

"Anyone who's an opinion-maker from such countries helps us," explained Jonathan Peled, the Israeli foreign ministry's deputy director general for Latin America. "They become [goodwill] ambassadors."

Baseball is not a top sport in Israel, but Team Israel's periodic success on the world stage has helped promote the game.

At lunch, Hernandez noted that he "would live here" in Israel in the off-season if he could obtain a visa. Asked whether he meant it, Hernandez answered, "Yeah, because it's the Jesus country. I asked my wife, and she said yes."

Sitting beside him at the restaurant, Gabriela Hernandez nodded.

"Yes," she affirmed, "because of the significance it has for us." ☆

credit: Nico Andre Duran



Oman Criminalizes Ties with Israel

BY ILSE STRAUSS / BridgesForPeace.com



In the two years since the Abraham Accords were signed, warmish ties between Israel and Oman caused speculation that the Sultanate might be next to follow in the footsteps of Bahrain, Morocco, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to join the circle of peace with the Jewish state. Yet all hopes of a reconciliation were dashed when Oman's parliament passed a vote to criminalize any relations, ties, or interactions with "the Zionist entity."

Although details about the ruling are sparse, the law includes "severing any economic, sports or cultural relations, and prohibiting dealing in any way or means, whether it is a real meeting, an electronic meeting, or something else," said Yaqoub Al-Harithi, vice president of the Omani parliament, as reported by Oman's WAF news agency.

The decision comes as a bit of an about-face. In the years leading up to the Abraham Accords, Israel's relationship with Oman was considered less frosty than with its neighbors. Although the Sultanate adhered to a royal decree that banned all "interaction with the Zionist entity for private and public figures," Oman has never faced Israel on the battlefield and the countries even established unofficial trade relations in the early 2000s.

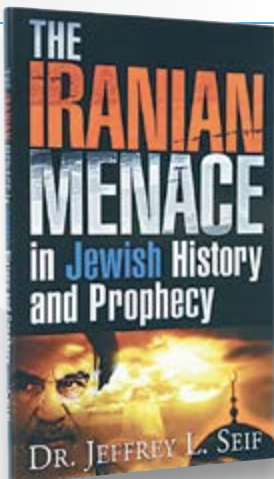
Moreover, between 1994 and 2018, the former ruler Sultan Qaboos bin Said even invited three Israeli prime ministers to his country, with Yitzhak Rabin's trip in 1994 making history as the first Israeli prime minister to visit a Gulf nation.

With all the factors pointing in a pro-Israel direction, why the turn-around? In a word: Iran.

According to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 2020 marked a shift in Oman's foreign policy. After Qaboos died, his cousin, Haitham bin Tariq Al Said, was proclaimed the new sultan. Since then, Haitham has cozied up to Tehran instead of Jerusalem.

Does this mark the end of Arab nations normalizing ties with Israel? Hopefully not. With Oman out of the running, Mauritania and Saudi Arabia have been mentioned as potential future peace partners (as has Indonesia — a Muslim nation off the coast of Southeast Asia). Yet as unfolding events have frequently proven, in the Middle East, anything is possible and tides — and sentiments — can change as swiftly as the shifting desert sands.

Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said is standing on the wrong side of history. He will regret his decision to oppose Israel. — David ☆



The Iranian Menace in Jewish History and Prophecy book

By Dr. Jeffrey Seif

Iran is central in End Times prophecy. At a time when Iran has captured the world's attention with nuclear threats, Jeff harnesses Scriptural and secular evidence to support his case for the Iranian-Armageddon connection. After glimpsing Iran in ancient Roman and Jewish histories, you will learn the significance of prophecy in the Jewish Scriptures and apocalyptic literature. Jeff's analysis is based on sound Scriptural understanding and two decades of academic contemplation.

(Most titles are also available as eBooks.)



The Sign of the Prophet Jonah

by Zola Levitt
from 1990
33 years ago

I received some negative response to our program on ecology and my trip to Russia. It seems that I am not to “walk in the way of the ungodly,” nor to be concerned about our planet and its deterioration. Many people reminded me that Carl Sagan and others who spoke at the conference I attended in Moscow are unbelievers. The responders painstakingly emphasized that unsaved people think nothing of value and have nothing of value to say.

Speaking The Truth

Friends, if you value our program because I tell you the truth, then all I can say is that sometimes the truth hurts. I did not quote Carl Sagan because of his virtues or vices, but because he is a knowledgeable scientist.

I wish born-again Believers were aware of what we are doing to this world through our pollution, selfishness, and our lack of care for the poor, the humble, and the dying. Instead, I'm ashamed to say that it's mainly unbelievers who are showing this kindness and compassion these days.

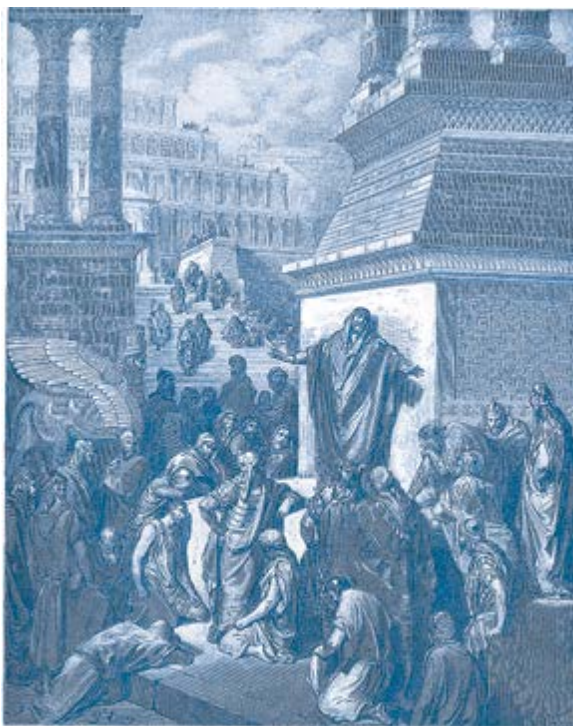
When I have to go to an expert for some reason, I choose the best available. If I'm to teach you anything, I'd better have good source material.

When I needed heart bypass surgery, I chose the best surgeon, not the best Believer. I would have preferred a Believer, but none was available. And in an emergency room with a bleeding child, I don't ask about the doctor's Biblical persuasions, but rather, about how many similar wounds he has stitched.

Many letter writers tried to educate me about the “New Age.” But I have written a half-dozen books on it. I was exposing cults long before anyone thought of the clever term “New Age.” Actually, there's nothing “new” about this godless thinking. Frankly, the term doesn't say enough. The thousand-year Kingdom of Christ on Earth will be a new age, too. What I need to know is, what kind of newness are we talking about when we describe a coming age?

When I see a Jew-hater, then I see the antiChrist's rightful prey. When I hear a man plead for the little children who are dying, I hear my Lord saying, “*Suffer the little children to come unto Me*” (Mark 10:14), or “*If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone?*” (Luke 11:11), or a hundred other hallmarks of the teaching of the One who said, “*Inasmuch as you've done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me*” (Matt. 25:40).

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Jonah Preaches to the Ninevites, engraving by Gustave Doré (1832–1883) for *Doré's English Bible* (1866)

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Relating to Unbelievers

Sitting back comfortably in our guaranteed salvation and demeaning the unbeliever — hating him and condemning him to Hell, in effect — is not what the Lord calls us to do. When we come to the judgment seat of Christ, I hope that there aren't many Christians whose proudest work is that they condemned their neighbors, friends, leaders, and teachers, and deep in their own hearts detested and felt superior to those people.

It is an awful reduction of the faith to imagine that a good Christian is someone who keeps to an exclusive society. We have enough country clubs that don't admit Jews, Blacks, Hispanics, and others. We don't need a Christian elite that throws out the wounded innocent instead of comforting them. Almighty God cared for unbelievers when He sent Jonah to Nineveh. God pled with His conceited prophet on behalf of at least the children and innocent animals of Nineveh: *"And should I not spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"* (Jonah 4:11). Yet I've received letters from many modern-day Jonahs who claim that we should not help suffering unbelievers.

Loving Others

While speaking in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4), our Lord highlighted the faith of pagan sufferers. As examples of proper reverence of God, the Lord referred to two people of the Old Testament: Naaman, the Syrian captain with leprosy, and the widow of Sidon. Both of these approached the prophet Elijah in true faith. After His sermon, the backbiting and jealous people of Nazareth tried to kill Jesus Christ for pointing out that God loves all of His children, even those to whom we have failed to witness. For those of you who would judge,

please make a judgment on this: Forty thousand children die per day in the Third World of the simplest, curable diseases, such as chronic diarrhea and ongoing malnutrition.

I am writing this article on a Friday. By Monday more children will have died in the Third World than all the people who were killed by the atomic bomb at Hiroshima. By the time you read this article, one million of these utterly blameless ones to whom no one has ever witnessed, nor even embraced in most cases, nor fed, nor clothed, nor visited, will have died.

None of us should go to the Lord saying, "My ministry was to correct Zola Levitt when he kept company with people whom I consider beneath me." ☆



Jesus and the Woman of Samaria, engraving by Gustave Doré (1832–1883) in *The Bible Panorama* (1891)

Q. What is Replacement Theology? (part 2)

Dr. Todd Baker
Zola Levitt Ministries
Staff Theologian
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A. Replacement theology claims that the New Testament Church has superseded and replaced the nation of Israel forever.

This teaching advanced in the 2nd century and afterward, and many Christians today believe it. But it is not Biblical.

In discussing Israel's rejection of Jesus the Messiah, the Apostle Paul addressed the Church at Rome about this erroneous idea. Paul considered Israel's destiny when he asked, *"Has God cast away His people?"* (Romans 11:1)

The Apostle answered emphatically: *"Certainly not!"* (Romans 11:1). The Greek phrase is *me genoito*—a double negative that is the strongest expression of negation in the Greek language. We can understand the phrase as, "No, may it never be!" or "Impossible! No way!" Then he continues, *"God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew"* (Romans 11:2). Paul stated that God will never replace or forsake the Jewish people, despite their current unbelief toward Jesus the Messiah.

Replacement theology opposes Scripture not only in Romans 11:1–2 but also elsewhere in God's Word, where God has assured the permanency and prominence of Israel in His plan for the ages.

If God were finished with the Jews and the nation of Israel, He would be contradicting the great promise He made to Israel in Jeremiah 31:35–37. Here, God explains that the universe—including the sun, moon, and the stars—would cease to exist before He would allow Israel to cease as a nation before Him, despite all that they have done!

Isaiah 49:14–16 proclaims that God has indelibly engraved Israel on the palms of His hands; even if a mother could forsake her nursing child, He will never forget Israel.

The supernatural survival of the Jews for thousands of years, coupled with the fact that they have been miraculously regathered into their ancient homeland and reconstituted as a nation against all odds, was foretold in Bible prophecy. (See Deuteronomy 30:1–5; Leviticus 26:40–45; Ezekiel 36–37; Isaiah 11:11–12; Amos 9:14–15.) In the End Times, Israel will experience the seven-year tribulation (Daniel 9:24–27), and the remnant who survive in the Land will be there when Jesus returns to reclaim and save the nation of Israel, as noted in Romans 11:25–27.

God supernaturally created Israel. He used them for His glory in the past and will do so in the future. They are God's Chosen People. The immutable, eternal, and unconditional covenants God made with Abraham, David, and Jesus Christ guarantee this forever!

*And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:
"The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will
turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My
covenant with them, When I take away their sins."*

—Romans 11:26–27



Detail of *The Apostle Paul*, print
by Nicolaas Verkolje (1683–1746),
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam





Ministry in Tel Aviv and Netanya

Dr. Todd Baker
ZLM Staff Theologian
TJF Team Leader

August Rosado and I arrived in the Land of Divine Destiny for our outreach in October 2022. After we went to the offsite car rental office, **Liat** sent us back to the airport to get our rental contract. August and I were frustrated because the rental policies and locations change too often. When we returned to her desk, the Lord led us to apologize to her for our attitude. Liat assured us that there was no need to apologize. Moved by her gracious attitude, August and I shared the Gospel of Yeshua with her and gave her a Complete Hebrew Bible and some Messianic reading material.

Liat was moved by our witness for Yeshua, placing her hand on her heart to express her sincere gratitude for the gift we gave her. Our prayer is that *Ruach HaKodesh* (the Holy Spirit) will burn in her heart (Luke 24:32) as He opens the Scripture for her to discover the saving power of Yeshua the Messiah.



August, Ronin, and Todd

we've ministered previously, the Lord led us to **Ronin**, the manager of a store that sells watches and men's accessories. Though he was born in Russia, Ronin said he made *aliyah* (immigrated) to Israel with his family when he was three years old.

On hearing this, August and I explained Jeremiah's prophecies regarding the exiled Jews' return to the Land of Israel from the far north country of Russia (Jeremiah 3:18; 23:7-8). Ronin was amazed to learn this, and he wrote down the passages we cited. We also noted that Ronin was part of the fulfillment of this End Times prophecy when he returned to Israel from Russia.

Utilizing lesser to greater reasoning, we explained that if God's Word is true on this level, it's also true on the greater level about fulfillment of Messianic prophecy. We asked Ronin if he knew the only person in Jewish history to fulfill all of the First Coming prophecies in Scripture. He correctly answered, "Jesus."

We agreed, then offered Ronin a complete Hebrew Bible so he could read the truths of Jesus for himself. Ronin was thrilled to receive the gift of God's Word!



Todd and Liat

Our second day began in the Mediterranean coastal city of Netanya. Returning to a shopping mall where

Charitable Giving's Thorny Questions

Below are excerpts from a secular article that makes a spiritual point. The author, Peter Coy, writes about economics, business, and finance. Please note his conclusion. —Mark

On what basis do we decide who should get our money? And how much should each receive? Normally, we feel good about spending as little as possible on things, but with charitable giving, more seems better.

Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, a psychology professor, criticized America's "capitalist system of charities." He wrote that they are "competing to the death for the same 50 cents."

One problem is that wealthy people set the priorities for philanthropy. Fundraisers increasingly focus their attention on rich people because they give the most. Other donors' preferences are relatively neglected.

- The share of households that give fell from 66% in 2000 to 50% in 2018, according to the Philanthropy Panel Study.
- Concentration of wealth has made foraging for gifts from the wealthy more cost effective.
- Leslie Lenkowsky, a professor emeritus at Indiana University, cited the decline in religiosity, since churches and other religious institutions have long been a nexus for giving.
- The increase in the standard deduction in 2017 took away the tax incentive for millions of middle-class American donors.

This is, frankly, bad for society. It's bad not only for the recipients who receive less but also for the rest of us who give less. Research shows that people are happier and communities are more resilient when neighbors look out for one another. "We are ingrained to help others, whether we're holding

Mark Levitt
ZLM Director
since 1988



Detail of *The Widow's Mite*, painting by James Tissot (1836-1902), The Brooklyn Museum

the door for someone, jumping in the water to rescue someone, or writing a check," noted Daniel Mansoor, the president of GoodWorks Group in Cleveland, a consultant to nonprofits. When we don't do that so much, we become poorer in spirit.

Jane Wales is co-chair of the Generosity Commission, a project of the Giving USA Foundation. They aspire to get more Americans to donate and volunteer their time. She states: "The single biggest barrier is the sense that you can't make a difference. ... How do you overcome that? ... If average Americans feel they can't make a difference in their own actions, what does that mean for democracy?"

I'd summarize it this way: You can make a difference. **Your money and your time are needed. And the biggest beneficiary of your giving may be your own soul.**

Contrary to most charitable organizations who cater to the rich, the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20) sets this ministry's priorities. Our donors cheerfully adhere to Deuteronomy 16:17 — "Every man shall give as he is able" and 2 Corinthians 9:7 — "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart... for God loveth a cheerful giver." —Mark ☆

ZLM Bulletin Board



Israel's Cattle Spying?!

"On the neck of each cow, they hang a medallion with an eavesdropping and recording device on it, and sometimes cameras, in order to monitor every detail."—statement from Khirbet Yanun Village Elder Rushd Morrar to the official PA daily. He added another fanciful libel: "Settlers release herds of **wild boars**" to destroy Palestinian crops. "Settlers" previously were accused of releasing a species of **super rats**, immune to poison, in the Old City's Arab neighborhoods. The announcement "Flipper Alert!" ([March 2022 Levitt Letter, p.15](#)), noted Hamas's accusation concerning Israeli "**killer Zionist dolphins**"... being used for military porpoises purposes.



Jewish Lives Don't Matter Much ...

to carolers in a Dutch city east of Amsterdam. Every year for over a century, they sing a carol, "Christ is Resurrected," several times on the first two days of Easter. Its lyrics denounce "the Jews who with their false council sacrificed Jesus on the Cross."

credit: Romy Arroyo Fernandez/NurPhoto



The Easter caroling procession of Ootmarsum

Word Search Video Archives

Our Jewish Roots viewers can review and share teaching segments by searching our ministry's website for topics of interest. For example, to search for mentions of "prince":

1. Go to levitt.tv
2. Search for "prince" in the **Video Search** box (right side)
3. From the results, click on, say, the 1529-17 episode
4. Search for "prince" in the **Caption Search** box
5. Double click on any timestamp in the results, and the video will play at that spot



Opening the "Transcript" heading (down the page) shows the transcript text and enables researchers to click on time-stamps and jump to any point in the video.

FREE ITEM

Pamphlet of the Month

The workbook, ***A Guide To Your Christian Will***, addresses key questions, including: 1) Who needs a will? 2) What are the advantages of having a will? 3) What happens without one? The guide also delves into appropriate steps, such as identifying your heirs and what you'll leave behind, and keeping your documents where they can be found. The worksheets include a Key Information Organizer, Facts to Help Your Attorney, and more. To receive this pamphlet at no charge, email us at staff@levitt.com or write to our P.O. Box. **Request POM "WILL."**



"COME HOME!"

**Zola
Tours
to Israel**



[See page 36
for details](#)





Courtesy:
The Jerusalem
Connection



אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מַחֲסֶה וְעֹז בְּצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מֵאֵד

“God is our refuge and strength: a very present help in trouble.” (Psalm 46:1)

אֵד	מֵ	צָא	נִמְ	צָא	מֵ	אֵד	רֹחַ	בְּ	צָרֹת	עֹז	וְ	עֹז	מַחֲ	סֶה	נֹ	לָ	הִים	אֱ	
(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)
mei-ohd'	neem-tzah'	ve-tzah-roht'	ez'-rah'	vah-ohz'	mach-seh'	lah'-noo	e-loh-heem'	surely	He is found	a help in troubles	a refuge and strength	God is for us							

read Hebrew right to left! ➡

In order to trust God, you must believe that you are valuable to Him and that He genuinely desires a relationship with you. You must accept that God has redeemed you to elevate your soul so that you could know and love Him.

The ten faithless Hebrew spies never transcended their slave mentality and therefore were unable to overcome the pain of their past; they continued to define themselves as victims. After scouting out the Promised Land, they confessed their sense of inadequacy: “we looked like grasshoppers to ourselves” (Numbers 13:33). Those spies felt small because they had forgotten the very reason for their redemption — they had overlooked their new identity as God’s children. Their lack of self-respect made them feel unworthy of the inheritance.

The sin of the spies was not their doubt that they could overcome the “giants in the land,” but rather their doubt that God would be with them.

Sadly, the spies’ view of themselves was more real to them than God’s view of them, which is why they concluded, “and so we were (like grasshoppers) in their eyes.”

In this connection, the late Henri Nouwen keenly wrote: “There are two realities to which you must cling. First, God has promised that you will receive the love you have been searching for. And second, God is faithful to that promise. You must believe the ‘yes’ that comes back when you ask, ‘Do You love me?’ You must choose this ‘yes’ even when you do not experience it.” (*The Inner Voice of Love*)

You have to trust that the place where you are is solid, despite any anxiety about living in perilous times. The Lord will never leave nor forsake you, friend. “God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1). ☆



Esther: **For Such a** **Time as This** DVD Set

Eight 30-minute TV programs on two DVDs

The Book of Esther is one of the Jewish people's favorites. In this series, Dr. Jeffrey Seif explains the story's details and points out that, like Esther, we Believers may be alive for such a time as this.

Beautiful Inside and Out Does God use women? Yes! We consider Esther's rise and Queen Vashti's fall, and how God elevates individuals to places of influence — then as now.

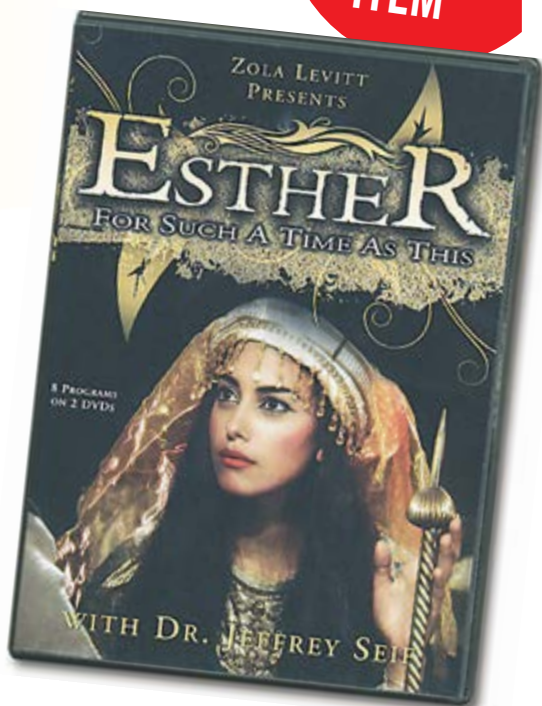
Chosen for a Purpose Though wickedness surfaces in every generation, God positions His people to thwart the devil's plans and fulfill His own. We examine Mordecai and Esther's placement — and our own; for we, too, are called to God's work.

Called to be Courageous Faced with a plot to destroy the Jews, Esther wavers but decides her sacrifice is worthy: "If I perish, I perish!" If only we all had such resolve!

Undone by a Woman Our story's heroine hatches a plan to thwart the scheming Haman. The once-sheepish Esther arises as a shepherdess, boldly taking on the wolf, guiding the saga to its conclusion.



Dr. Jeffrey Seif



God Rewards the Righteous God uses irony to give the wicked and the righteous their "just deserts."

Justice at Last! Our story's villain meets his inglorious end as he becomes the object of his own wicked scheme. Seeing the triumphal outcome of righteousness and faith encourages us in our own lives.

Fight We Must! Even with Haman gone, the Jews had to defend their homes and families. Spirited self-defense is Biblical.

The Triumph of God in Human History God turns our mourning into joy. The Jews are bidden to commemorate God's saving power and goodness in an annual celebration, Purim. We should all celebrate God's goodness, thereby banishing the clouds of despair.

Please see the related [cover article](#), "Purim — We Need Modern-Day Esthers."





Zola's Classic Study Booklet Library

Qty.	Title	Price	Total
___	A Christian Love Story	\$4	___
___	Glory! The Future of the Believers	\$4	___
___	How Can a Gentile Be Saved? (pictured)	\$4	___
___	In My Father's House (p.36)	\$4	___
___	Israel, My Promised	\$4	___
___	The Miracle of Passover	\$4	___
___	The Promised Land	\$4	___
___	The Second Coming	\$4	___
___	Seven Churches— Does Yours Fit In?	\$4	___
___	The Seven Feasts of Israel	\$4	___
___	Spirit of Pentecost	\$4	___
___	Mix or Match: 50 Classic Study Booklets (above)	\$49	___

Books

___	The Beginning of The End (p.23)	\$9	___
___	The Bible Jesus Read	\$11	___
___	Broken Branches (booklet) Zola on Replacement Theology (p.5)	\$7	___
___	Coming: The End! Russia & Israel in Prophecy	\$12	___
___	Heaven and Earth (Ken Berg) (p.3)	\$18	___
___	The House That God Built	\$8	___
___	The Iranian Menace (Jeff Seif) (p.9)	\$9	___
___	An Israeli Love Story — Zola's only novel	\$8	___
___	Israel's Right to the Land (pictured)	\$3	___
___	Jesus, the Jew's Jew	\$8	___
___	Jews and Jesus (pictured)	\$10	___
___	Meshumed! (Traitor!)	\$10	___
___	The Mountains of Israel (Norma Archbold) (pictured)	\$10	___
___	The Prophesied Messiah	\$10	___
___	Satan in the Sanctuary (pictured)	\$10	___
___	Signs of the End: The Millennium	\$8	___
___	The Trouble with Christians/Jews	\$10	___
___	The Warrior King (Jeff Seif)	\$12	___
___	Whose Land Is It?	\$7	___
___	Zola's Introduction to Hebrew (John Parsons) (pictured)	\$39	___

Featured DVDs

___	The Bible: The Whole Story (p.27) (7 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$39	___
___	Called Together	(8 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	Eretz Israel	(8 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	Esther: For Such as Time as This (p.17) (8 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$49	___
___	Ezekiel & MidEast "Piece" Process (8 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$49	___
___	Faith for the Future	(10 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	Faith of Our Fathers	(8 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
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___	Israel, the Church, & the Future	(6+ hours, 4-DVDs) \$69	___
___	Jeremiah: Hope Over the Horizon	(9 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	Joshua: More Than a Conqueror	(8 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	Kings and Kingdoms	(8 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	New! Much Like Peter (pictured) ..	(9 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	Revelation: Unveiling the Visions ...	(8 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	<i>Sar Shalom</i> : Prince of Peace	(8 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	Secrets of the Scrolls (p.20)	(7 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	Sons of Promise	(8 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	The Warrior King	(8 programs, 2-DVDs) \$49	___
___	Whose Land Is It?	(3 programs, 1-DVD) \$19	___
___	Zion Forever	(9 programs, 2-DVDs) \$59	___



New!

To order:

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ZLM Dallas office:
214-696-8844

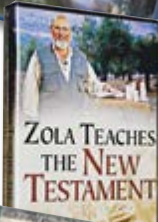
Print/Tear out this 2-page form,
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Studies, Specialty, Etc. — UNIQUE WITNESSING ITEMS!

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___	2-flag Collar Pin (pictured)	\$2	___
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___	AHAVA Mineral Body Lotion 17 oz.	\$58	___
___	AHAVA Mineral Foot Cream 3.4 oz.	\$23	___
___	AHAVA Mineral Hand Cream 3.4 oz.	\$24	___
___	Drink Koozies	2 for \$6	___
___	Flag of Israel (3' x 5')	\$10	___
___	Genealogy Chart (16" x 20")	\$12	___
___	Grafted-In Gold Decal (1.2" x 3" hand-cut)	\$3	___
___	Grafted-In Lapel Pin	\$10	___
___	Grafted-In Sterling Silver Necklace (with 18" chain)	\$39	___
___	Half-shekel Keychain	\$16	___
___	New! Jerusalem Magnets (pictured) ... (set of 3 different designs)	\$12	___
___	Jewish Heritage Calendar (5783 / 2023)	\$6	___
___	Pictorial Map of Jerusalem	\$12	___
___	Pilgrim's Map of the Holy Land	\$7	___
___	"Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem" Bumper Sticker	\$3	___
___	Pro-Israel Buttons	(set of 4 different designs) \$8	___
___	Zola's Notebook (p.27)	\$25	___
___	Institute of Jewish-Christian Studies (info only)	no charge	___



Teaching CDs

___	The Beginning of the End (includes music) (p.23) ... (2 CDs)	\$14	___
___	How Can a Gentile Be Saved?	(CD) \$8	___
___	Zola Teaches the New Testament (pictured) (6 CDs)	\$29	___

Music CDs: Hear samples at levitt.com/music

___	22-Album Special	(Zola's 16 albums + 6 CDs free) \$98	___
___	A Pilgrim's Journey	(Music CD) \$12	___
___	Unto the Gentiles (pictured)	(Music CD) \$12	___

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

We Accept
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\$61 to \$97.99, add \$10
\$98 and over, FREE SHIPPING

For shipments outside the United States, please **DOUBLE** shipping.
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Please allow about 2–3 weeks for delivery.

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Secrets of the Scrolls

DVD Set (also available
as an eBook Transcript)

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 (DSS). *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. Terms such as “son of God,” “branch of David,” “stripes or piercings,” “being put to death,” and “raising the dead” all strike a familiar chord. Quite possibly, these incredible Scrolls represent the first extra-Biblical revelation of Jesus Christ in history.



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

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

The Scrolls: Part 3 During this interview, Dr. Tabor refers to several books about the DSS, 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 the article, “2,200-Year-Old Coins ...” on [p.32](#).



Zola Tours Report

Zola Tours Update



What a blessing it was for our pilgrims to finally be able to go to the Holy Land after over two years of being unable to travel there due to COVID-related travel restrictions. Our Fall 2022 tour surpassed expectations. As usual, we had rave reviews!



Clockwise from top left: Sarah Liberman, Chaim Malespin, Todd Baker, and August Rosado

One unsolicited review from P.C. in Texas summarized, "To say I would give the tour 5 stars out of 5 doesn't do it justice." She noted that our insightful Israeli guide, Ilan Barkay, was "superb and incredibly knowledgeable and gifted at teaching." She also lauded our Messianic Jewish speakers — Sarah Liberman and Chaim Malespin — along with our To the Jew First messengers — Todd Baker and August Rosado — as being "truly inspiring and genuine."

P.C. applauded our TV and tour co-hosts, David and Kirsten Hart, explaining that they were friendly and comfortable to be around, and enhanced our excitement to be in the hallowed Land. She added that the Harts "sincerely wanted this to be all it could be for us, and they worked hard to make that happen."

P.C. went on to say "I saw places on this tour that I had not seen on my prior three tours; destinations I had read about and wanted to see, like Abraham's Gate, Shiloh, the Shrine of the Book, and others. I saw Israel on this tour in a way I had not seen it before — both the Land and the people. And I love them both even more as a result."

According to Kirsten, many pilgrims observe that our tour is very unique in how it ties the Old and New Testaments together and how our Israeli guide teaches from the Messianic Jewish perspective, rather than from the gentile Christian viewpoint that's shared in many Bible studies and sermons.

Lastly, P.C. also encouraged us to keep doing what we're doing. She believes "it's especially important for today." We couldn't agree more!

Please consider joining us on our Fall 2023 tour to witness the phenomenal blessings of being in Yeshua's Land and all of the extras that P.C. described. To seize this opportunity, please go to levitt.com/tours to review the tour information and to register online; or contact me at travel@levitt.com or 214-696-9760.

Our Tour Director, Sandra, is second to none. There's no better time than this fall to visit this Covenant Land with us! — David and Kirsten



David and Kirsten Hart in Israel





Letters to ZLM

Some letters have been edited for space.
For ministry products and TV programs,
visit our [web store](#) and [video archives](#).

Letters, emails, and comments from [www.levitt.com](#) and [YouTube](#)

Joshua and Caleb Discuss — Immanuel, the Red Heifer, & the Coming Temple on YouTube

From D.T.: Not to be a Grinch, but the celebration of so-called “Christmas” is a pagan holiday, in violation of God’s instructions, and should be avoided by Believers. Jesus was not born in winter, but many of the pagan deities were — December 25th, to be exact. The pagan cultures were celebrating this day long before Jesus was born, and they continue today.



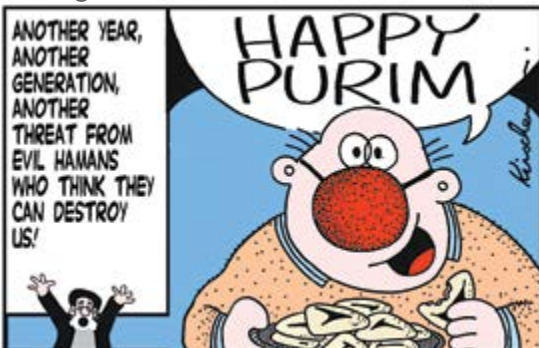
Dear D.T.,

Astute observation about the pagan origins behind Christmas; we have taught this many times. **The early Church leaders may have tried to draw away pagan worship of Roman deities by the distraction of a celebration of Yeshua’s birth.** Today, however, many Biblical scholars believe that the calculation of December 25 coinciding with our Messiah’s birth was accurate, but we tend to disagree with the timing.

We believe that the celebration is rooted in even more ancient times when the Babylonians revered Tammuz and Nimrod. But it’s important to note that Satan counterfeits many things that are of God. The Babylonian Christmas Tree was merely a counterfeit of the Tree of Life, as well as the World’s Tree (such as Yggdrasil) as seen in pagan worship through the centuries. Even the menorah that we use to celebrate Hanukkah is a mirror of the Tree of Life. We know that many Christians utilize holidays such as Halloween to celebrate harvest festivals in order to reach lost people and be a witness to them. Thus, we have no problem with having the world focus on Yeshua’s birth once a year, even though the timing and ceremonies may be misguided.

Dry Bones

Another Year



This may be the only time, next to Resurrection Day, in which lost people may hear a message of truth about our Savior. We don’t glorify the origins of Christmas, but we will continue to use it as a springboard to declare the miracle and love of the Father in sending His Son Yeshua to save us from our sins.

— The Bearded Bible Brothers

(continued on next page)



Shocking Article

From D.S.: The “brief” on [page 30 of the January 2023 Levitt Letter](#) about people beating and killing dogs was shocking and totally uncalled for. **How a publication with high morals like yours could even consider printing such disgusting trash is beyond me.** My heart breaks for all victims of killing and brutalization. Human beings cause a problem, and the animals pay the price. Because of my age, I have become very sensitive to the depravity of man in the killing and torture of any living thing. Bad move on your part. You seem to be part of the problem, not the solution. For shame.

Dear D.S.,

I appreciate your sensitivity to depravity, but please don’t shoot the messenger. Quoting Zola’s article on [page 10](#) of this *Levitt Letter*, “sometimes the truth hurts,” thus at times we print some disturbing information. The Hebron mayor’s recent campaign was shocking, as was his involvement (and conviction) in the killing of six Jewish students in 1980. Likewise, the October attack on the hotel in Bethlehem that was displaying the Star of David (see “[Select Media Briefs](#)” in the [December 2022 LL](#)) was also disgusting. Unfortunately, many Palestinians want to destroy Jews (and the Jewish state) even more than they do dogs, as their words and actions regularly demonstrate. — Editor

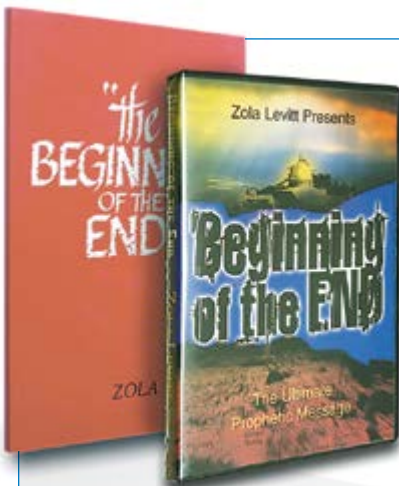
Temple Preparations on YouTube

From N.Z.C.: The City of David is where Solomon’s Temple WAS at the Gihon Spring, from which Hezekiah built the tunnel, but all this is “vanity says the preacher!” That’s why God destroyed it—the Temple is idolatry! Blood sacrifices are abhorrent to God: We are the better spiritual Temple sanctified by His Spirit with a pure offering of our hearts (Isaiah 66:3). The Jews are still chasing after pointless tradition! Let the Arabs have it—the wall is meaningless.

Dear N.Z.C.,

Blood sacrifices were not abhorrent to God, as He commanded them. The Bible explains that during the Tribulation period, the antiChrist will enter the Temple and defile it, so there must be another Temple in Jerusalem that

(continued on next page)



The Beginning of the End book & teaching/music CDs

A most unusual study with a dramatic urgency. The Rapture, the antiChrist, the Third Temple, Armageddon, and the Second Coming are among the subjects considered, along with world affairs leading to The End. A “must-read”! The CD version includes the original music and soundtrack of this dramatic TV series. (2-CD set)

will be standing at that time. And Christ will reign from a Temple in Jerusalem in the Millennium Kingdom. As Scripture notes in Ezekiel 43:18–46:24, there will be sacrifices (memorial in nature) during this time with Jesus on the throne.

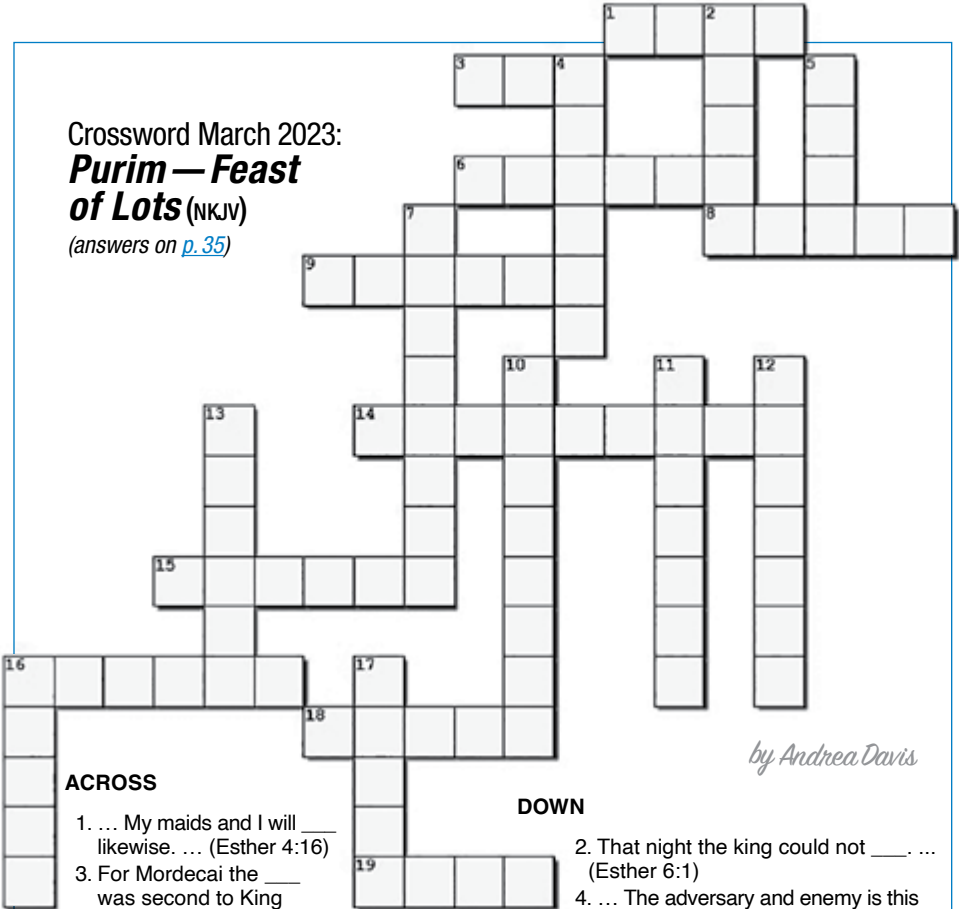
—Greg H., levitt.com webmaster ☆



credit: Arelly (Wikimedia Commons)

Herod's Temple as imagined in the Holyland Model of Jerusalem

Crossword March 2023:
**Purim — Feast
of Lots** (NKJV)
(answers on [p.35](#))



by Andrea Davis

ACROSS

1. ... My maids and I will ____ likewise. ... (Esther 4:16)
3. For Mordecai the ____ was second to King Ahasuerus ... (Esther 10:3)
6. You yourselves write a ____ concerning the Jews ... (Esther 8:8)
8. So they called these days ____ ... (Esther 9:26)
9. Esther had not revealed her ____ ... (Esther 2:10)
14. ... that they should ____ yearly ... (Esther 9:21)
15. ... Queen ____ has not only wronged the king, ... (Esther 1:16)
16. So they ____ Haman on the gallows ... (Esther 7:10)
18. After these things King Ahasuerus promoted ____ ... (Esther 3:1)
19. So the king and Haman went to ____ with Queen Esther. (Esther 7:1)

DOWN

2. That night the king could not ____ ... (Esther 6:1)
4. ... The adversary and enemy is this ____ Haman! ... (Esther 7:6)
5. Now in the twelfth month, that is, the month of ____ ... (Esther 9:1)
7. ... ____ sat within the king's gate. (Esther 2:19)
10. ... What is your ____? It shall be granted you. ... (Esther 5:6)
11. ... Let a ____ be made, fifty cubits high ... (Esther 5:14)
12. ... Haman sought to ____ all the Jews ... (Esther 3:6)
13. ... But Mordecai would not bow or pay ____ ... (Esther 3:2)
16. The Jews had light and gladness, joy and ____ ... (Esther 8:16)
17. ... the Jews themselves overpowered those who ____ them. (Esther 9:1)



Device Zaps Airborne Viruses



BY ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN (r) Israel21C.org



courtesy: Aura Air

Aura Air's device, left, purifying air in a hospital nursery

This past winter, many people became sick due to a "tripledeemic" of COVID-19, flu, and RSV (respiratory syncytial virus). RSV was the number one reason children were admitted to hospitals this past year, and cases overwhelmed hospitals worldwide.

Israel-based Aura Air says that its four-stage air disinfection and purification devices can help, according to newly released results of an independent study.

The Aura Air device is comprised of several components. A pre-filter targets large particles, including dust, pollen, insects, and animal hair. The HEPA Ray-Filter consists of three unique antibacterial layers that target fine particles, germs, odors, bacteria, viruses, fungi, and mold spores. The device uses ultraviolet light technology to reduce viruses, bacteria, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Finally, the device releases positive and negative ions to freshen indoor spaces and remove any remaining harmful pollutants.


The Innovative Bioanalysis Laboratory study shows that Aura Air's system successfully filters and removes 99.99% of airborne RSV particles.

"We are committed to helping hospitals mitigate the risks of... RSV," said Roie Friedberg, CEO of Aura Americas.

In addition to RSV, Innovative Bioanalysis Laboratory and Israel's Sheba Medical Center confirmed that Aura Air successfully filters and removes 99.99% of airborne SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) and 99.98% of Influenza A (flu) virus particles, in addition to many other pathogens and allergens.

Schools, hospitals, businesses, hotels, restaurants, buses, and medical associations in 87 countries, including the New Jersey Hospital Association (NJHA), have installed Aura Air to help combat the spread of these microbes.

"Hospitals and communities across the country [were] hit by an unprecedented surge in patients suffering from RSV, especially very young children," said NJHA Senior Vice President Michael A. Guerriero.

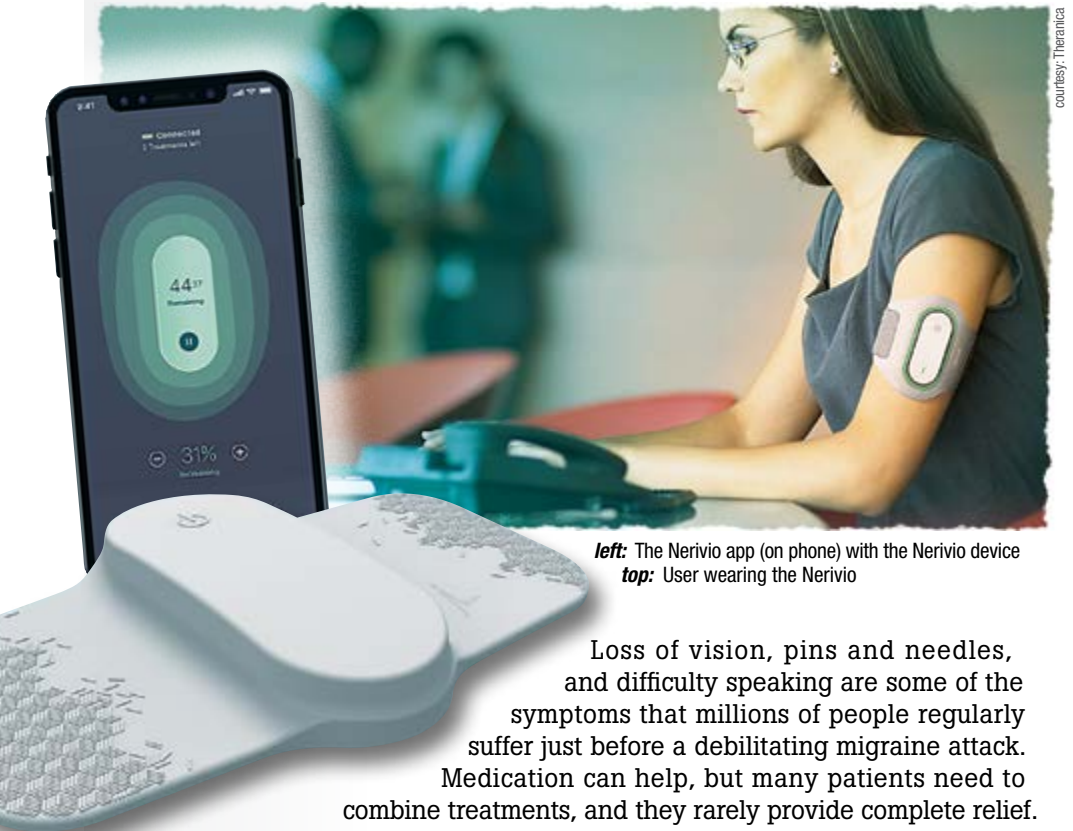
"Aura Air's advanced air purification and disinfection technology provides a welcome line of defense against these highly contagious viruses. Our partnership is focused on supporting New Jersey-area hospitals and their front-line heroes as they battle the tripledeemic," added Guerriero. 



Vibrating Armband Eases Migraine Pain



BY ARIEL GROSSMAN (r) NoCamels.com



courtesy: Theranica

left: The Nerivio app (on phone) with the Nerivio device
top: User wearing the Nerivio

Loss of vision, pins and needles, and difficulty speaking are some of the symptoms that millions of people regularly suffer just before a debilitating migraine attack. Medication can help, but many patients need to combine treatments, and they rarely provide complete relief.



But a new treatment could minimize — and possibly end — the use of combination drugs to treat migraines. Israeli company Theranica has developed the Nerivio, a drug-free, smartphone-controlled, vibrating armband for the treatment of episodic and chronic migraine for people aged 12 and older.

The Conditioned Pain Modulation (CPM) in the brain decides which of the billions of daily external stimuli that we experience is a threat. For those not considered a danger, the CPM increases the release of neurotransmitters that can abort pain by temporarily blocking the body's ability to detect painful stimuli.

Many people with certain neurological diseases have a CPM deficiency, however, so their brains cannot trigger the mechanism when needed. Instead, they experience hyper-sensitization, which amplifies the pain.

The Nerivio device specifically triggers the nerve fibers that transmit the "first-pain" signals. After identifying the vibrations as a false alarm, the brain releases neurotransmitters that increase the concentration of serotonin, the "happy chemical."

Users place the device on the upper arm when a migraine starts. It vibrates at an intensity just below their pain threshold for 45 minutes. The body's nerve fibers deliver a message to the brain, which decides that the sensation is harmless and releases neurotransmitters to prevent the sufferer from feeling pain.

The Nerivio device connects to an app that guides the user during the first minute of a migraine to gradually raise the intensity of the stimulation from a low level to a level just below the pain threshold. Afterward, users can continue with their daily routines, without having to sit or lie down.

(continued on next page)

In clinical tests, over 60% of patients said that the pain eased within two hours, and 35% experienced complete pain freedom. Alon Ironi, CEO of Theranica, noted that while about 30% of patients do not benefit from the device, the number is much lower than that for some other migraine treatments.

Theranica is working with the FDA to extend its device's capabilities to be used as a preventative treatment. **Currently, over 40,000 patients use the device in the U.S.** It's also available in Israel. Both countries require a prescription.

Nerivio's only competitor is Cefaly, an over-the-counter device worn on the head that uses electrical signals to temporarily block local painful sensations. Ironi says that 65–70% of migraine patients are hyper-sensitive to touch, so wearing a device on their head would not be very tolerable. ☆



courtesy: Theranica

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Zola's Notebook is also available as an eBook.



The Biden Administration's Two-State Delusion

BY BASSAM TAWIL (r) GatestoneInstitute.org

Days after U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken reaffirmed the Biden administration's commitment to the "two-state solution," the Palestinians repeated their rejection of the idea and their support for more terrorism against Israel.

The Palestinian response came through a public opinion poll published in December by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research and statements by Hamas, which controls the Gaza Strip.

The poll found that 69% of Palestinians believe that the "two-state solution" is no longer practical or feasible. And, 72% believe that the chances for the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel in the next five years are slim or nonexistent.



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken

credit: Ronny Przysocka (U.S. Department of State)

Preferring confrontation over negotiation

The Palestinians, in short, are telling the Biden administration that they can keep dreaming about the two-state fantasy, but that they prefer "armed struggle" and terrorism rather than peace negotiations with Israel.

When asked about the most effective means of building an independent state, 51% of the Palestinians chose the "armed struggle." And 55% supported a return to armed confrontations and an *intifada* (uprising) against Israel.

Even more concerning is that 72% of Palestinians said they favor forming terror groups like the Lions' Den, whose members carried out attacks against Israeli soldiers and civilians in the northern West Bank in late 2022.

This is not the first poll to show that a majority of Palestinians oppose the "two-state solution." They are clamoring for a Palestinian state not alongside Israel, but instead of Israel.

Moreover, this is not the first poll to show that most Palestinians continue to support Hamas, the terror group whose charter openly calls for *jihād* (holy war) and the elimination of Israel.

The Biden administration's focus

In November, during a phone call with Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas, Blinken reaffirmed the administration's two-state fantasy—especially along the notoriously indefensible 1949 armistice lines, where the fighting at the time just so happened to stop.

Then in a December speech at the J Street National Conference in Washington, D.C., Blinken reiterated

(continued on next page)

credit: Quirinale.it



Mahmoud Abbas



the administration's efforts at "realizing the enduring goal of two states." He noted: "We continue to believe, as the President said on his trip to the Holy Land [in 2022], that two states — based on the 1967 lines, with mutually agreed swaps — remains the best way to achieve our goal of Israelis and Palestinians living side by side in peace and security."

The results of the recent opinion polls demonstrate that Blinken and his team are either engaging in self-deception or simply fail to understand or see **what most Palestinians want: Killing more Jews and obliterating Israel.**

Rejecting Israel's previous peace offers

If the Palestinians really wanted their own state next to Israel, they could have had one years ago. However, Abbas and his predecessor, Yasser Arafat, rejected all the peace offers they received from Israeli leaders over the past 22 years without even a counteroffer.

In 2000, then Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's proposal to Arafat included the establishment of a Palestinian state on some 92% of the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) and 100% of the Gaza Strip. It also included the establishment of a Palestinian capital in eastern Jerusalem.

Arafat said no.

In 2007, then Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert offered to withdraw from 93% of the West Bank, all of the Gaza Strip, and large parts of east Jerusalem. **Abbas said no.**



credit: Yaacov Saar, Government press office

Yasser Arafat, 1994

A coming catastrophe?

Blinken and his advisers should recall the words of former U.S. President Bill Clinton, who hosted the 2000 peace summit at Camp David. In it, Arafat refused the generous offer he received from Barak. When Arafat said no, Clinton banged on the table and said: "You are leading your people and the region to a catastrophe."

Since then, the Palestinians have sought to fulfill Clinton's prophecy. They continue to resort to terrorism, glorify terrorists and support their families financially, and back Hamas.

Establishing a Palestinian state would be paving the way for the Palestinians to use the West Bank and Gaza Strip as launching pads to attack and destroy Israel. The last thing Israel and its Arab neighbors need is an Iranian-controlled terror state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Such a state would be a recipe for war, not peace in the Middle East.

Time to wake up

It is time for the Biden administration to awaken to Clinton's words — that the rejectionism of the Palestinian leaders is dragging the Palestinian people, and the entire Middle East, toward a bloody and dead-end future.

The way for the international community — starting with the U.S. — to change the situation is through insisting that any aid is strictly conditioned upon the Palestinians abandoning their calls for terrorism, which now infest the entire Palestinian society. If there is non-compliance, payments must be withheld.

If one goes to a bank and asks for a loan, there are conditions attached; why not with aid? Otherwise, all of the aid that does not "disappear" is openly being used to bankroll terrorism, *jihad*, and killing Jews.

Bassam Tawil is a Muslim Arab based in the Middle East.





credit: Abed Raaim Khattib/Flash90

SELECT MEDIA BRIEFS

Mourners gather around the coffins of four Palestinian migrants who died off the Tunisian coast

Gazans Blame Hamas for Drowning of Migrants

By Wafaa Shurafa and Fares Akram
TimesOfIsrael.com

In December, thousands of people joined the funerals of eight young Palestinian men who drowned off the coast of Tunisia as they tried to sail to new lives in Europe.

The drownings have drawn attention to the dire conditions in Gaza after a 15-year Israeli-Egyptian blockade and have prompted some rare public criticism of the ruling Hamas terror group.

"The government that governs us here is the reason," said Naheel Shaath, whose 21-year-old son Adam died. "I blame all officials here who don't care for the youths or provide job opportunities for them."

Israel and Egypt imposed the blockade after Hamas seized control of Gaza from the Palestinian Authority in 2007. The blockade has stifled Gaza's economy, where unemployment hovers near 50%, and residents are usually quick to blame Israel for the difficult conditions. But increasingly, families are complaining about Hamas's leadership, citing high taxes, its heavy-handed rule, and a growing stream of leaders, including its supreme leader, Ismail Haniyeh, who have moved abroad to more comfortable places with their families.

"Our children are drowning in the sea and their children are enjoying luxury," Mrs. Shaath said. "Isn't this unfair?"

The al-Shaers, another family, buried their 21-year-old son Mohammed. His younger brother, who was on the same boat, is still missing. Their mother, Amina, blamed Hamas for the family's misery. "What do we see in Gaza? We only see oppression," she said. "They are suffocating the youth, and the youth flee because of their suffocation."

The young men who died were headed to Turkey, one of the few countries that accepts Palestinians from Gaza. From Turkey they hoped to get to Europe. About two dozen Palestinians drowned in the last quarter of 2022 on the perilous journey. According to the nonprofit Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, around 360 people from Gaza have either died or gone missing in the Mediterranean on smuggling ships since 2014.

German Woman Convicted in Death Camp Murders

By Philissa Cramer / JTA.org

A 97-year-old German woman was convicted in December of complicity in 10,500 concentration camp murders. Irmgard Furchner was 95 when she was first arrested and charged with crimes related to her work as a secretary to an SS commander at the Stutthof concentration camp in Nazi-occupied Poland during World War II. She tried to flee by a taxi on the first day of her trial but was soon apprehended.

(continued on next page)





Furchner, who claimed that she had no knowledge of the murders being committed in the camp, was sentenced to two years of probation. She was tried in juvenile court because she was under 21 while she worked at the camp.

credit: Christian Charisus/Pool Photo via DPA



Irmgard Furchner in court in Itzehoe, Germany

During her final court appearance, Furchner commented: "I am sorry for everything that happened. I regret that I was in Stutthof at that time. That's all I can say."

Earlier last year, a 101-year-old former Nazi guard was sentenced to five years in prison for his role at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Berlin. Due to his advanced age, he is unlikely to serve any prison time.

Google Apologizes for Definition of "Jew"

By Elad Benari / IsraelNationalNews.com

Google apologized after controversy surrounding the definition of "Jew" that appeared on the popular search engine.

When the word "Jew" was searched on Google in December, the word was defined as to "bargain with someone in a miserly or petty way," with the origin being "in reference to old stereotypes associating Jewish people with trading and money lending."

The StopAntisemitism organization denounced the definition on Twitter: "When one enters 'Jew' into the Google search engine, a grotesque anti-Semitic trope comes up. This is unacceptable, Google."

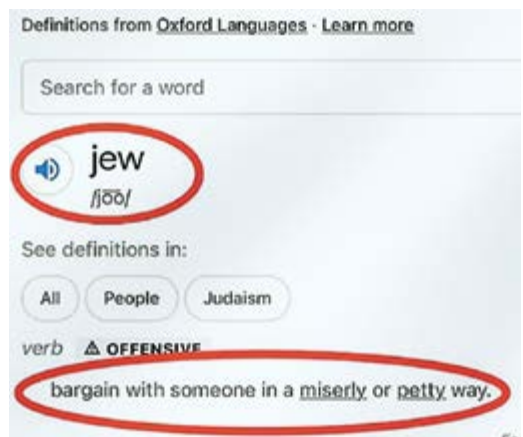
Google Search Liaison Danny Sullivan later apologized on behalf of the search engine company, while also offering an explanation.

"Our apologies," Sullivan wrote on Twitter. "Google licenses definitions from third-party dictionary experts. We only display offensive definitions by default if they are the main meaning of a term. As this is not the case here, we have blocked this & passed along feedback to the partner for further review."

Fox News Digital sought a statement from Google as to why the search for the word "Jew" was listing an "offensive" verb as the top definition, before it recently was switched back to the noun definition.

In response, Google turned the attention to Sullivan's tweet and a help center article about how Google sources definitions on Search.

Wiktionary.org, while noting the term "jew down" is offensive, still defines it as "to bargain or haggle with a seller in order to obtain a lower price." ☆



Google's definition of "Jew"



Archaeology

2,200-Year-Old Coins Prove Book of Maccabees



BY AMANDA BORSCHER-DAN (r) TimesOfIsrael.com



credit: Stal Halavi, Israel Antiquities Authority

Silver coins discovered near the Dead Sea

A cache of 2,200-year-old silver coins was discovered recently in a cave near the Dead Sea. Archaeologists claim that this is the first physical proof that Jews fled to the Judean Desert during the upheaval and persecution under Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

In the period prior to the Maccabean Revolt, righteous men were exhorted to leave everything and flee to the desert. Subsequently, while upholding the laws of Shabbat, they were slaughtered by the king's forces.

During excavations last May, a small, well-preserved wooden box holding 15 silver tetradrachma coins was discovered in a cave in the Darageh Stream Nature Reserve. **The coins were minted by Ptolemy VI, king of Egypt, and date to up to 170 B.C.,** which is just before Seleucid King Antiochus IV Epiphanes began handing down harsh measures against Jews' freedom of worship.



credit: Emili Adajam, Israel Antiquities Authority

Wadi Muraba'at near the Dead Sea

According to Eitan Klein of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA), the coins were stashed by a fleeing Jew, who presumably died in the violence leading up to the Maccabean Revolt.

"Here, we have good proof that people really were fleeing," said Klein, deputy director of the IAA's Theft Prevention Unit. "In general, when we find a cache of coins, they tell us a story of war. Otherwise, people don't run off and leave their life savings." At an average wage, the coins represented about two months' salary.

The pristine wooden box was discovered in one of the four Muraba'at Caves

(continued on next page)





credit:
Yaniv Berman,
Israel Antiquities
Authority

where, some 70 years after the first scientific excavations took place in the caves near the Dead Sea, new objects are still coming to light.

Inside the newly-discovered box were 15 silver coins, a piece of purple-dyed cloth, and some wool stuffing. The dry desert climate, combined with the cave's protected atmosphere, preserved the organic materials in excellent condition.

The dating of the coins could serve to anchor the artifacts to the moving description in 1 Maccabees 2:29, in which the eventual Maccabean Revolt founder Mattathias cries out for righteous men to leave their lives of persecution and live in the desert or *eremos*, a Greek term for a place desolate of people or animals. (Incidentally, in 2 Maccabees we find the earliest Greek text to use the word "Judaism," according to scholar Malka Z. Simkovich.)

The silver tetradrachmas were minted by Ptolemy VI, king of Egypt, who reigned contemporaneously with his uncle, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (often called "the Wicked"), who ruled over the Seleucid Kingdom. Between 270–168 B.C., the

Seleucids and Ptolemies fought the Six Syrian Wars. After the fourth war, the territory of Judea was conquered by Antiochus III, in the Battle of Paneion in 200 B.C. According to the IAA, the three earliest coins in the trove were minted in 176/5 B.C., while the latest coin dated to 171/0 B.C. Curiously, the name "Shalmal" was incised in Aramaic script on one of the coins.

"It is impossible to know where the person fled from.... Every time there was a war or a traumatic event, people fled to the desert and hid in caves, which were their 'safe rooms.' They'd leave their homes, and take only their important items," Klein explained.



Opening the wooden box

The Muraba'at Caves were used for millennia as a refuge. Located in Nahal Darga, the closest Jewish settlement during the Maccabean era would have been a walk of a day or two away.

At that time, the caves were very difficult to reach, which also shows the individual's desperation, Klein noted. "Today, we can take a Jeep. In that period, there was a path to the Dead Sea, but it was flanked by many unfriendly tribes, and it was dangerous to walk in the middle of the desert."

Klein explained that these are not the only silver tetradrachmas minted by Ptolemy VI that can be found in Israel today. "We've found in the antiquities market coins of that period, from looters. But now, for the first time in the Land of Israel, we've found a trove in a scientific excavation. And therefore, the coins can tell us a story," said Klein.

Since 2017, the IAA has surveyed some 500 caves in the Judean Desert — in part to look for more Dead Sea Scrolls, in part to beat antiquities looters to priceless artifacts.

Please see the DVD series, *Secrets of the Scrolls*, on p. 20 ☆



U.N. Envoy Slammed Over Anti-Semitic Comments

JNS.ORG

Israel and the U.S. have slammed a United Nations envoy over anti-Semitic statements she made in 2014 that recently resurfaced.

Francesca Albanese, the U.N. Human Rights Council's Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territories, asserted that the "Jewish lobby" controlled the U.S. and compared Israelis to Nazis.

Albanese also sympathized with terror organizations, dismissed Israel's security concerns, and accused the Jewish state of potential war crimes, according to *The Times of Israel (TOI)*.

"Anti-Semitism is a persistent malice that has infected the United Nations Human Rights Council for far too long. Comments made by ... Francesca Albanese that surfaced today are yet another stain on the credibility of this body and yet another example of the impunity that exists today regarding anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic comments made by UN officials," the Israeli Mission to the U.N. in Geneva said in a statement.

"It is about time that the United Nations take concrete action in addressing systemic anti-Semitism within the United Nations Human Rights Council and its mechanisms. The lack of accountability and impunity for comments made by UN officials only works to legitimize anti-Semitism and endangers the Jewish people," the statement added.

U.S. Permanent Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council, Ambassador Michèle Taylor, likewise denounced Albanese on Twitter: "We are appalled by [Albanese's] recently uncovered anti-Semitic remarks.... References to the 'Jewish Lobby' are an age-old trope; this is outrageous, inappropriate, corrosive, & degrades the value of the UN."

Albanese did not directly address the report, but she told the *TOI*: "Some of



UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese addresses the UN, October 2022

source: screengrab/YouTube

the words I used [in the Facebook post] during Israel's offensive on the Gaza Strip in 2014 were infelicitous, analytically inaccurate, and unintentionally offensive. People make mistakes. I distance myself from these words, which I would not use today."

In November, Albanese spoke at a conference in Gaza attended by senior members of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. In her speech, Albanese stated: "You have a right to resist this [Israeli] occupation."

In a June interview with an Italian magazine, Albanese claimed that "Israel says 'resistance equals terrorism,' but an occupation requires violence and generates violence." She added that the "Palestinians have no other room for dissent than violence."

Albanese also repeated long-running accusations of Israeli apartheid and suggested that Israelis holding dual citizenship could be tried for crimes in the countries of their secondary citizenship if they live in eastern Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, or any other location deemed "occupied Palestinian territory."

In an interview with an Italian national television station in May, Albanese asserted that "Palestinian violence is inevitable because the right to exist of the Palestinian people has been denied for 55 years." ☆





Jewish Humor, etc.

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

If their mothers had been Jewish:

Mona Lisa's mother: "After all that money your father and I spent on braces, that's the best smile you can give us?"

Columbus's mother: "I don't care what you've discovered, you still could have written!"

Michelangelo's mother: "Can't you paint on walls like other children? Do you have any idea how hard it is to get that stuff off the ceiling?"

Napoleon's mother: "All right, if you aren't hiding your report card inside your jacket, take your hand out of there and show me."

Abraham Lincoln's mother: "Again with the stovepipe hat? Can't you just wear a baseball cap like the other kids?"

George Washington's mother: "The next time I catch you throwing money across the Potomac, you can kiss your allowance good-bye!"

Thomas Edison's mother: "Of course I'm proud that you invented the electric light bulb. Now turn it off and get to bed!" ☆

Dry Bones

HAR HAR HAR



Answer Key for March 2023 Crossword (p.24)

Across:

1. Fast
3. Jew
6. Decree
8. Purim
9. People

14. Celebrate
15. Vashti
16. Hanged
18. Haman
19. Dine

Down:

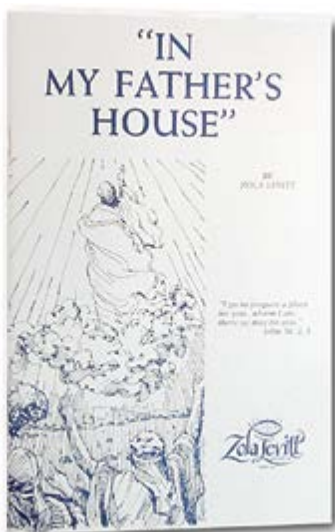
2. Sleep
4. Wicked
6. Adar
7. Mordecai
10. Petition
11. Gallows
12. Destroy
13. Homage
16. Honor
17. Hated



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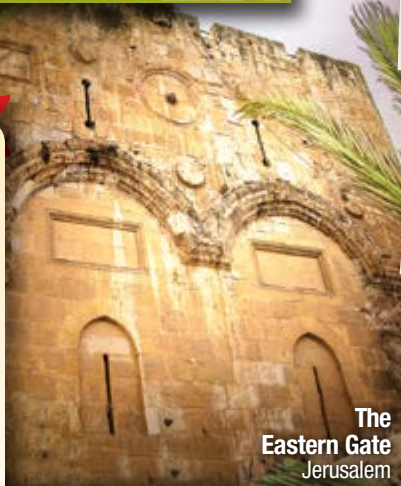
SPRING TOUR 2024

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Grand Petra: Mar. 25–Apr. 7
(Israel & Petra)

*Spring 2024 dates and
prices are pending.*

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