



# Levitt LETTER

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

— ROMANS 10:1

inside: **Rest Secure  
in Israel p.4**

# Christ in Hanukkah

By David Brickner / JewsForJesus.org

A traditional saying arose from the Hanukkah story: “*nes gadol haya sham*,” which means, “a great miracle happened there.” The great miracle was that the oil, enough for only one day, continued to burn for eight whole days, enough time to make and sanctify new oil. This legend explains why we celebrate Hanukkah for eight nights and why the *Hanukkah* (Hanukkah menorah) is lit for eight nights as well. It’s a good story, but it isn’t mentioned in the accounts of the Maccabean revolt, such as 2<sup>nd</sup> Maccabees. The legend of the oil isn’t brought up until much later, in the Talmud. Maybe a day’s worth of oil supernaturally burned for eight days... and maybe it did not.

Many believe that a more likely reason for celebrating Hanukkah for eight days is that the Maccabees, upon recapturing Jerusalem, conducted a belated Feast of Tabernacles celebration. Remember, Solomon himself had

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#### REMEMBER:

**Hanukkah Dec. 21 - Dec. 30 (Jewish holy days begin at sunset the preceding night.)**

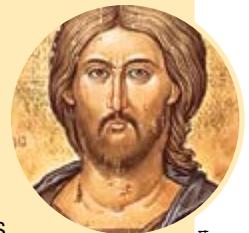
## The Jesus-Hanukkah Connection

IsraelToday.co.il

Though not among the prescribed seven feasts dating back to the time of Moses, Hanukkah is an eight-day Jewish festival that Jesus Himself celebrated (John 10:22–25) to mark God’s miraculous intervention during the reign of Syrian-Greek Emperor Antiochus Epiphanes, who desecrated the Jewish Temple by sacrificing a pig on its altar and blasphemously proclaimed himself to be God.

Judah Maccabee led a brave and successful revolt against the tyrant in 167 B.C. and re-established Temple worship (Hanukkah means “Dedication”) with a menorah that burned miraculously for eight days despite

*(continued p.3)*



Detail from *Christ the Pantocrator* by Jovan Zograf, 1384

## Christ in Hanukkah *continued from cover*

chosen the Feast of Tabernacles on which to dedicate the Temple when it was newly built. So, the eight-day festival of joy and thanksgiving would have been an especially appropriate way to commemorate the Maccabees' rededication of the Temple.

In any case, it is still appropriate at Hanukkah to say, "nes gadol haya sham." The miracle of Hanukkah is the miracle of God's preserving power. Israel's victory over Antiochus and his mighty army showed that miraculous power.

God staked His reputation on His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when He vowed to preserve and sustain their descendants forever. No wonder Satan has attempted to annihilate the Jews throughout history! Antiochus was one of Satan's agents in his diabolical scheme to destroy the Jews and so make God a liar! In fact, the prophet Daniel predicted the wicked deeds of Antiochus (Daniel 8–11) and even depicted him as a type (foreshadow) of the antiChrist, the beast of Revelation 13.

The rededication of the Temple was a reminder of God's power to keep His promises and preserve His people Israel. But One greater than the Temple stood on Solomon's porch that day. **And He made an astounding claim. "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30). Remember, that occurred at Hanukkah.** Fresh in my people's minds was the fact that they had rightly rejected the false claims of Antiochus. Now here is Jesus, standing in the Temple asserting His own claim to deity. The reaction of my people was predictable. "Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him" (v.31). And if He hadn't been who He claimed to be, they would have been absolutely right to do so.

When my people rejected Antiochus, God kept His promises, miraculously preserving them. But when the Jewish leaders wrongly rejected Jesus' claims that day, they missed the miracle of Immanuel, which means "God with us." Jesus has the power to preserve those who come to Him. In Him, God has proven His faithfulness to Israel and to all the world. ★



*The Triumph of Judas Maccabeus* (detail), Peter Paul Rubens, 1634–1636



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- Classic Zola**
- 4 Rest Secure in Israel**
- Studio Co-host**
- 6 A New Thing**
- On the Ground in Israel**
- 7 Under-the-Radar Revival**
- 8 Religious Freedom in Israel and the Arab World (part 1)**
- 10 Dutch Hanukkah Hides in Plain Sight**
- Ask the Chaplain**
- 12 Reincarnation and Messianic Jews**
- TJF Report**
- 13 "Spread the Word"**
- A Note from Mark**
- 14 Zola Levitt Presents: Our Jewish Roots**
- 15 ZLM Bulletin Board**



- 16 Parsons: Hebrew Lesson The Word Made Flesh**
- Zola Tours**
- 21 Drawn to the Land**
- 22 Letters to ZLM**
- Science**
- 26 Detecting Blood at Crime Scenes**
- Medicine**
- 27 Fat Cells and Melanoma**
- 28 Crossword Puzzle**
- 29 7 Facts the Media Ignore**
- 30 Jelly Doughnuts on Hanukkah**
- Archaeology**
- 32 Discovering Emmaus**
- Muslim Focus**
- 34 Confronting UNRWA's Anti-Semitism**
- 35 Jewish Humor**



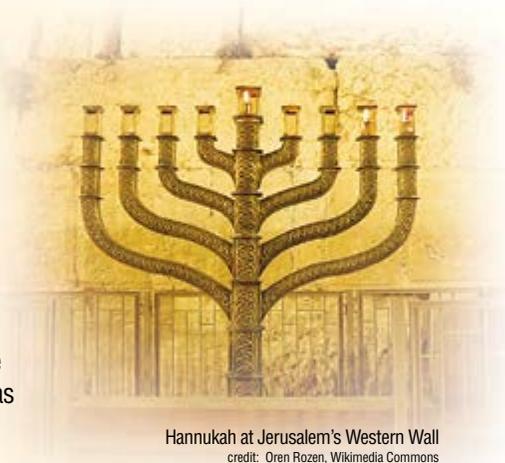
## The Jesus-Hanukkah Connection ... *continued from cover sidebar*

having only enough oil for one day. The Greeks had polluted the rest.

The feast foreshadows the coming of the Jewish Messiah Yeshua (Jesus), described as "the light of the world" (though it is more likely that Jesus was born in the autumn).

Messianic Jews (who do believe Jesus is their Messiah) celebrate both Hanukkah and Christmas, and a menorah as part of the festive decorations is increasingly common. As Christmas cards from Jews for Jesus state, the baby born at Bethlehem is the only hope for peace in the Middle East. During this Hanukkah and Christmas season, when many of us celebrate

the coming of light into the world in the person of Jesus Christ, let us remember that He came to bring hope and life to all who believe. ★



Hanukkah at Jerusalem's Western Wall  
credit: Oren Rozen, Wikimedia Commons

# Rest Secure in Israel

Classic Zola  
from 1982  
37 years ago



*Following a 1982 flare-up between Israel and Syria, Zola wrote this Note.*

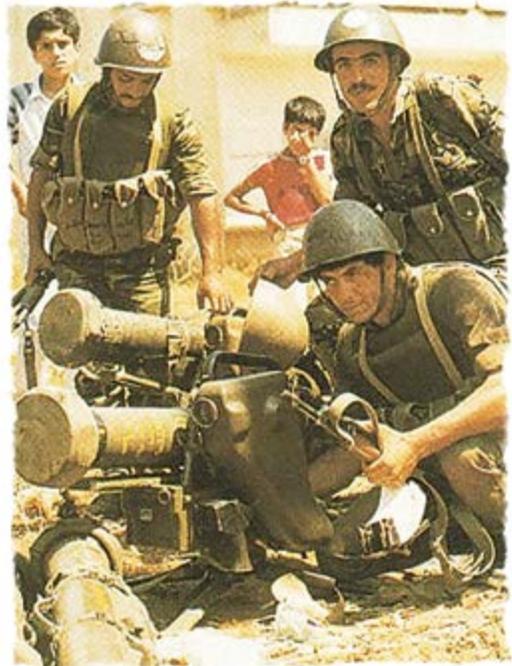
I'd like to say something about the relative security of the Holy Land. It is clear from the Scriptures that God will not move His people out of the land again:

*And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God. — Amos 9:15*

Once the restoration of Israel to the Chosen People has begun, there's no going back. The prophecy's fulfillment involves the Tribulation Period: the Temple, the antiChrist, Armageddon, and the return of the King. Once started, it simply cannot be stopped. **There is no prophecy to suggest the downfall of a re-established Hebrew nation in Israel... and that's why I never fear to go there.** I went to Israel just weeks before the 1973 war and a few months after it. I could just as well have been there during the war since it appears that God will not allow any army to cross the borders. I have always felt safe and secure in an area that God Almighty has guaranteed. I frankly don't feel as secure in Dallas as I do in Jerusalem (and I have the statistics to back that up).

## Bad Press

But news about violence in Israel has a very damaging effect on the "image" of the Israeli people and on their economy. Tourism suffers, of course, as would-be pilgrims forgo their trip in favor of a relatively peaceful place. I have a feeling that our tour groups would be twice as large without the reports of violence from West Bank villages. I think the enemies of Israel delight in stirring up some newsworthy event — though, are these very local and ineffective demonstrations really newsworthy? The Moslems lost a lot of their self-serving publicity to the Falkland Islands crisis and something had to get them more newspaper space. Now people fear going to Israel again, and the economy, the chief component of which is tourism, turns down a little.



Syrian anti-tank teams deploying French-made Milan ATGMs during the war in Lebanon in 1982



[Back to Cover](#)



[To Index](#)



[Back to p.9](#)

credit: Tom Cooper

## Safe Tours

Well, I, for one, am still going. The Israelis know a good deal about their enemies and their land, and they know how to guide tourists through the Biblical sites without any problems, no matter the political difficulty of the moment.

Our tours don't really go anywhere near the action; in fact, they spend most of their time far away from it. Back when there were American hostages in Tehran, some people didn't want to go to Israel, not realizing that the trouble was a thousand miles away. The situation would be similar to avoiding Texas

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Zola Levitt in Israel on *Zola Levitt Presents*.  
Zola continued going back to Israel his entire life.

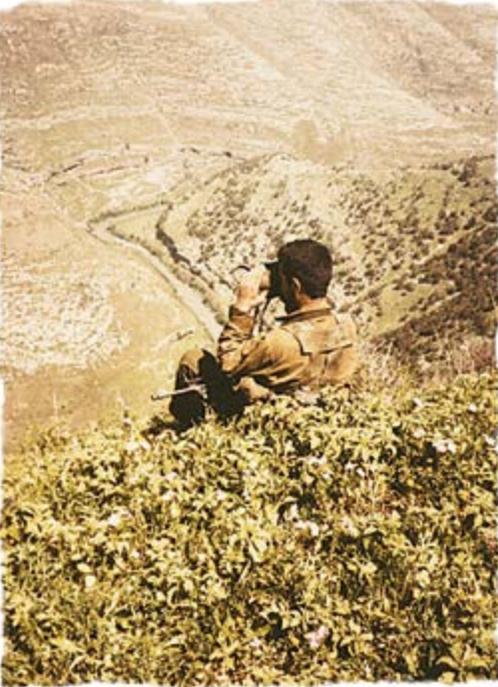


because of trouble somewhere in Guatemala. Currently, the trouble is well out of our way. We'll be safe and sound, and we'll return with a lot of good television to show you in the upcoming season.

On that point, you voted for us to go. By an overwhelming majority, the viewers of *Zola Levitt Live* [now *Zola Levitt Presents*, soon to be called *Our Jewish Roots*\*] preferred the Holy Land programs to local shows, with very interesting points along with the responses. People asked us to film at sites over there and not set up in a local studio. I believe in that. Some commented that Sea of Galilee scenes might have been shot at any

lake in America, preferring one-of-a-kind sites like the Western Wall or Petra. We plan this time to show you what you can't see anywhere else — like taking you back to 1<sup>st</sup>-century Jerusalem by means of a unique scale model of the city, painstakingly built with every temple, palace, and public building that stood in the time of King Herod. We'll make two shows there. We also plan to film in the Upper Room, at King David's tomb, the Dome of the Rock, the sheep-and-goats marketplace, and other absolutely unique-to-Israel settings.

credit: David Smeeth, Oran1973, Wikimedia Commons



Keeping Israel safe through vigilant surveillance

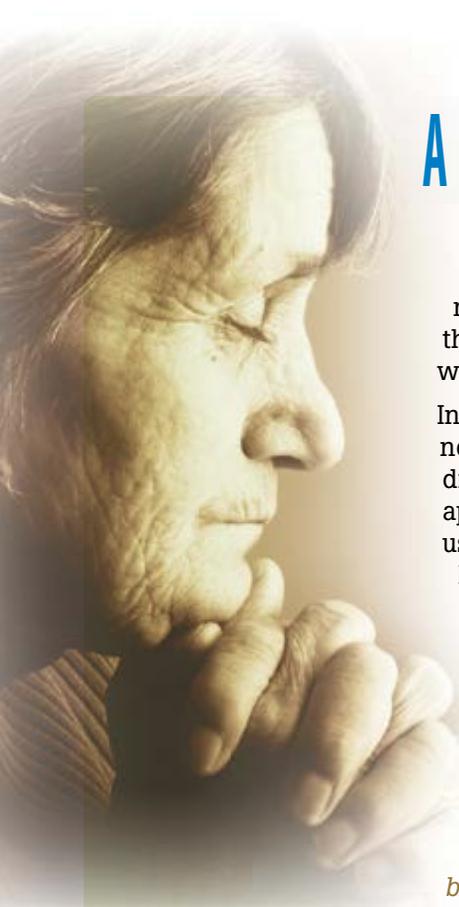
the digs. One show I'm personally eager to get to is our "man on the street" interviews. We plan to set up our cameras at places where interesting people with interesting opinions happen by, e.g., the Arab bazaar in Old Jerusalem and Zion Square in Jerusalem. We hope to interview an Israeli army officer and a Palestinian spokesman, as well. Unlike network news programs, we will bring you both sides of the story, just as they are told to us.

Anyway, those are the plans. Frequently, our Supervisor has some different ideas which He issues to us from His throne in Heaven. Very often, we are practically on location when we feel an urge to film something else instead. So, stay in your seats and I promise you we'll be back with something fine. If it's not all of the above, then it will be something just as good, but whatever we do will be arrived at with sincere consideration of the will of God and of your edification.

Until we return with more new programs from Israel, please rejoice with us in our pilgrimage. Praise God for all of you. Next week in Jerusalem!

**\*Note:** Decades ago, Zola and our TV producer Ken Berg modified our television program's title. Now, with 41 years of service to this ministry, Ken believes that the newest name as of January — *Our Jewish Roots* — will enable our message to reach many, many new viewers. — Mark ★





# A New Thing

Kirsten Hart  
Studio co-host of  
Zola Levitt Presents



For me, someone who thrives on *new*, living in new places, exploring new lands, and having new adventures fulfill my wanderlust. I'm wired that way. Many people are content to stay right where they are. They shun change. I embrace it.

In 53 years of living, I have walked through many new seasons. Now, in December of 2019 (how did *that* come so quickly?), a brand-new year approaches. What does this year have in store for us? I know one thing for sure, it will be new. We have never walked this far into the future before. What journeys will we experience?

I believe that God desires to do "new things" in our lives. At least that was His desire for the Hebrews.

One of my favorite passages in Scripture is Isaiah 43:18–19. *"Forget about what's happened; don't keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. I'm about to do something brand-new."* (The Message version.) The Hebrews

were told not to look back at past concerns. I love the wording "don't keep going over old history." God knows us well,

doesn't He? He understands our tendency to look behind us and ponder over what was. (That didn't pan out well for Lot's wife, did it? Gen. 19:26)

By now you have heard that, beginning in January, Zola Levitt Presents will be called *Our Jewish Roots*. In my [Levitt Letter column last month](#), I wrote about Abram, Jacob, and Saul, who all underwent name changes that were filled with significance. They remained the same people, looked the same, and retained their histories. But God renamed them for new seasons and defined purposes.

While our Godly mission will remain the same, we do pray that through this name change, all of you will recognize that God is doing *a new thing*. My personal prayer for the coming months is that our viewers and readers will react in a Godlier manner than the Hebrews in the desert. The Hebrews complained and had to wander in the wilderness for another 40 years! ZLM staffers and supporters could not afford 40 years of resistance in this ministry. Let's learn from the past but be excited about walking into new territory.

God prepared a land flowing with milk and honey for His people. We believe that the new TV program title *Our Jewish Roots* will help our broadcasts reach more souls than ever and reap a *new harvest* by identifying our core message rather than our beloved founder and original messenger, Zola Levitt. After all, the deep and much needed wisdom of the Jewish roots of Christianity has always been the heartbeat of this ministry. Zola's teaching will always be a click away for free viewing at [levitt.tv](http://levitt.tv). Please see for yourself! 😊

As we look ahead, may God open new doors and paths for your personal and spiritual endeavors. Look forward to 2020 with positive expectancy. God brought the stiff-necked Hebrews into the Promised Land; He certainly can perform above and beyond your wildest dreams.

Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, and may God bless you in this beautiful season of light! ★



# Under-the-Radar Revival

On the Ground in Israel  
**Sarah Liberman**  
[SarahLiberman.com](http://SarahLiberman.com)  
ZLP Contributor



I just watched a new documentary — *Sheep Among Wolves: Volume II* — about the underground Church in Iran. What I saw gave me — a Messianic Jewess living in Israel — hope. The media in Israel report that Iran hates Israel, communicating a continuous stream of death and annihilation threats from high Iranian government officials and army leaders.

These threats calling for the destruction of Israel are no longer news to anyone. For forty years, Iran’s extreme Islamic rulers have promoted this rhetoric of hatred and invested heavily in Iran’s long-range missile and nuclear technology. The Iranian people, who are living under worsening economic hardship and strict Sharia law, are the ones paying the price. Yet, as the film shows, in the midst of this harsh reality stands a beacon of light, a glimmer of God’s plan, which turns everything on its head.

## New Revival

Created by Joel Richardson and Dalton Thomas, *Sheep Among Wolves* introduces individuals who are responsible for what they claim is the fastest growing church in the world. With no buildings, assets, or budget, this underground church also faces severe persecution when discovered, yet its membership is increasing. Yeshua is revealing Himself to thousands of folks in Iran on a regular basis, with **local estimates ranging between 250,000 and one million people who have turned from Islam to following Christ.**

What is very astounding is **these new Believers’ deep and strong love for Israel!** “Muslim-background Iranians are leading a quiet but mass exodus out of Islam and bowing their knees to the Jewish Messiah — with kindled affection toward the Jewish people,” say the film’s creators.

## God’s Unseen Work

While we look with our physical eyes to what we can see on the surface, God’s plan occupies levels that we can’t even imagine, *seeking to lay foundations*

*for the Gospel where there were none.*

(Romans 15:20)

Just as now, so also in Bible times some in the Persian government sought to annihilate the Jews. Haman targeted the Jews in Persia and fomented a plan to kill them all. God’s plan, however, included using the least in society — a simple man named Mordecai and an orphan girl named Hadassah. God elevated Hadassah’s status and made her a queen, giving her the courage to face losing her own life in order to save her people. The spiritual revival in Iran constitutes no less a miracle than the end of the story in the Book of Esther: *“So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai”* (Esther 7:10). What if we read this verse in the context of today? Could God once again be using the most unassuming — the lowest in Persian society — to bring about His perfect plan of salvation for both the Iranians and the Jewish people? ★



credit: Shira Shir, MEHR News Agency



credit: CBNNEWS.COM



credit: screen capture, YouTube, PressTV Videos

A 2014 survey estimated over 150,000 Christians in Iran

# Religious Freedom in Israel and the Arab World



**PART 1:** BY JOEL C. ROSENBERG (r) JPost.com

In an age of horrific attacks against Jews, Christians, Sikhs, and those of other religions, the words of Proverbs must be our mission.

*"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute." — Proverbs 31:8–9*

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo recently held a conference in Washington designed to make the advancement of religious freedom a top global priority and give voice to many who feel voiceless.

More than 1,000 religious and civic leaders, victims of religious persecution, as well as foreign ministers and other dignitaries from more than 100 countries, attended.

My keynote address, "Advancing Religious Freedom in the Middle East: [An Israeli Evangelical's Perspective](#)," focused on the state of religious freedom in Israel and the Arab-Muslim world. Here are excerpts from my remarks.

## The state of religious freedom in Israel

The State of Israel is not perfect, yet it is a modern miracle.

- Born out of the ashes of the Holocaust
- The fulfillment of ancient prophecies
- Thriving, despite repeated wars and enemies hell-bent on its annihilation
- A booming economy
- And a robust and raucous democracy — the only in the region

Israel is a model of religious freedom. It is a safe harbor for Jews from all over the world, regardless of how religious or secular they may be. It is also the safest, freest country in the Mideast for people of all faiths, and no faith.

- 75% of Israel's 9 million citizens are Jews.
- 20% are Muslims or Druze — full citizens, with equal rights, absolutely free to attend mosque, read their religious texts, and raise their children in their faiths.
- Only about 2% are Christians, including Catholics, Orthodox, and Evangelicals and Messianic Jews. (We are a small minority, but are absolutely free to practice our faith and to preach it.)

Do religious minorities in Israel face a variety of governmental and societal challenges? We do, including an inordinate and sometimes unhealthy control by one faith stream — ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) Judaism, a relatively small

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minority — over political decisions affecting the lives of everyone else. This includes rules governing marriage, divorce, burial, immigration, and much else.

The Haredim have every right to advance their policy objectives, of course. But the growing mass movement of other Israelis to balance Haredi influence is also legitimate. There is much that Israel's government can and should do to make reforms and improve the quality of life for religious minorities, and the sooner the better.

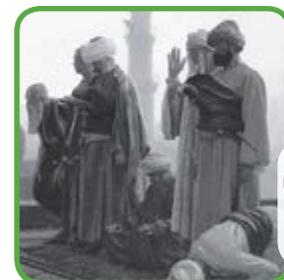
That said, **regardless of what outsiders hear from critics, Muslims and Christians do not face government persecution, and there is certainly no apartheid.**

- Muslim, Druze, and Christian Arabs have served as Members of the Knesset, Israel's parliament, since the founding of the modern state.
- Muslims, Druze, and Christians serve with distinction in Israel's military, police, academia, media, and businesses. Recently, an Israeli Arab-Muslim was named chairman of one of Israel's largest banks.
- Arab Christians and Muslims even serve as justices on the Israeli Supreme Court.

Challenges remain, including our wrenching conflict with the Palestinians, for which we must continue to work and pray for peace and reconciliation. Still, I am deeply encouraged by the state of religious freedom in Israel today.

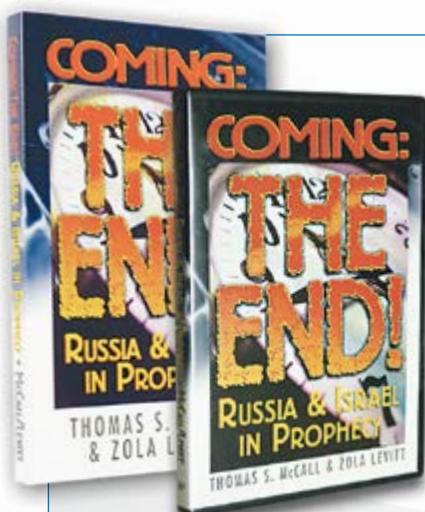
[In the next two months, we'll look at the state of religious freedom in the Arab world.](#)

*The author lives in Jerusalem with his wife and sons.* ★



*top:* Yemenite Jew blowing a shofar  
*middle:* Druze sheiks in traditional dress  
*bottom:* Prayer in Cairo, detail of painting by Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

To  
Index



## **[Coming: The End! Russia & Israel in Prophecy](#) book & CD** by Zola Levitt and Dr. Thomas S. McCall

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

*(Please see Classic Zola article on [p.4](#).)*

*This and many titles also available as eBooks.*

# Dutch Hanukkah Hides in Plain Sight



BY CNAAN LIPSHIZ (r) JTA.org

credit: S Sepp, Wikimedia Commons



**above:** Joods Historisch Museum (Jewish Historical Museum) in Amsterdam, Holland **right:** Nieuwenhuys menorah

Nothing about object MBO2280 in Amsterdam's Jewish Historical Museum suggests it is the capital's priciest *Hanukkah* (Hanukkah menorah), worth more than the average price of a local duplex home.

Shaped like the body of a violin, it is only 16 inches tall. Its base cradles eight detachable oil cups set against the menorah's smooth, reflective surface, whose edges boast elaborate rococo reliefs. The oil cups function as candles on Hanukkah, when Jews light candles to commemorate the Maccabees' 167 B.C. rebellion against the Greeks.

But for all its charm, the Nieuwenhuys menorah — created by non-Jewish silversmith Harmanus Nieuwenhuys — doesn't stand out from the museum's other menorahs. **Not the oldest one either, the menorah doesn't look worth its estimated price of \$450,000.** (A similar menorah by the same silversmith fetched an unprecedented \$441,000 at a 2016 auction.)

## The Story behind the Nieuwenhuys Menorah

The Nieuwenhuys menorah can hide in plain sight because its worth owes "more to its story than to its physical characteristics," said Irene Faber, the museum's collections curator.

Made in 1751 for an unidentified Jewish patron, the Nieuwenhuys menorah is tied to the country's royal family, as well as to a Jewish war hero who gave his life for his country and his name to one of its most visible tourist attractions.

The menorah came from the collection of the Maduros, a well-known Portuguese Jewish family that produced one of Holland's most celebrated war heroes. The Nazis murdered George Maduro at the Dachau concentration camp after

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In countless wartime broadcasts, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands rallied the Dutch but mentioned Jews only three times.



credit:  
National  
Archive of the  
Netherlands

they caught him smuggling downed British pilots back home. In 1952, his parents built Madurodam, a miniature city and one of Holland's must-see tourist attractions, in his memory.

The Jewish Historical Museum would not sell the Nieuwenhuys, Faber said, although it could attract a spectacular price owing to its provenance: It was bought in 1907 by the late queen of the Netherlands, Wilhelmina, as a gift for her mother and lent long-term to the museum by her great-grandson, King Willem-Alexander.

"We don't know who commissioned the work, but from the reputation of the artist and the amount of labor it took, it was likely a wealthy Jewish family," Faber said.

At the center of the object is a round network of arabesque-like decorations "that probably contains the owner's initials in a monogram," Faber said, "but we haven't been able to decipher it. It's a riddle." The monogram was one of several techniques that Nieuwenhuys and other Christian silversmiths in the Netherlands had developed for their rich Jewish clients.

### Anti-semitism surrounding the Nieuwenhuys Menorah

Before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, no Jews were allowed to smith silver in the Netherlands because they were excluded from the Dutch silversmiths guilds, which were abolished in the 1800s. "This exclusion meant that Christian smiths needed to become experts at making Jewish religious artifacts, like this menorah," Faber said. Works like the menorah illustrate that some Jewish customers were art lovers with sophisticated tastes.

The purchase by Queen Wilhelmina may appear inconsequential to a contemporary observer, but its significance becomes evident when examined against the backdrop of institutionalized anti-Semitism among other European royal houses and governments.

The German Emperor Wilhelm II, a contemporary of Wilhelmina, was a passionate anti-Semite who reportedly said in 1925 that "Jews and mosquitoes are a nuisance that humankind must get rid of some way or another," adding "I believe the best way is gas."

Belgium's King Leopold III was more politically correct, stating magnanimously in 1942 that he had "no personal animosity" toward Jews, but declared them nonetheless "a danger" to his country and raised no objections when the Germans began deporting Belgian Jews to their deaths.

But in the Netherlands, where thousands of Jews found haven after fleeing the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, royals not only refrained from such statements but were genuinely "interested in other faiths, including the Jewish one," Faber said.

Wilhelmina's gifting of a menorah to her mother "wasn't strange for her," Faber said. "I imagine she found it fun, something to talk about with her mother, to see together how it works." ★

credit: T. H. Voigt of Frankfurt, Imperial War Museums



credit: Willem van de Poel, Nationaal Archief



**top:** Emperor Wilhelm II of Germany, 1902  
**bottom:** King Leopold III in the palace in Laeken, 1934



# Reincarnation and Messianic Jews

Dr. Todd Baker  
Zola Levitt Ministries  
Staff Theologian



**Q.** Some New Agers and reincarnationists, like Hindus, claim that the Bible teaches reincarnation. They base this belief on the fact that John the Baptist was considered to be the Old Testament prophet Elijah. **Is this a possibility?**

**A.** This false belief is not a valid argument for the doctrine of reincarnation. The Word of God tells us that Elijah was taken alive to Heaven and is still there (2 Kings 2:11–12). John the Baptist was a different person from him. John was born of a woman and came in the spirit of Elijah, but he was not actually the physical person of Elijah (Luke 1:5–25; John 1:21).

Scripture is clear that each person lives, dies, and does not return here after death but either goes to Heaven or Hell (see Luke 16:19–31; Hebrews 9:27). When the Believer dies, he or she does not come back to relive another life on earth through the natural birth process. **When a Believer's body dies**, their spirit leaves the body and goes to Heaven to be in the presence of the Lord to await the Rapture of the Church at the First Resurrection (2 Corinthians 5:5–8).



**Q.** What happens to Jewish people in the present age who receive salvation based on their faith in Jesus Christ as the Messiah? **Are they part of Israel or the Church?**

**A.** Jews who are saved in the present Age of the Church (Messianic Jews) are a part of the Church until the Rapture occurs. Accepting Yeshua as Savior does NOT mean that they stop being Jews. They are called the remnant of Israel within the Church. *"Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace"* (Romans 11:5).

Jewish Believers who are saved after the Rapture of the Church (i.e., during the Tribulation) will be a part of the nation of Israel, while gentiles who come to faith during the Tribulation will be a part of the great company of the Tribulation Saints (see Revelation 7).

Israel will be the chief nation in the Millennial Kingdom, and the Church will serve as Christ's co-regents throughout the Earth (Isaiah 32:1; Isaiah 66; Jeremiah 31; 1 Corinthians 6:2; Revelation 20:6). ★

# “Spread the Word”

Day one in Israel: ZLM’s **To the Jew First** team arrived in the Land of Immanuel (Isaiah 8:8) in mid-afternoon, eager to begin our 48<sup>th</sup> Gospel outreach to the Chosen People. August Rosado and I were able to pass out four complete Hebrew Bibles to receptive Israelis, but one encounter in particular stands out and still brings tears of joy to my eyes. We met **Avi**, a drummer, working at the music store in the Dizengoff Center mall in Tel Aviv. August himself was at one time a drummer and is still quite good. This interest-in-common opened a conversation with Avi when August and Avi enjoyed a high-spirited drum duel.

When we mentioned that we come to Israel to teach the Word of God, Avi remarked, “What better place to do that than here!” This outreach trip coincided with Israel’s recent elections, so we asked Avi his thoughts on the results. He responded that he doesn’t get into politics because he feels that politicians are dishonest, plastic, and phony; he said that he prefers conversations like the one we were having—direct and honest! That welcome compliment from this young Israeli man presented us the perfect opportunity to tell him about the most honest, refreshing, and

uplifting Person — Yeshua the Messiah — whose life-giving words are found in the Hebrew New Testament. Avi surprised us by not only agreeing but admitting that he has read some of Jesus’ words in portions of the New Testament.

Awed by how God orchestrated this divine appointment, August and I knew that we were sent to give Avi the complete Word of Yeshua that saves sinners: a complete Bible with both Testaments in Hebrew. Avi was so grateful for our gift that he gave August a gift in return — a pair of drumsticks.

The tear-evoking part of this witnessing encounter occurred as we were leaving the music store. Avi exclaimed that he would now read God’s Word about salvation in Jesus the Messiah and exhorted us to “keep spreading the Word” in Israel. We joyfully reiterated that what makes us travel to Israel several times each year is bringing Yeshua back to the Jewish people. And you may already realize this: Israel encouraging this Gospel mission means that Messiah’s return is near at hand. ★



**Dr. Todd Baker**  
ZLM Staff Theologian  
TJF Team Leader



Todd and Avi



August and Avi holding exchanged gifts, Avi gesturing “I love you” in sign language

↑  
To  
Index

↓  
Back to  
p. 24

# Zola Levitt Presents: *Our Jewish Roots*

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



As we prepare to label our television program by what is being taught rather than by who is teaching, let's begin with a key facet of this international outreach that will remain unchanged in the New Year: teaching about Christianity's Jewish roots. For many Believers, learning about the New Testament's roots in the Old Testament eradicates any inklings of anti-Semitism and opens their eyes to their faith's profound heritage.

This ministry will also still hold true to "a strictly literal and inerrant Bible interpretation, salvation through Christ alone, an imminent pre-Tribulation Rapture of all Believers, and the establishment of a thousand-year Kingdom on Earth."

Writing "God originated the whole 'name change' idea," TV co-host Kirsten Hart cited Biblical examples for her "[Name Changer](#)" article in [last month's Levitt Letter](#):

1. *Abram* became *Abraham*
2. God changed Jacob's name to *Israel*
3. After Saul met Yeshua, he went by his Roman name, *Paul*

This ministry continues to emphasize our mission rather than our founder's prominence. Just as Zola would have insisted, we continually echo his original vision for a dynamic, Messianic outreach. **As of January, however, we begin a new era — entering new living rooms and appearing on computer screens — featuring a television program title that resonates with younger viewers who've never heard of us or our founder.**

Our teaching topics have always been and will remain more important than our messengers. Since our very first broadcast in December 1978, our Biblical subject matter has focused on *Our Jewish Roots*. Such a pro-

gram title will pique the curiosity of potential Jewish and gentile viewers alike while appealing to ZLMers who already know us.

## The following ministry features will remain unchanged:

- **Zola Levitt Ministries, Inc.** (aka Zola Ministries, Levitt Ministries, ZLM) — our ministry's name
- **Zola Tours** — the DBA/nickname for Travel Experience International, Inc., organizer of Holy Land study tours each spring and fall
- **www.levitt.com** remains our main website entry point
- **www.levitt.tv** receives redirected hits from **www.OurJewishRoots.com**
- **Zola TV** — **levitt.com**'s link for our TV broadcasting schedule, free video archives, podcasts, music, and instructions for watching internet "broadcasts" on your television set
- **The Levitt Letter** — this ministry's 36-page monthly news magazine
- **The Personal Bible Study Letter** — our monthly 8-page Bible lesson & ministry update mailing
- **Zola's Bible Exchange** — an ongoing effort to share donors' spare Bibles with the needy (see [p. 15](#))
- **Classic Zola** — Zola's timeless articles in the monthly *Levitt Letter*
- **ZolaBoard** — a moderated discussion board accessed via **levitt.com**'s "Discussion" tab
- **Our fish-and-menorah logo**



Not to worry: Newcomers will quickly realize that Zola is the one who originally carried the baton of televising Jewish-roots Bible teaching. In fact, while the ministry's teaching will retain its integrity, the program's new name — *Our Jewish Roots* — will extend our message farther than ever, to viewers who are interested in the subject but unfamiliar with Zola (until they get to know our teaching). ★



# ZLM Bulletin Board



## Swastika-Shaped Amusement Ride?

Last summer, a theme park in Germany shut down a new attraction after complaints that it resembled a pair of giant, spinning swastikas. The “Eagles Flight” ride included a set of four cars, each connected at right angles to a central axis, giving it a swastika-like appearance. A Reddit commenter remarked, “Goebbels approves,” referring to the Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels.



## The “Watch-Zola” Button

For those who focus on Zola’s Bible teaching, [levitt.tv](http://levitt.tv) now features a prominent button for accessing all of this ministry’s classic *Zola Levitt Presents* episodes. Now it is easier than ever to zero in on his Bible lessons, pro-Israel prophecy commentary, music videos, and more—all in one place! You’ll also find the inspirational tribute programming we created to commemorate highlights of our founder’s four-decade career as a Messianic messenger.

**Note:** please see our [Classic Zola Collection](#), offered on [page 23](#).

## Zola’s Bible Exchange

If you have an extra Bible in new or nearly new condition to pass on to someone who needs one, such as an inmate or a retiree on fixed income, please send it to us to forward. (Bibles for inmates must be softcover.) On the other hand, if you need a Bible and can’t afford one, please send us your address. There will be no charge. (Incidentally, ZLM consulting theologian Dr. Tom McCall refers to a New Testament without the Old Testament as “The Amputated Bible.” (See [A Note from Mark on p. 14](#).)

## ECFA Approved (still)

For the past seven years, the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) has steadily monitored various aspects of this ministry’s financials, newsletters, website, government documents, television broadcasts, etc. The ECFA knows more about our ministerial effort than some of our employees! Once again, we appreciate the ECFA continuing to accept ZLM as an official member.



## FREE ITEM

### Pamphlet of the Month

People with IRAs can make tax-free gifts directly to qualified charities in amounts up to \$100,000.

Did you know that Traditional IRA assets are not only subject to income tax when withdrawn during one’s lifetime or by survivors, but that they may also be subject to state and/or federal estate tax if left to loved ones other than a spouse? To receive at no charge the pamphlet

***The Charitable IRA***, email us at [staff@levitt.com](mailto:staff@levitt.com) or write to our P.O. Box. **Request POM# 23.**

THE CHARITABLE IRA



## “Come Home!”

Zola  
Tours to  
Israel



See [page 36](#)  
for details



## The Word Made Flesh A Classic Christmas Teaching

by **John Parsons**  
Hebrew for Christians  
Hebrew4Christians.com



הִנֵּה הַעַלְמָה הָרָה וַיֵּלֶדֶת בֵּן וַקְרָאת שְׁמוֹ עִמָּנוּ אֵל

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

|               |          |         |            |       |              |          |            |         |      |      |     |     |      |     |     |     |       |     |     |     |
|---------------|----------|---------|------------|-------|--------------|----------|------------|---------|------|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| הֵ            | נָה      | הַ      | עַלְ       | מָה   | הָ           | רָה      | וַ         | יֵלֶ    | דֶּת | בֵּן | וַ  | קְ  | רָאת | שְׁ | מוֹ | עִ  | מָנוּ | אֵל |     |     |
| (1)           | (2)      | (1)     | (2)        | (1)   | (3)          | (2)      | (1)        | (4)     | (3)  | (2)  | (1) | (3) | (2)  | (1) | (2) | (1) | (3)   | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| El            | im-ma-nu | she-mo  | ve-ka-raht | ben   | ve-yo-le-det | ha-rah   | ha-al-mah  | hi-neh  |      |      |     |     |      |     |     |     |       |     |     |     |
| “God with us” | His name | and she | shall call | a Son | and shall    | will     | the virgin | behold! |      |      |     |     |      |     |     |     |       |     |     |     |
|               |          |         |            |       | bear         | conceive |            |         |      |      |     |     |      |     |     |     |       |     |     |     |

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

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

God Almighty was clothed with human skin: our flesh, our bones. The miracle of the Incarnation is a paradox wherein the infinite meets the finite in mystery of the Divine Presence. Here God “touches a leper” (Matt. 8:3), eats with sinners and prostitutes, sheds human tears, and suffers headache like all men ... and dies for our sins. **The Creator of the cosmos “emptied Himself” to come in the form of a lowly servant (Phil. 2:7 NRSV) — disguised to the eyes of the proud and hard-hearted, but is revealed as High Priest to those who are genuinely broken and in profound need.** ★



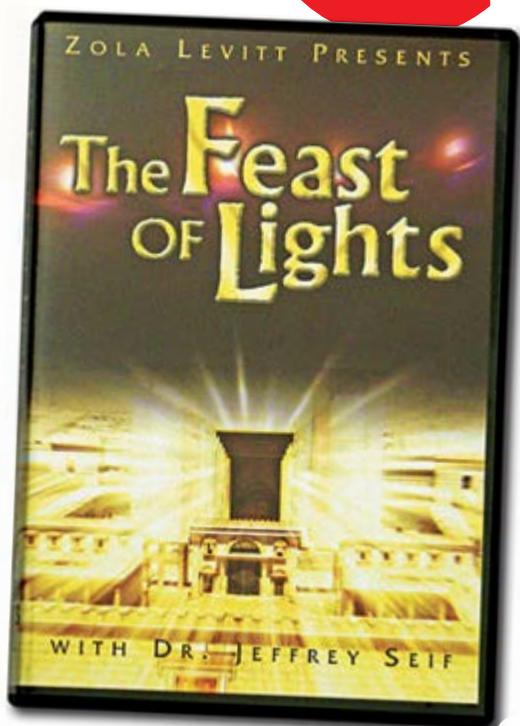
Courtesy: The Jerusalem Connection

## ***The Feast of Lights***

### DVD Set

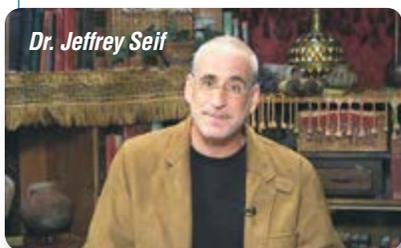
Three 30-minute  
TV programs on one DVD

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



### **The Story of Hanukkah**

Dr. Jeffrey Seif explains the story of Hanukkah wherein Syrian dictator Antiochus Epiphanes overthrew Jerusalem and desecrated the Holy Temple. Although many have sought to destroy God's Chosen People, Jeff reassures us that "He who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalm 121:4). We look at harvesting olive oil and its importance to the menorah in the Holy Place.



Dr. Jeffrey Seif

### **The Light of the World**

Jesus told His disciples, "You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14). At a Messianic synagogue, Jeff explains the significance of

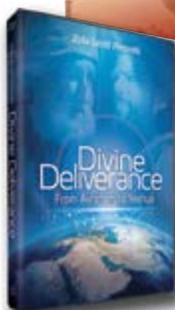
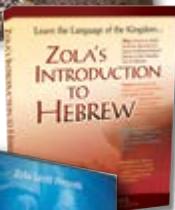
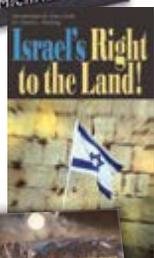
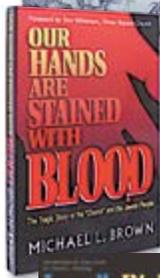
light in celebrating Hanukkah, as well as its prophetic image of our Messiah. Jeff interviews Rabbi Marty Waldman about the recent increase of Messianic Jews. Zola interviews Messianic minister in Ashdod, Simcha Davidov.

### **The Feast of Dedication**

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

*(Please see articles about Hanukkah on pp. [1](#), [10](#), and [30](#).)*

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To  
Index

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|     |   |      |     |
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### Music CDs: Hear samples at [levitt.com/music](http://levitt.com/music)

|     |  |      |     |
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## *The Holy Days of Our Lord* DVD Set Eleven 30-minute TV programs (3 DVDs)

Filmed on location in Israel, this 11-program series presents the holidays that our Lord celebrated. Given to Moses on Mount Sinai, these Seven Feasts provide some of the most fascinating studies of Biblical types and shadows. Few churches or seminaries teach this important subject.

**Overview** From the Mount of Olives, Zola gives a summary of the festivals that the Lord established for the Chosen People in Leviticus 23. Dan Hendrickson, an Orthodox Jew of Jerusalem, explains how rabbinical Jews view each of the feasts, which include:

**Passover** Zola looks at the original Exodus and also explains the traditional Seder as it relates to Christ's fulfillment and the Lord's redemptive plan.

**Unleavened Bread** Zola explains that this festival serves as a yearly reminder to the Chosen People that they did not have time to let the bread rise when the Lord delivered them out of Egypt. The Messiah is represented in the unique matzo.

**First Fruits** In this feast, "wave offerings"—two loaves of bread, representing the Church and the Chosen—are presented to the Lord for the new harvest season.

**Pentecost** Zola explains that when Christ told His disciples to wait for the coming Power of the Lord, the Jews were anticipating the celebration of this feast, Shavuot.

**Trumpets** Zola teaches about Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. A time of celebration and merriment, it is also a time when the seriousness of sin weighs on the hearts of the Jewish people and shofars sound.

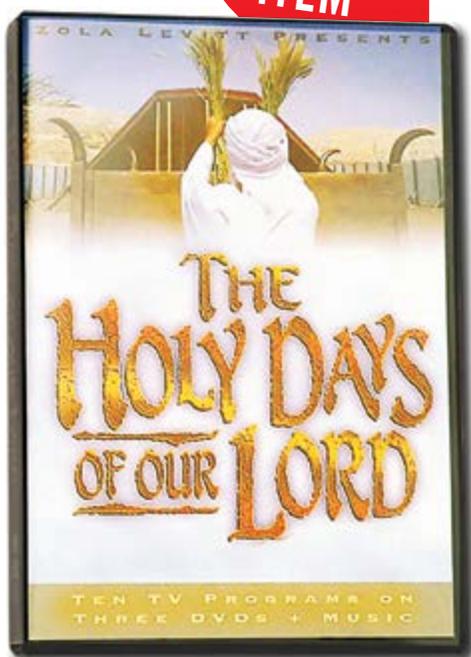
**Day of Atonement** From the Mount of Olives, Zola explains Yom Kippur. Once a year, the priest entered into the presence of God in the Holy of Holies and made a sacrifice for the sins of the entire nation.

**Tabernacles** Standing next to a sukkah, Zola informs us that the mood in Israel changes from a solemn occasion of judgment to one of celebration and merriment.

**Purim/Hanukkah** From the giant menorah by the Knesset (Israeli Parliament), Zola recalls the Book of Esther and New Testament references to the Festival of Lights—rededicating the Temple.

**Sabbath** Standing by a stream in the desert, Zola reads from Exodus and teaches about the day of rest. He draws a contrast between this commandment and where Christians find their "rest."

**Music** This conclusion to the series features all the music heard in the prior ten programs. We see dramatic recreations of each feast, Zola's musical performance on location in Israel, and view the scenic beauty of the Holy Land.



# Drawn to the Land



BY SANDRA LUTTRELL (r) Zola Tours Manager

Every time we step foot in the Land, my husband (Mike) and I pinch ourselves to be sure we are not dreaming. We find each visit to Israel that amazing! Something about the Land makes people feel that they are “home.” Sandra Levitt always reported that feeling, and we experience it too. Of course, as Christians, we know that this present world is not our real home, and that God has designed for us a far better place in which to spend eternity. Israel, and specifically Jerusalem, figure in the prophecy of our eternal home! (Rev. 21:1–2)

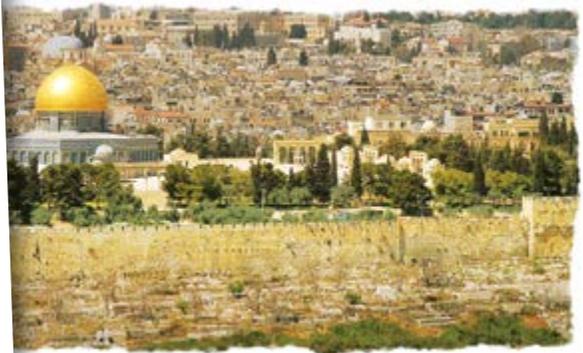
Each time Mike and I go to Israel, we meet special, fascinating, and genuine people on our study tour — individuals who love Israel, the Jewish people, and, most of all, Yahweh/Yeshua! They remark again and again how they felt drawn to come and see His Land firsthand. They express a hunger to witness for themselves what life is like there and to walk in the places where Yeshua Himself walked, taught, and performed miracles.

Until you experience being there for yourself, nothing can adequately describe how studying the Bible in the Holy Land enhances your relationship with our Heavenly Father/*Abba*. Understanding that the Bible is one narrative that perfectly connects the Old and the New Testaments finally makes sense! As Zola used to say, “The Bible is the Book with the answers in the back.”

On our most recent study tour, **Shmuel, one of our Messianic Israeli tour guides, kept reiterating the fact that, in Israel, the old meets the new ... the beginning meets the end ... and everything is tied together.** And, that is very true! Our God is a God of order and purpose, and His purpose becomes obvious when you see it come together in His Land.

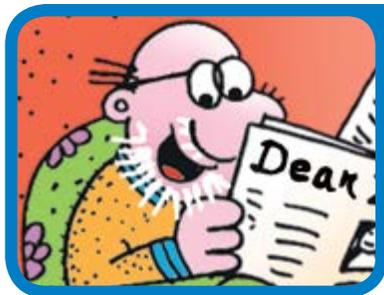
If you feel the Holy Spirit drawing you to Israel, we hope that you will consider joining David and Kirsten Hart for Zola Tours’ upcoming Spring Tour in March 2020. While we still have plenty of space on our Deluxe Tour (Israel only, March 16–26), reserved airspace is currently very limited on the Grand Petra Tour (Israel and Petra, March 16–29). If the Grand Petra Tour fills up completely, we can put you on a waiting list, should someone need to unavoidably drop out of the Petra extension. Please see [page 36](#) or visit our website at [levitt.com/tours](http://levitt.com/tours) for dates, prices, and other details.

Season after season, we at Zola Tours hear pilgrims exclaim about the eye-opening, life-changing phenomena of our Holy Land study tours. We pray that you will come with us and witness them for yourself! ★



**left:** Tour manager Sandra and husband Mike with neon green bandanas adorning hats to help them find each other in Jerusalem crowds  
**right:** The Temple Mount, Jerusalem





# Letters to ZLM

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

## Comments on changing the name of ZLM's TV program

**From R. & D.W.:** .....

Cool church sign! Our ministry also will remain under the same management — under God's control — as it was during our first television broadcast in December 1978. Meanwhile, I'll begin my 32<sup>nd</sup> year of managing ZLM since November 1988. —Mark



**From D.P. (OH):** I'm sure Zola is rejoicing that his program, teaching, and legacy have continued, but I also don't think he'd be offended if his name disappeared. After all, it is Yeshua who matters, and He would emphatically agree, I am sure.

Thanks for your encouragement. But please note the difference between broadening our TV program title's appeal and Zola's name disappearing from our teaching; it won't. In fact, let's start a fun (to make a point) contest to tally how many times Zola's name comes up on *Our Jewish Roots* broadcasts and in the *Levitt Letter*. The *what* letter? (count "1."). Newcomers will wonder why it is called the *Levitt Letter* ("count 2") and then get a solid clue when they read the "Classic *Zola*" (count "3") article. —Mark

**From B.C. (WV):** I just love it when you show Zola on the programs, and to think someone wants to take off Zola's name is ridiculous!

You can be our first contestant! You'll notice Zola's name in each introduction of his classic teaching segments. Please click on the new "**Classic Zola**" button at [levitt.tv](#) to see the best of his television programs through 2006. —Mark

**From P.T.R.:** The thought of removing Zola's name from the ministry, for me, would be as if he died again. But I realize the need to keep up with the younger audience, which I pray you are acquiring.

"Born once — die twice; Born twice — die once" (Martin Luther on Rev. 20:14). To be clear, our ministry name remains "Zola Levitt Ministries, Inc." As of January, our TV program will be called *Our Jewish Roots*. People watching *OJR* will still see original teaching clips featuring Zola Levitt. We will continue making all of his most worthwhile programs available at [levitt.tv](#). You can be our second contestant. —Mark

**From J.B.:** More Zola is better; definitely not less. For me, less Zola, less giving. Our third contestant! Only the television title will change. Not the subject matter or teachers, not the original clips featuring Zola nor his music. Even the term *rebranding* isn't accurate, because we're simply capturing more eyeballs than we would with the name of someone who's been on a well-deserved, eternal sabbatical. So yes, more Zola for more eyeballs — with a more descriptive program title. —Mark

**From H.L.:** GOD does not need our human help to DRAW people to Himself. So true, H.L. Well said. But we soldiers in God's army should employ the most efficient weaponry available in our spiritual battles. Why shy away from the

*(continued next page)*



power of broadcast television? Our free Bible teaching at [levitt.tv](http://levitt.tv) may have less impact than the collective prayers of our supporters, but why not seek His will in making it the best that we can? —Mark

**From K.A.:** IF YOU CHANGE, MY SUPPORT WILL BE NO MORE!!!  
Congratulations, K.A.! YOU are hereby our FOURTH (4<sup>th</sup>) contestant! —Editor

**From B.S.:** It astounds me that TBN would drop a ministry just because the originator has gone to Heaven. Paul and Jan Crouch are gone, but TBN didn't fold. Their reasoning isn't very reasonable. I trust you to make changes as you feel led and leave the solid foundation intact.

When we note that much of Bible teaching's commentary becomes quickly outdated when it's tied to news events, TBN's programming policy makes sense. And, though we have made sure to keep our content fresh and relevant, our title has not reflected that to prospective viewers—or broadcasters. **Many stations and networks should agree that our teaching, with a proven format and a refreshed title, will add value to their networks.** —Mark

*(continued next page)*

## ***The Classic Zola Collection***

***Just \$999 (a \$1,613 value!)***

Devoted fans of our beloved founder will treasure this comprehensive collection of his very durable Bible teaching resources. Whether completing your own library or giving as gifts, you'll find many edifying keepsakes. The **80 collectibles** include:

### **25** DVD titles

14 have six to twelve 30-minute TV programs  
**(\$1,025 if purchased separately)**

### **24** books and study booklets

plus Zola's Notebook—*The Bible: The Whole Story*  
**(\$192 if purchased separately)**

### **13** teaching CDs

**(\$113 if purchased separately)**

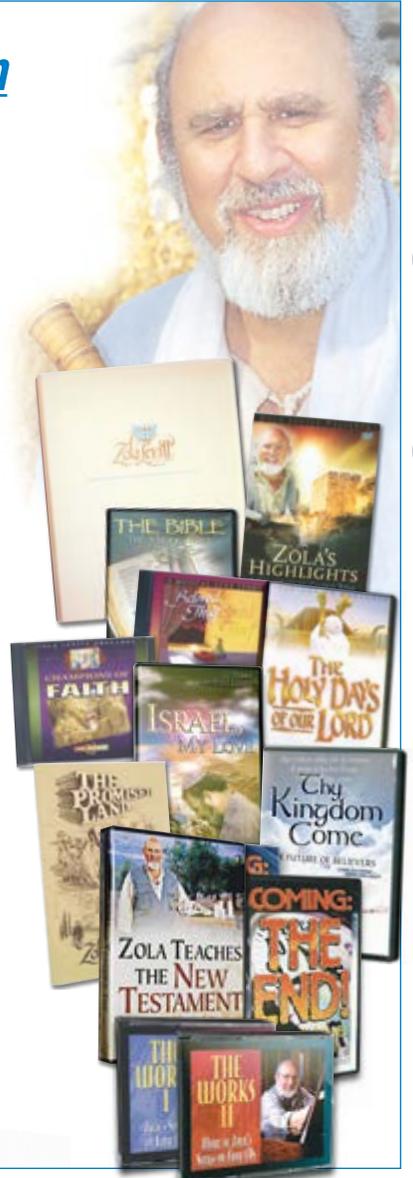
### **18** music CD items

two of which are 8-album compilations  
**(\$283 if purchased separately)**

Grand Total Value of \$1,613 if purchased separately.

**At just \$999 with free shipping**, this \$1,600+ bevy of Bible teaching resources is a remarkable bargain at a **price reduced by more than 38%!**

Please see [page 19](#) to order this incredible collection, or click on [The Classic Zola Collection](#) for more details.



**Dry Bones** OUR HOLIDAY OF FREEDOM

(“Comments on changing the name of ZLM’s TV program” continued from p.23)

**From S. K. (WI):** God is unchanging and so is His message. Zola must have been aware that change would come; hence he signed his writings “your messenger,” keeping the door open to successors. God is about doing new things (Isaiah 43:19). What an exciting, fresh time for ZLM! The Holy Spirit is your guide.

We received many letters about the possible change of our television program’s name, but the positive reactions make me happy. From Zola’s viewpoint in Heaven, something as practical as changing the name of a television program should be welcomed, particularly for those who otherwise might have missed Zola’s teaching... and the lessons of our many guests and messengers. —Kirsten

**Outstanding work**

Dear ZLM,

Thank you for the Bible lesson on Psalm 84 (*Personal Bible Study Letter*, August 2019). Tony Derrick did an outstanding job explaining its verses.

Please continue your *Personal Bible Study Letter*, *Levitt Letter* news magazine, and your TV and internet productions. I hate to hear about ZLM cutting back, because people would miss your clear and precise Messianic message. I will continue to pray. —G.W. (AZ)

**Remember your roots!**

Dear ZLM,

Thank you for all the knowledge that you offer me. And not just knowledge but also images of the Holy Land and Zola’s wonderful music. I thank you so that you remember how deep and strong your roots are. —T.E.D. (OH)

Dear T.E.D.,

Producer Ken Berg’s vision to bring the Holy Land vibrantly alive to viewers has been a ZLP trademark since day one. Ken will appreciate your comment, as do all the folks at ZLM. —David

**A life well-lived**

Dear ZLM,

For my 87<sup>th</sup> birthday, my dear children and friends at church asked me which missionary endeavor I wished them to donate to in my honor. (What 87-year-old needs more “stuff”?) I immediately replied: Zola Levitt Ministries. Here’s the check. Please use it for God’s glory and to bless Israel. —B.N. (TX)

Dear B.N.,

Happy 87<sup>th</sup> Birthday! You are such a beautiful example of a life well-lived. Thank you for believing in this ministry and acknowledging our value by donating your birthday funds to ZLM. Be assured that your gift will be spent spreading the good news of Messiah, particularly in Israel. (See p.13’s TJF Report.) —Kirsten

(continued next page)



## So annoying!

Dear ZLM,

As a program viewer, I find it so annoying that you ask for support many times on one program. ONE time in a positive manner is best. You are wasting TV time repeating it. —P.W. (OR)

Dear P.W.,

If even a tenth of our viewers regularly supported this outreach on a regular basis, we'd never have to mention fundraising needs again. **As it is, only 3%–4% lend a hand.** We're just thankful that we haven't needed to interrupt our weekly programming for fundraising marathons like so many others. Thanks for watching. —Kirsten

## Listen before you buy

Dear ZLM,

What a pleasure to see Zola teaching on *The First Christians* refreshed series. You have a “winner” with Zola himself teaching again.

I don't know what is planned for the Harts and their singing on the program, but I would like to hear more. It's hard for me to purchase their music CD if I can't first hear their music. Have you considered this? —Dr. B.J.W. (PA)

Dear B.J.W.,

Our new CD *Zion Song* contains Zola's compositions that we have sung on the program over the past three years. The arrangements and orchestrations are lush and beautifully done by Sammy Davenport (who also creates music for our TV programs). If you missed hearing them on the show, you can sample them (and any of Zola's music) at [levitt.com/music](http://levitt.com/music). —David ★

↑  
To  
Index

## *Zion Song* music CD

During his lifetime, Zola Levitt composed over 200 Spirit-filled songs. This rich legacy was revived when musicians David and Kirsten Hart became the studio hosts for *Zola Levitt Presents* in 2017. You have likely heard them sing on the program. To fully appreciate their gifts, tour Israel with them and hear them sing on the Mount of Olives or crossing the Sea of Galilee.



On *Zion Song*, David and Kirsten sing 11 songs written by Zola and arranged and orchestrated by Sammy Davenport, hopefully the first of many beautiful tributes to Zola's musical legacy. Television viewers won't see *Zion Song* ads until we offer it when the series *Joshua: More than a Conqueror* debuts in January 2020. **However, you can get your copy now!**

**JUST  
RELEASED!**  
([sample here](#))



# Detecting Blood at Crime Scenes

SCIENCE: BY SHOSHANNA SOLOMON (r) TimesOfIsrael.com



At crime scenes, forensic analysts work alongside investigators to collect evidence and analyze it for chemical, biological, and physical markers, such as DNA. Now, researchers at the Beersheba-based Ben-Gurion University of the Negev have found a way to do the job better with a device they developed made up of luminol—a chemical substance used by criminologists to detect blood and proteins—and nanosized particles of gold or silver, which amplify the emission of light when blood spots are detected.

Luminol reacts with microscopic bits of biological residue invisible to the naked eye, which then emit light, revealing their presence.

But luminol is not a very good emitter of light, so the Ben-Gurion University (BGU) researchers set out to find ways to enhance its ability to emit light.

Putting luminol in one syringe and gold and silver particles in another, they created a tube-like device that is fed by both syringes on its sides. **When forensic analysts suspect blood at a certain location, they place a sample on the edge of the tube.** The mixture absorbs the light emitted from the luminol and then re-emits it, with a stronger light, that makes it easier to see, said Dr. Alina Karabchevsky of the Electro-Optics and Photonics Engineering Department, School of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Ilse Katz Institute for Nanoscale Science & Technology at BGU, who developed the technology.



*inset:* Dr. Alina Karabchevsky



Gathering forensic evidence

The device that Karabchevsky and her team invented not only increases the chemiluminescence intensity several-fold but also prolongs the glow time of luminol, enabling the detection of much smaller blood samples at a forensic scene.

"Identifying trace quantities of blood can increase the efficiency and accuracy of a forensic investigation of a crime scene,

but requires more sensitive detectors than those that are currently available," said Netta Cohen, CEO of BGN Technologies, the technology transfer arm of the university. ★

# Fat Cells and Melanoma



MEDICINE: AMERICAN FRIENDS OF TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY—AFTAU.org

Researchers at Tel Aviv University, led by Prof. Carmit Levy and Dr. Tamar Golan of the Department of Human Genetics and Biochemistry at TAU's Sackler School of Medicine, have discovered that **fat cells allow melanoma cells to penetrate the dermis, from which they spread, causing fatal metastases in vital organs.**

"We have answered a major question that has preoccupied scientists for years," explains Prof. Levy. "What makes melanoma change form, turning aggressive and violent? Locked in the skin's outer layer (the epidermis), melanoma is very treatable; it is still Stage 1, it has not penetrated the dermis to spread through blood vessels to other parts of the body, and it can simply be removed without further damage."

Melanoma turns fatal when it "wakes up," sending cancer cells to the dermis layer of skin (below the epidermis) and metastasizing in vital organs. **Blocking the transformation of melanoma is one of the primary targets of cancer research today, and we now know that fat cells are involved in this change."**

The researchers examined dozens of biopsy samples taken from melanoma patients at Wolfson Medical Center and Tel Aviv Medical Center and observed a suspicious phenomenon: fat cells near the tumor sites.

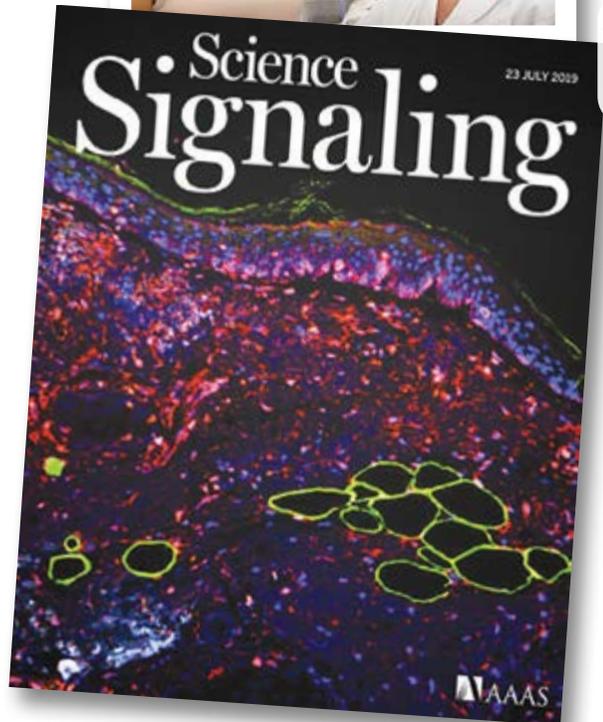
"We asked ourselves what fat cells were doing there and began to investigate," adds Prof. Levy. "We placed the fat cells on a petri dish near melanoma cells and followed the interactions between them."

The researchers observed fat cells transferring proteins called cytokines, which affect gene expression, to the melanoma cells.

"Our experiments have shown that the main effect of cytokines is to reduce the expression of a gene called miRNA211, which inhibits the expression of a melanoma receptor of TGF beta, a protein that is always present in the skin," says Prof. Levy. "The tumor absorbs a high concentration of TGF beta, which stimulates melanoma cells and renders them aggressive."



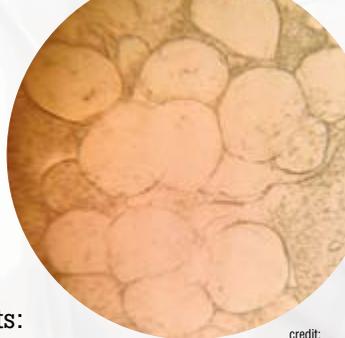
credit: Prof. Carmit Levy/AFTAU



**Top:** Prof. Carmit Levy (left) and Dr. Tamar Golan  
**Bottom:** Melanocytes in the study, stained with a fluorescent dye, on the cover of the *Science Signaling* issue.

(continued next page)





credit:  
Laurararas,  
Wikimedia  
Commons

**“We found the process to be reversible in the laboratory:** When we removed the fat cells from the melanoma, the cancer cells calmed down and stopped migrating,” adds Prof. Levy.

A trial of mouse models of melanoma yielded similar results: When miRNA211 was repressed, metastases were found in other organs; re-expressing the gene blocked metastases.

In the search for a potential drug based on the new discovery, the researchers experimented with therapies that are known to inhibit cytokines and TGF beta, but which have never before been used to treat melanoma.

“We are talking about substances that are currently being studied as possible treatments for pancreatic cancer, and are also in clinical trials for prostate, breast, ovarian, and bladder cancers,” Dr. Golan said. “We saw that they restrained the metastatic process, and that the melanoma returned to its relatively ‘calm’ and dormant state.”

“Our findings can serve as a basis for the development of new drugs to halt the spread of melanoma — therapies that already exist, but were never used for this purpose,” concludes Prof. Levy. ★

Crossword December 2019:  
***Feasts of Our Lord—  
Shadows of Things to Come***  
*(answers on p. 35)*

**ACROSS**

2. Ye shall dwell in \_\_\_ seven days... (Lev. 23:42)
4. ...in the \_\_\_ of an eye... (1 Cor. 1:52)
6. In the 14th day of the 1st month at even is the Lord's \_\_\_. (Lev. 23:5)
7. ...there shall be a day of \_\_\_\_\_. (Lev. 23:27)
13. And the \_\_\_ shall come to Zion... (Isaiah 59:20)
15. Let no man therefore \_\_\_ you... (Col. 2:16)
16. ...ye shall proclaim to be holy \_\_\_\_\_. (Lev. 23:2)
17. ...shall be the feast of \_\_\_\_\_. (Lev. 23:34)
19. Which are a \_\_\_ of things to come... (Col. 2:17)
20. ...the \_\_\_ is truly plenteous... (Matt. 9:37)
21. And when the day of \_\_\_ was fully come... (Acts 2:1)
22. ...for the \_\_\_ things are passed away. (Rev. 21:4)

**DOWN**

1. ...to make an atonement for the \_\_\_ of Israel... (Lev. 16:24)
3. ...ye shall bring a sheaf of the \_\_\_\_\_. (Lev. 23:10)
5. ...is the feast of \_\_\_ bread... (Lev. 23:6)
8. ...Behold the \_\_\_ of God... (John 1:29)
9. Command the children of \_\_\_\_\_. (Lev. 24:2)
10. These are the \_\_\_ of the Lord... (Lev. 23:4)
11. ...a memorial of blowing of \_\_\_\_\_. (Lev. 23:24)
12. But every man in his own \_\_\_\_\_. (1 Cor. 15:23)
14. ...This cup is the new \_\_\_ in my blood... (Luke 22:20)
18. ...they shall call His name \_\_\_\_\_. (Matt. 1:23)





## 7 Facts the Media Ignore

[ElderOfZiyon.blogspot.com](http://ElderOfZiyon.blogspot.com)

Here are six basic facts about Israelis, and one about Palestinians, that are rarely mentioned in the media or universities. This absence causes a major gap in Western understanding of the conflict.

- 1. Israelis desperately want peace and to be accepted as a normal nation in the Middle East.** Israelis have made serious sacrifices for peace with Egypt and the Palestinians. But they yearn for peace that is not at the expense of Israeli security.
- 2. No one in Israel wants to rule over Palestinians.** Israel has tried to avoid that by withdrawing from Gaza and by allowing Palestinian autonomy in Area A of the West Bank and to some extent in Area B. Gaza provides the worst-case scenario of unilateral withdrawal.
- 3. Almost no one in Israel wants to withdraw to the 1967 lines.** The human cost of doing that is unacceptable. Pretty much everyone agrees that some territories will remain under Israeli rule, perhaps with land swaps. The vast majority are against controlling 100% of the territories, and a vast majority are also against dismantling the homes of half a million people.
- 4. Israelis deserve human rights as much as Palestinians do.** Israel wants to provide as many human rights for Palestinians as possible without compromising the security of Israeli citizens, who also deserve human rights. **All of Israel's security measures that upset people (e.g., border barriers) have been put in place to save lives.**
- 5. Racism exists in Israel but is no worse than in other Western countries.** The Palestinian issue is

not a race issue at all from Israel's perspective—it is a security issue.

- 6. Israel can do better.** In general, Israel strives to do better, even in the face of vicious world opinion. Even when no one will notice. Western militaries study Israel's methods for waging war while minimizing casualties of civilians. No one in Israel wants innocent Arabs to die.
- 7. Palestinians have had 25 years since Oslo to teach their children peace, but they have done the exact opposite.** Violence has been reduced, not for any moral reason but because terror is seen as counterproductive at this time. Palestinians still teach their people that violence is a legitimate, moral option, and that terrorists are heroes.

Folks who say that Israel must make all the concessions are not serious about peace. Calling Israelis "Nazis," calling Zionism "racism," or accusing Israel of "apartheid" are not serious arguments, and people who insist on those designations are only interested in demonizing the Jewish state. They are either anti-Semites or deluded.

If the West reported these basic facts, the number of people susceptible to anti-Semitic arguments would fall dramatically.

All these points are obvious to Israelis and anyone who knows Israel. But rarely are any of these basic concepts mentioned in Western media reports or in textbooks. That gap between truth and what is reported is a major impediment to peace.

The real story is not hard to uncover. But the fact that it is not readily available is a scandal. ★

# Why Jelly Doughnuts Are Eaten During Hanukkah



BY EMELYN RUDE (r) TIME.com

credit: Yoninah, Wikimedia Commons



Powdered and iced *sufganiyot* for sale in Jerusalem before Hanukkah

An Israeli folktale goes like this: After Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden, God tried to cheer them up by giving them jelly doughnuts. Scholars agree that the tale has zero basis in Scripture, but the idea that doughnuts bring joy enjoys consensus across cultures. Germans eat *Berliners* on New Year's Eve for good luck, the Pennsylvania Dutch mark Fat (Shrove) Tuesday with fried *fasnachts*, and people in Latin America and Spain enjoy *buñuelos* on Christmas.

The Israeli version is the *sufganiyah* (pl. *sufganiyot*) — not only the Lord's consolation prize, but also a staple of annual Hanukkah celebrations. The fried treats are a good fit for a holiday focused on oil, commemorating the miracle of one night's supply of oil lasting for eight. *Sufganiyot* are typically fried balls of yeast dough filled with strawberry jelly and dusted heavily with powdered sugar.

But jelly doughnuts weren't a part of a typical diet when the Hanukkah miracle happened, and the miraculous oil isn't the whole story behind why they're eaten on the holiday.

The word *sufganiyot* can be traced to the Greek word *sufan*, meaning "spongy" or "fried." This could perhaps be where these treats got their name; **similar fried balls of dough have been eaten to commemorate Hanukkah for centuries by Jews in North Africa.**

But these Moroccan and Algerian treats didn't have the modern *sufganiyot's* characteristic jelly filling, which is where migrants from Central Europe came in. The first fried pastries in European history typically contained savory fillings, like meat or mushrooms. But colonies established in the Caribbean in the 16<sup>th</sup> century brought cheap, slave-produced sugar and led to a renaissance in fruit preserves and from that a renaissance in sweet stuffed pastries. The

*(continued next page)*



first known recipe for a jelly doughnut is found in the 1485 German cookbook *Kuchenmeisterei* ("Mastery of the Kitchen"), one of the first cookbooks run off Gutenberg's printing press. The treat was made by packing jam between two round slices of bread and deep-frying the whole thing in lard.

From its Germanic origins, the dessert quickly conquered most of Europe. It became *krapfen* to the Austrians, the *Berliners* to the Germans, and *paczki* to the Polish. Substituting *schmaltz* (goose or chicken fat) for the decidedly un-Kosher lard, Jews also enjoyed the dessert, particularly Polish Jews, who called them *ponchiks* (*paczki*) and began eating them regularly on Hanukkah. When these groups migrated to Israel in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, they brought their delicious jelly-filled doughnuts with them, where they mingled with the North African fried-dough tradition.

But it would take more than just the mingling of Jewish cultures to make the *sufganiyot* today's powerful symbol of Israeli Hanukkah. Credit must be given to the Israeli *Histadrut*: Founded in 1920 in British-mandated Palestine, the national labor group's aim was to organize the economic activities of the Jewish workers in the region. Founded on Russian socialist principles, full employment was among *Histadrut*'s aims, as was the integration of the new Jewish immigrants making their ways to the country's shores.

The *latke*, the classic fried potato pancake that was already associated with Hanukkah celebrations, is a dish that can easily be made at home. A perfectly filled and fried *sufganiyah* is much more difficult. Even the most talented home cooks agree that the treat tastes better when left up to the professionals. Which is exactly what the *Histadrut* wanted: a Hanukkah treat that involved professionals.

As many important Jewish holidays are concentrated in autumn, the end of that season brought a lull in work in Jewish quarters. By pushing *sufganiyot* as a symbol of the Festival of Lights, as opposed to the DIY-friendly *latke*, the *Histadrut* could encourage the creation of more jobs for Jewish workers.

By all accounts, the *Histadrut*'s efforts to promote the jelly doughnut worked. In modern Israel, over 20 million *sufganiyot*

are consumed in the weeks around the holiday, which averages out to over two doughnuts per citizen. More people enjoy the fried treat than fast on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, and the Israel Defense Forces purchase more than 50,000 of the doughnuts each day of the eight-day holiday to boost the morale of its troops.

*Sufganiyot* can now be found throughout the United States as well during Hanukkah, produced by Jewish and non-Jewish bakeries alike. After all, as hungry folks all over the world have been discovering for centuries, no one can say no to a truly delicious jelly doughnut. ★



Potato *latkes*

credit: Mark Mitchell - Flickr

# Discovering Emmaus— the Town Where Jesus Appeared after Resurrection



ARCHAEOLOGY: BY EMILY JONES (r) CBN.com



*The Supper at Emmaus*, painting by Caravaggio (1571–1610), National Gallery, London

Archaeologists in Israel say they may have discovered the true location of Emmaus, the Biblical town where Jesus first appeared to two of His followers after His crucifixion and resurrection.

*Haaretz* reports that researchers found the massive 2,200-year-old walls of a Hellenistic fortification believed to have been built by the Seleucid general who defeated Judah Maccabee, the Jewish leader spoken of in the Hanukkah story.

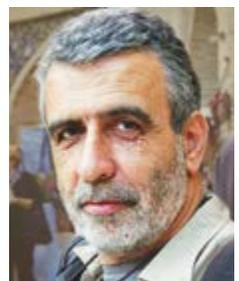
Since 2017, a Franco-Israeli team has been excavating a hill overlooking Jerusalem known as Kiriath Yearim, an area believed to be where the Ark of the Covenant was kept for 20 years before being taken to Jerusalem by King David.

Tel Aviv University archaeologist Israel Finkelstein and Thomas Römer, a professor of Biblical studies at the College de France, argue that the hill of Kiriath Yearim and the adjacent town of Abu Ghosh should be identified as Emmaus.

“The importance of this site, its dominant position over Jerusalem, was felt again and again through time: in the eighth century B.C., in the Hellenistic period, and again after the First Jewish Revolt and the sack of Jerusalem in A.D. 70,” Finkelstein said.

Judah Maccabee, a priest who led the Jewish revolt against the Seleucid empire, was defeated and killed here in 160 B.C. by General Bacchides and

*(continued next page)*



**left:** Professor of Biblical Studies, Thomas Römer (College de France) and **right:** archaeologist Israel Finkelstein (Tel Aviv University)



To  
Index

the Seleucid army. Bacchides fortified the towns surrounding Jerusalem with large walls, including the Biblical town of Emmaus. Finkelstein and Römer believe they may have found the walls built to fortify Emmaus.

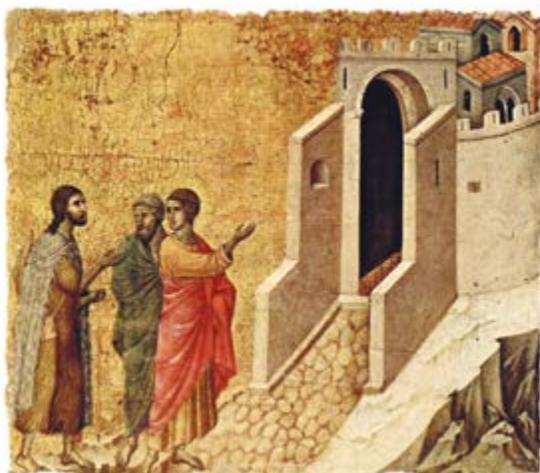


### Their discovery has huge significance for Christians worldwide.

According to the Gospel of Luke, Jesus appeared before two disciples who were walking to Emmaus.

*"While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him." — Luke 24:14–16*

Jesus walked with them for some time, but not until Jesus broke bread with them did the disciples recognize Him.



Jesus and the two disciples *On the Road to Emmaus* (1308–1311), tempera on wood by Duccio di Buoninsegna (1255–1319), Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena, Italy

*"And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight." — Luke 24:31*

Luke says that the village of Emmaus was 60 *stadia* from Jerusalem, a measure that translates to approximately seven miles, which is about the distance separating Jerusalem from the hill of Kiriath Yearim and Abu Ghosh today.

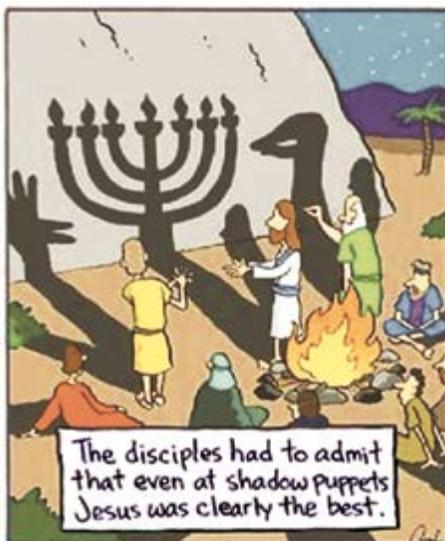
"Geographically, the distance to Jerusalem fits well, so I think that Kiriath Yearim could have been the Emmaus of the New Testament," Römer concludes.

However, Benjamin Isaac, emeritus professor of ancient history from Tel Aviv University, has his doubts about the discovery.

"Finkelstein and Römer have a good case archaeologically, geographically, and topographically," he said. However, Isaac, who was not a part of the study, says there are at least two other sites nearby with strong claims to the town of Emmaus.

Finkelstein and Römer are publishing a paper about their findings in the journal *New Studies in the Archaeology of Jerusalem and its Region*, and will present it at a conference of the same name in Jerusalem. ★

### INHERIT THE BIRTH BY CUYLER BLACK



# Confronting UNRWA's Anti-Semitism at the UN

BY ARNON GROISS, DAVID BEDEIN (r) JPost.com

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination calling out the Palestinian Authority for anti-Semitism in its textbooks coincides with the 5-year renewal in December 2019 for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) mandate.

This year, for the first time, there will be no automatic renewal.

## Connection between the PA textbooks and UNRWA

On Aug. 1, 2000, Dr. Na'im Abu Al-Hummus, then Palestinian education minister, explained that the PA had contracted with UNRWA to exclusively supply schoolbooks for all UNRWA schools in Judea, Samaria, Gaza, and Jerusalem.

That very day, the PA provided the Center for Near East Policy Research (CFNEPR) with its first 80 schoolbooks, and the center has, over the last 19 years, received and examined all 365 schoolbooks that the PA has supplied.

The CFNEPR found that PA textbooks used by UNRWA have been indoctrinating virulent anti-Semitism into the hearts and minds of refugees from the 1948 War of Independence and their descendants.

## UNRWA: 321,000 students in 370 schools

UNRWA uses the PA textbooks for all UNRWA schools and relies on new schoolbooks produced by the PA. UNRWA never questions whether PA schoolbooks should be used by a UN agency that must adhere to the core principles of the United Nations.

The CFNEPR, which has reviewed all PA textbooks since the PA began to issue its own schoolbooks, finds that PA schoolbooks contain consistent, crude, anti-Israel, anti-Zionist, and even anti-Semitic expressions, contradicting UNRWA's neutral character as a UN organization. **By using the PA schoolbooks with no omissions or**



**amendments, UNRWA has become a full partner of the PA's anti-Israeli, anti-Semitic indoctrination.**

Anti-Semitism in the Arab world—part and parcel of the current violence—can trace its roots to earlier periods. It exists in most Arab curricula though to a lesser extent in Palestinian textbooks likely because Palestinian textbook publishing was partly financed by Western donor states.

## Donor nations can intervene in UNRWA education policies

The Palestinian Authority issued a history textbook for grade 10 in which The Protocols of the Elders of Zion were described as the confidential resolutions of the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897. Following a report by the CFNEPR, the Belgian Embassy in Tel Aviv asked for the relevant Arabic page accompanied by an English translation. A few months later, the PA issued a new version of the book ... without the said description.

In considering the UNRWA mandate renewal, UN donor nations will now have ample opportunity to ask whether UNRWA will continue to teach such material, and what it intends to do with it, after recognizing the venomous character of the PA texts. Anti-Semitism has been promoted by UNRWA schools for far too long.

The two-month UN debate on UNRWA policies before the UNRWA mandate's review represented a healthy initiative of the UN General Assembly.

*David Bedein is director, Israel Resource News Agency at The Center for Near East Policy Research. ★*



# JEWISH HUMOR, ETC.



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

## The Talking Centipede

David's favorite Hanukkah present is a rare, talking centipede. It came in a little white box that doubles as the centipede's house.

David decides he'd like to take his new pet to *shul* (synagogue) with him, so he goes over to the box and asks the centipede, "Would you like to go to *shul* with me today? We will have a good time."

But there is no answer from inside the box. This bothers David a bit, so he waits a few minutes and then asks again, "How about going to *shul* with me and receive some blessings?" But there is still no answer from his new pet. David waits a few more minutes thinking about the situation and then decides to invite the centipede one last time.

This time, David puts his face right up against the centipede's box and shouts, "Hey in there! Would you like to go to *shul* with me?"

This time, a little voice comes from inside the box: "I heard you the first time, David! I'm putting on my shoes!" ★

### Answer Key for December 2019 Crossword (p.28)

#### Across:

2. Booths  
4. Twinkling  
6. Passover  
7. Atonement  
13. Redeemer  
15. Judge

16. Convocations  
17. Tabernacles  
19. Shadow  
20. Harvest  
21. Pentecost  
22. Former

#### Down:

1. Children  
3. Firstfruits  
5. Unleavened  
8. Lamb  
9. Israel  
10. Feasts

11. Trumpets  
12. Order  
14. Testament  
18. Emmanuel



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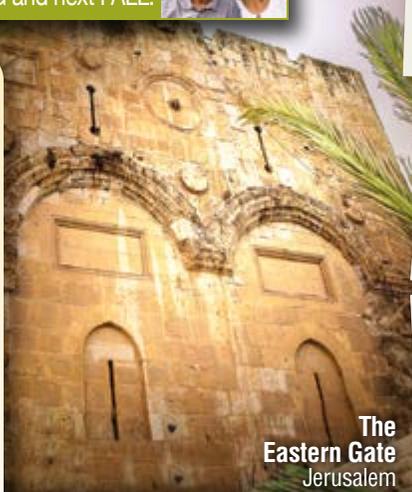
**Grand Petra:** Oct. 19–Nov. 1  
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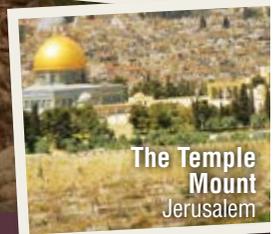
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Back to p. 15



Back to p. 21