



Levitt LETTER

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

— ROMANS 10:1

inside: **What Is
Heresy?** p.12

Sodom: Science Proves the Bible... Yet Again

By Stoyan Zaimov / ChristianPost.com

Scientists have found that a “superheated blast from the skies” destroyed cities near the Dead Sea 3,700 years ago, which Biblical analysts say echoes the destruction of Sodom.

The findings were revealed recently by archaeologist Phillip Silvia of Trinity South-west University in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Scientists used radiocarbon dating and unearthed minerals that instantly crystallized at high temperatures at what used to be cities and farming settlements north of the Dead Sea, suggesting that a massive airburst, possibly by a meteor, destroyed communities in a 15-mile-wide circular plain.

Silvia said that following the cataclysmic event, people did not return to the region for 600 to 700 years.

Researchers have been studying five large sites in Middle Ghor (present-day Jordan),

(continued p.2)

REMEMBER:
Valentine's Day is Thursday, February 14.

Why Do Non-Jews Fight For Israel?

Israel Today

If Israel is a racist state that only benefits its Jewish residents, then why are so many non-Jews ready to lay down their lives for it?

And not just the millions of Bible-believing Christians around the world who share a deep devotion to Israel's well-being. There are a great many non-Jews living in the Holy Land who put it all on the line every day to keep the Jewish state safe.

Their stories are not often told since they contradict the popular narrative that Israel is an apartheid state that oppresses its minorities. But an apartheid state doesn't open up its top military combat units to its



Photo: Nir Gal/DI Spokesperson's Unit



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Sodom *continued from cover*

which are believed to have been continuously occupied for at least 2,500 years, until they suddenly collapsed.

Some of the strongest evidence for a low-altitude meteor explosion was found at the remains of the Bronze Age city Tall el-Hammam, where radiocarbon dating shows that the mud-brick walls of nearly all structures were suddenly wiped out 3,700 years ago.

Other finds show that the outer layers of pieces of pottery melted into glass, a result of extremely high temperatures.



Dr. Steven Collins at Tall el-Hammam—the site of historic Sodom in the Jordan Valley



The Dead Sea (Possibly, a low-altitude meteor explosion around 3,700 years ago destroyed cities, villages, and farmland north of the Sea, rendering the region uninhabitable for 600–700 years.)

Other archaeological research, such as a 2013 article by Dr. Steven Collins, reveals that the Tall el-Hammam site offers evidence that it could have been the Biblical city of Sodom.

The fiery destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is famously depicted in Genesis 19, which says that “God destroyed the cities of the plain” with “dense smoke rising from the land, like smoke from a furnace.” The Biblical account also mentions that God overthrew “all those living in the cities” along with “the vegetation in the land.”

Silvia and Collins authored a paper in 2015 in which they argued that “the physical evidence from Tall el-Hammam and neighboring sites **exhibits signs of a highly destructive concussive and thermal event that one might expect from what is described in Genesis 19.**”

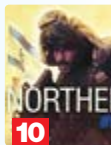
“The destruction not only of Tall el-Hammam (Sodom), but also its neighbors (Gomorrah and the other cities of the plain) was most likely caused by a meteoritic airburst event,” the authors added. ★



Overhead view of excavation at Tall el-Hammam



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Passing the Torch

ISRAEL TODAY

As Aviel Schneider took up the editor's pencil, Ludwig, the founder of *Israel Today*, told his son:

"You do things differently, and that's good. It's only natural. I was born in a different land than you, and in a different time. We all knew that the world around us was changing, but also that the Bible and God's promises remained the same. Life is a journey in which trends and the way we present things change. At the same time, the direction remains the same."

I imagine that Zola gave Mark Levitt similar advice in 2006, after being diagnosed with lung cancer. —Editor ★



left: Zola Levitt (1938–2006)
right: Mark Levitt

How Rabbis Avoid the Messiah

Classic Zola
from 1995
24 years ago



Detail of *Talmudic Discussion*, oil on panel by Carl Schleicher (1825–1903)

In avoiding the Bible's evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus, some Jewish scholars have created Biblical confusion. One such instance is a [1995] article in *The International Jerusalem Post* by Moshe Kohn, who teaches Jewish law and history and, once in a while, Scripture. His scriptural teaching on the Feasts of Israel made me a bit suspicious, particularly his use of dots (ellipses) in quoting the Bible. I want to point out how rearranging the schedule of Jewish festivals has resulted in obscuring their obvious fulfillment in the person of Jesus Christ.

You may wonder how this matter relates to us Christians in today's world. It is one piece of evidence in how the Jewish people have been led to depend on sources outside of Scripture (in this case, the Talmudic Sages) to determine God's instructions for their lives. Over the ages, scholars and sages have molded Judaism to exclude the idea of Jesus as Messiah, even to the extreme of altering their own festivals.

The Four Feasts

First, we should briefly review the very meaningful first four Feasts given to Israel in Leviticus 23.

- **Passover** occurs on the fourteenth day of the first month (Nissan).
- **Unleavened Bread** occurs on Nissan 15.
- **First Fruits** occurs on the following Sunday.
- **Pentecost** occurs fifty days after First Fruits.

Christians are familiar with this schedule and especially thrill to learn that our

(continued next page)





Lord fulfilled each feast in the appropriate manner:

- He was **crucified** on Passover,
- **buried** on Unleavened Bread,
- **raised** on First Fruits, and
- He **sent the Holy Spirit** on Pentecost.

I believe that the Lord will go on fulfilling the Feasts with the Rapture on the Feast of Trumpets, the Second Coming on the Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*), and setting up the Kingdom on the Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*). This elegant and important Bible study is available in our booklet *The Seven Feasts of Israel* (described on [p. 20](#)).

The Consternation of the Rabbis

Early on, in the first century, the Jewish people must have seen these amazing coincidences, and evidently great numbers were won to the Lord. After all, on the Sunday of First Fruits, the unsaved Jews and the Messianic Jews must have passed each other on the sidewalks as they went to their various festival worship services. Surely a Messianic Jew would point out how the Sunday of First Fruits so perfectly represented the resurrection of Yeshua. *"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept"* (1 Corinthians 15:20).

The rabbis must have been in consternation trying to answer the very persuasive arguments of Believers in the Lord. Scripture is Scripture, after all. Torah is Torah. (The Torah equals the first five books of the Bible and is deeply respected by the rabbis.) The first task in avoiding those embarrassing questions was to find an escape from First Fruits and Pentecost.



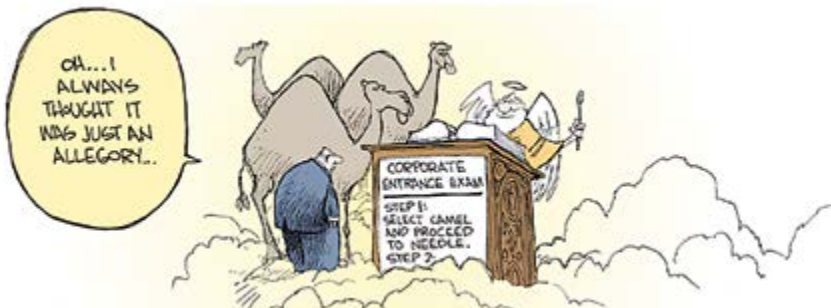
Detail of *Curses Against the Pharisees*, painting by James Tissot (1836-1902)

Next month, we'll examine how the rabbis approached that task. ★



NON SEQUITUR BY WILEY

GOCOMICS.COM/NONSEQUITUR



(See Mark 10:25.)

He'll Make A Way

Kirsten Hart
Studio co-host of
Zola Levitt Presents



People praying under bushes growing out of the Western Wall

A highlight of any Zola Tour is visiting The Wall (*HaKotel* in Hebrew), the Western Wall of the Temple Mount. Until the Temple Mount is open to Jews to pray, *HaKotel* is the closest the Jewish people can get physically to where the Holy of Holies in the Temple is believed to have been located. Every day, thousands of people pray and worship there. Orthodox Jews say their prayers alongside Christian men and women in a stunning picture of faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

What God Provides

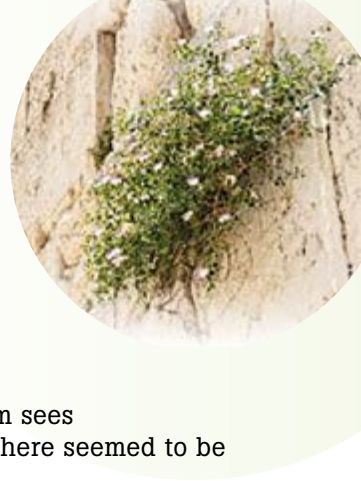
Mount Moriah (the Temple Mount) is where God told Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice thousands of years ago. In a world that considered child sacrifice necessary for pleasing small “g” gods, God asked Abraham to kill his promised son, Isaac. Abraham, being the very first Hebrew, had no laws or “traditions” to consult. He didn’t know what God would require of His followers. What must have gone through Abraham’s head and heart when God told him, “Take your son . . . to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you” (Genesis 22:2)? Depression? Confusion? I would have been *angry*. Really, really angry.

I can imagine Abraham grumbling all the way up the mountain, “So much for
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“Abraham Offering Up Isaac” from
Story of the Bible, 1873





the whole ‘Father of Nations’ deal.” And what conversation besides verses 7–8 could he have had with Isaac, his young-adult son?

We all know the story. Isaac is literally bound and lying on the altar. (How did Abraham explain doing *that*?) Then, Abraham, knife in air, ready to plunge it into his beloved child, hears the voice of an angel. His faith is confirmed: God *does* provide a sacrifice. Abraham sees a ram, caught in a thicket. And God made a way when there seemed to be no way out.

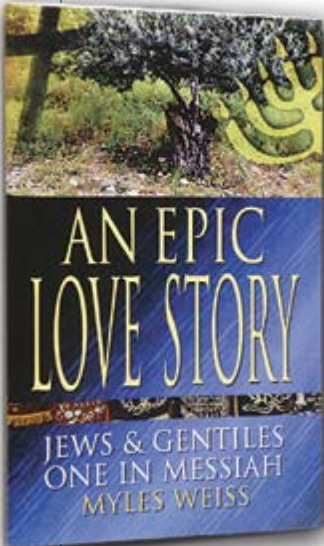
What We Take Away

Everyone who visits the Western Wall takes away a unique experience. Some place a tightly folded prayer slip into a crevice between the ancient stones. Some shed tears of sorrow or joy. What do I take away? This: The reminder that God always makes a path for us, even though we don’t see a way out.

I easily recall that promise as I look around *HaKotel* because from between those stones (with no soil) grow caper bushes. Those edible bushes growing out of rocks provide a visual reminder that God can do miracles for us today. How awesome for the God of the Universe to provide a living picture of provision on an ancient stone wall!

If God can provide a way for Abraham and Isaac, He can do the same for you. Whatever you’re facing this month, God can make a way even when there seems to be none. Even if you’re *that close* to giving up, He can open a door you never thought possible. Abraham trusted God in the midst of a seemingly hopeless situation. You must trust Him too.

I pray shalom and blessings to you and your family. ★



An Epic Love Story *study booklet by Myles Weiss*

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

This readable booklet tackles topics including:

1. Is Jesus Coming Soon?
2. Why Did Judaism and Christianity Part Ways?
3. God’s 9-11
4. Turning Points in the Modern Era
5. The Olive Tree as a Modern Parable

Rescuers (continued from last month)



BY JONATHAN BLAUSTEIN (r) NYTimes.com

We continue our profiles of “Rescuers,” non-Jewish Europeans who risked torture and death to save Jews during the Holocaust. Documented by Malka Drucker, a children’s book author, and Gay Block, a fine art portrait photographer, we hope that these stories will inspire others to stand strong in difficult times. (Our monthly series began in the [November 2018 Levitt Letter, p. 10.](#))

Rescuers Johtje and Aart Vos

Aart and Johtje (nee Johanna Kuyper) Vos lived in Laren, an artist colony near Amsterdam, and their home became a reliable stop on the underground. Her grandfather had been the prime minister of the Netherlands, and Johtje and her family were devout members of the Dutch Reformed Church.

Throughout the war, Johtje and Aart saved 36 Jews — as many as 14 at a time. “We had mattresses all over the floor, and they had to be camouflaged in case the Germans came,” Johtje said.

The couple lived on a dead-end street that backed up to the woods, easing the task of transporting refugees discreetly. **Aart constructed a tunnel about 55 yards long from the back of the Vos house into the woods.** The righteous couple also received help from a local police chief who would give advance warnings about Gestapo raids.

“Holland was like a family and part of that family was in danger,” Aart recalled. “In this case, the Jewish part. The Germans were threatening our family. We weren’t thinking, ‘What shall we do?’ We just did.”

Rescuer Zofia Baniecka

Warsaw residents Zofia Baniecka and her family were integral to the Polish resistance even after Zofia’s father was killed by a Russian bomb in 1941. In addition to relaying guns and other materials to resistance fighters, Zofia and her mother rescued over 50 Jews in their home.

Unlike some other rescuers, she and her mother evaded detection the entire time they fought the Nazis. “I was never interrogated,” Zofia said. “I was just lucky ... because **I kept people and guns in my house from the**

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Photo: courtesy Gay Block



Johtje (1909–2007) and Aart Vos (d. 1990)



Zofia Baniecka (1917–1993)



winter of 1941 until the Polish uprising in August 1944.

“Many people saved my belief in humanity, and that is why it is important for people to know about this time in Poland during the war — that there were those of us who did try to save Jews,” she said. “It is necessary for the children to know that there were such people.”

In the 1980s, Zofia actively participated in Poland’s Solidarity movement.

[These stories of courageous gentiles/Christians will continue in next month’s Levitt Letter.](#) ★



Why Do Non-Jews Fight For Israel? *continued from cover sidebar*

minorities, nor does it bitterly mourn when they fall on the field of battle.

But that’s what happens day-in and day-out in the Holy Land. The IDF military censor prevents our reporting on a recent incident related to this matter, despite the fact that every Israeli and every Palestinian knows about it, and the foreign press has itself reported on some of the details without repercussion. Suffice it to say that when minority **soldiers fall defending this nation**—these Christians, Druze, and Muslims—they are **mourned by every Israeli just as deeply and sincerely** as any of their Jewish comrades.

So, let the mainstream media claim what they will. A growing number of minority communities realize that they share a

blood bond with the Jewish nation, and are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for the good of the State of Israel.” ★



The IDF includes all sectors of society

Photo: Miriam Alster

Our Shield In Time Of Terror

On the Ground
in Israel
Sarah Liberman



Operation Northern Shield, the current IDF defense operation

I remember the day when we, the general Israeli public, came to know that tunnels had been dug from Gaza into the sovereign State of Israel. It was the morning that a young Israeli soldier guarding the border fence between Israel and Gaza was abducted. Gilad Shalit would remain in captivity for over five years. On the morning of June 25, 2006, early news of an attack on an Israel Defense Forces (IDF) army base in the area of Kerem Shalom near Gaza, started streaming in via the media. It was confusing, as reporters kept repeating “The event is not over,” though the attack had since ceased.



A Hamas operative climbs out of one of the major tunnels (notice the work on the sides of the tunnel)

As the day wore on, we learned that Hamas (the terrorist organization that would seize power in Gaza in 2007) had attacked a base some distance from where Shalit was abducted. Hamas had managed to cause an explosion at the base, and during this diversion, the tank in which Shalit was sitting farther down the border fence was attacked, killing several soldiers. The diversion worked: All attention focused on the attack at the base.

A terrible feeling of panic and horror spread through the Land as we learned that Hamas was able to capture a soldier and take him to Gaza, alive. We knew about the cameras that monitor the border fence 24/7 and observers who watch that feed live, in real time. Those observers said that they watched three men cross the fence into Gaza and assumed they were Hamas terrorists. The three men quickly disappeared. How did they vanish and where did they go?



Hamas tunnels can accommodate two-way motor traffic

More details arrived. Though the base attack came from *within* Israel, there was no sign

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of a border breach. Instead, the terrorists had emerged from an underground tunnel 100 yards from the base. This element of surprise gave Hamas the upper hand. Gilad was taken to the opening of a different tunnel (on the Gaza side) and quickly moved deep into Gaza City.



Sophisticated reinforcement of Hamas tunnel

A new reality set in. There were tunnels, lots of them, that crossed the border into Israel, and any number of terrorists could appear from them at any time. This threat had to be neutralized. Military “Operation Protective Edge” in 2014 was designed, in part, to destroy these tunnels.

Israel recently launched a new operation — “Northern Shield” — revealing the existence of a similar threat, this time from the north, along Israel’s border with Lebanon. For nine long years, residents of northern border towns such as Metulah and Yiftach have complained to authorities that they hear digging noises at night. They even recorded them for the media. I remember hearing the recordings: sounds of heavy machinery and methodical thuds. But they were told that tunnels were unlikely because of the rocky hard soil in the northern mountains.

Yet, these tunnels do exist. The IDF says they have known about them since 2014. The tunnels were dug by Hezbollah, another terror organization, using knowledge gained by Hamas. But these tunnels are sophisticated, connecting to electricity, water, and communications. While each tunnel in Gaza’s sandy soil is estimated to cost several million dollars, the terrain and soil in the north is much harder and very rocky. Hezbollah’s tunnels are also larger and deeper, costing significantly more. Hezbollah planned to use the tunnels to attack Israel and capture Israeli civilians living in towns close to the fence.

“Northern Shield” brought a collective sigh of relief. The people in the border towns felt a sense of “I told you so,” but also comfort that this important threat is finally being addressed.

The northern tunnels are numerous and will take time to find and destroy. (Israel plans to leave some intact to show ambassadors, UN forces, etc.) This time, Israel had the element of surprise, and Hezbollah now suffers a big loss, both militarily and financially.

This new operation could easily ignite a war in this very sensitive situation. Matthew 24:6 tells us: *“And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet.”*

Yet, we Israeli Believers have a different promise to look to and pray over regarding this situation. It is found in Isaiah 29:17 — *“Is it not yet a very little while until Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be regarded as a forest?”* As we continue to watch and see how this political and military scenario plays out, let us pray according to THIS promise, and understand that God Himself is our “Northern Shield.”

See related articles on [p. 28](#) and [p. 34](#). ★



IDF soldier surveys disrupted Hamas tunnel construction



What Is Heresy?

Dr. Todd Baker
Zola Levitt Ministries
Staff Theologian



Q. What is heresy and why is it a threat to the Church?

A. Heresy is any belief that contradicts essential (orthodox) teaching*. Church heresy misinterprets or twists Scripture out of context to create a doctrine or belief that contradicts what the Scriptures *actually* and *truly* mean (2 Peter 3:16).

Example: Arius (256–336 A.D.), the father of Arianism, denied the deity of Jesus Christ by twisting certain verses of Scripture out of context. In the end, he contradicted Bible passages where Jesus and the Apostles clearly affirmed that Jesus/Yeshua was God (see John 1:1–2, 14, 8:58; 20:28; Romans 9:5; 1 Timothy 3:16; Colossians 2:9).



Athanasius at the Council of Nicea, Anonymous, William of Tyre manuscripts, 13th century

The opposite of heresy is *orthodoxy*, which comes from the Greek word *orthodoxia* (ὀρθοδοξία) and means “right doctrine.” Used within the context of Biblical truth, “orthodoxy” means all revealed Bible teaching that is given in Scripture as theologically defined by the seven ecumenical councils of the Christian Church from 325 to 787 A.D. Believers accept the creeds adopted by those councils because they are subordinate to the doctrine that Scripture has revealed. We call the body of orthodox Biblical doctrine **the historic essentials of the Christian faith**. They include the deity of Christ, the Trinity, salvation by faith alone, the inerrancy of the Scripture, the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ, His physical return, etc.

Heresy is the denial or contradiction of those historic essentials.

From the moment of its inception, the Church has continually fought the emergence and threat of heresy. Two of the first heresies were **Legalism** and **Gnosticism**. Legalists believe that one can keep the Mosaic Law to earn salvation. Apostle Paul fought Legalism in Galatia. Gnostics deny Christ’s physical incarnation and resurrection from the dead. Apostle John refuted Gnosticism in his epistles.

Several times in the past, heresy has gained prominent positions in the Church. However, *Yeshua HaMashiach* (Jesus Christ) promised the Church’s indestructibility in Matthew 16:18, where He indicated that the truth of God’s Word would preserve the true Church from being destroyed by the powers of Hell with false doctrine and heresy.

Indeed, when the Church edged toward embracing Arianism in the early 4th century, God raised up Athanasius (296–373 A.D.) to defend the orthodox, Biblical view that Christ is God in the flesh (God incarnate). Thankfully, the Church condemned for all time Arius and his heresy at the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.

The word heresy comes from the Greek word *hairesis* (αἵρεσις), which means “division” or “faction” (1 Corinthians 11:19). Originally, the word meant a sect or dissenting group that separated from the whole community. Eventually, those factious groups came to be known for teaching false doctrine and heresy, hence, the cause of their separation. This is exactly the twofold nature of heresy: deception and division. The Bible condemns false doctrine and false teachers. **Heresy is a danger to the Church because it is a work of the flesh and fundamentally counters the Biblical Gospel** (Galatians 5:20). Those who preach contrary to the true Gospel are under the condemnation of God, which Paul made clear in Galatians 1:8–9. ★

* Resource: *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms*



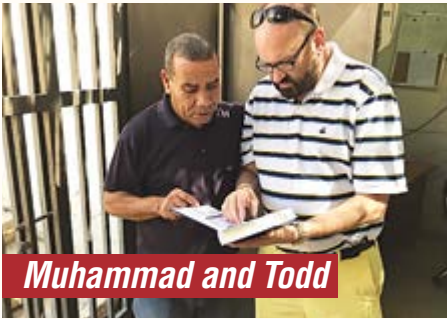
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To Index

Breaking Down Walls

The **To The Jew First** team had a very effective ministry in Tiberias, ancient Jericho, and Jerusalem. In Jericho — where God miraculously brought down the imposing walls (Joshua 6) — I met **Muhammad**, a Muslim open to the Word, at the entrance to the ancient ruins. I showed him a Gospel tract in Arabic that illustrates the life of Jesus from His pre-existence to His Second Coming.



Muhammad and Todd

After I correlated those details to show Muhammad from Scripture some of the Messianic prophecies that Jesus fulfilled, Muhammad was more than happy to accept a Hebrew copy of the Bible that he could read alongside the Arabic tract. He stated that he would take the Bible home and read it, and thanked me many times for giving it to him! May God tear down any walls of resistance in this man's heart and give him the faith to truly believe that Jesus is the Son of God come to die for man's sins and give us eternal life.

The following day was a placid Sabbath in Jerusalem. The Lord did not disappoint this day, either. Our six-member outreach team passed out six Hebrew Bibles to several Arab and Jewish people.

Meeting three Israelis (pictured at right) outside our hotel, we told them how shocked and disappointed we were to have seen a big red sign at the entrance to Jericho warning that Jewish citizens of Israel are not welcomed in the city and any who enter risk death!

Dr. Todd Baker
ZLM Staff Theologian
TJF Team Leader



Itai told me that many such signs exist throughout the “disputed territories” in Israel under PA (Palestinian Authority) control.

I explained to Itai that this PA policy barring Jews mirrored the Nazi policy of *Judenfrei* that they implemented when killing or deporting Eastern European Jews. Once the Nazis had removed all Jews from a particular area, it was declared “*Judenfrei*” — free of Jews.

Our group pointed out to the three young Israelis that God has regathered the Chosen People into their ancient homeland of Israel. He gave it to them *forever* and will never allow them to be removed or uprooted from the land again (Genesis 17:7–8; Amos 9:14–15).

God promised to regather the Jews in His Word, and He is doing it now, in these last days. We told the three that He also promised to send the Messiah to be a Jew from Israel to save from the punishment of sin those who believe Him. God kept this promise too, when He brought His Son Yeshua the Messiah into the world.

All three Israelis were remarkably receptive to our Jewish Gospel message and accepted Complete Hebrew Bibles, Messianic study materials, and Gospel tracts in Hebrew. Each thanked us for the Bibles and truth about Yeshua, and expressed gratitude for our love and support of Israel. ★



Itai, Eden, & Nadav with Todd

Harvesting Low-Hanging Fruit

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



Easy-to-reach fruit that grows on a tree's lower branches inspired the expression *low-hanging fruit* to describe targets or goals that can be easily achieved.

You're already familiar with examples of low-hanging fruit for improving your health. Feeling better physically often begins with improving your diet, sleep, and exercise. Consuming less sugar and white flour, drinking more water, sleeping just an hour more per night, and taking a brisk daily walk could make a world of difference for maintaining God's temple. (1 Cor. 6:19)

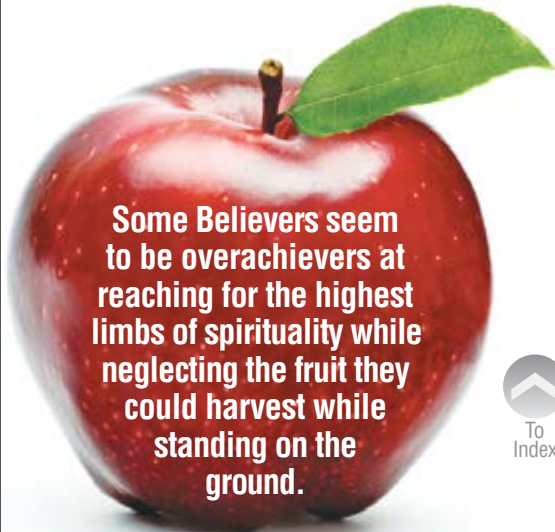
What then, generally speaking, is the low-hanging fruit of sustaining a stable, happy marriage? The answers, of course, vary with circumstances, but the following have worked for mine.

My wife and I make it a point to see off and then warmly welcome each other back home. Taking a few minutes to apply foot lotion at bedtime also scores easy points. Doing the laundry is easier for me than grocery shopping, and I'd rather wash dishes than cook. Since the missus works full time, my shouldering my share means we eat out less often and have better meals than if she did everything singlehandedly.

It should go without saying that communication is key to any team's success. Marriage is so much happier when we stay on the same page via texting, etc. regarding where we're going to be and when. "Find My Friends" is a free app that clues us when the other is working late or stuck on an errand.

Many *Levitt Letter* readers are old hands at healthful living, marriage maintenance, or both. The basics of spiritual sustenance include regular Bible reading, an active prayer life, ministry, and fellowship with

other Believers. Lately, I have been contemplating how a Believer's walk with the Lord is comparable to a marriage in that we can derive abundant benefit with basic effort. Some Believers seem to be over-achievers at reaching for the highest limbs of spirituality while neglecting the fruit they could harvest while standing on the ground.



This ministry very effectively offers low-hanging fruit for the neediest and hungriest to harvest. Libraries and businesses that offer free Internet wi-fi enable ZLMers to access years of *Zola Levitt Presents* programs and *Levitt Letters*. Orthodox Jews researching rumors about Yeshua being their Savior can discreetly explore [levitt.com's FAQs](http://levitt.com/s/faqs) and [archives](http://levitt.com/s/archives). Grandmothers who can't drive to church or fly to Israel can see on-location Bible teaching via their television screens and computer monitors. All for free; all on low branches — easy pickin's, thanks to you! ★



ZLM Bulletin Board



Atheist “Christian” Pastor

The atheist Rev. Gretta Vosper does not believe in God, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit, but she continues to “minister” to her congregation at a United Church of Canada in Toronto: “We’ll be out from underneath that heavy cloud. Now we’ll be able to really fly.” We agree. Without the Holy Spirit, Vosper and her congregation are free to fly into the pits of hell. Vosper’s professed atheism

faced an unprecedented ecclesiastical court hearing until a deal was reached (exact terms not disclosed).



Islam Becoming U.S.’s Second-Largest Religion

According to the Pew Research Center, Islam will soon overtake Judaism as America’s second-largest religious group. U.S. Muslims have increased by 40% in just five years — between 2010 and 2015, while non-Muslims have grown by just 5%. Disproportionally impacting local and national politics, their voters will swing domestic elections, elect progressively more likeminded representatives, and change the laws of our land. **Note: a few centuries ago, Syria was more than 90% Christian.**

Jerusalem, Where?

A recent *New York Times* travel section article extolled “Five Places to go in Jerusalem” ... with no mention of *Israel*. The *Times* apparently experienced dementia regarding which country boasts Jerusalem as its capital. The same *Times* edition managed to peg Oslo as Norway’s capital. And earlier pieces identified “Dusseldorf, Germany” and “San Jose, Costa Rica.”



FREE ITEM

Pamphlet of the Month

Gift annuities can help those who wish to give charitably but also want to make certain that they first provide for their own financial needs and their loved ones’. A gift annuity offers you a way to further the causes that you believe in while benefiting from one or more of the following: 1) Lifetime payments taxed at rates lower than for other income, 2) Income, gift, and estate tax savings, and 3) Favorable treatment of capital gains. To receive the free pamphlet **Questions and Answers About Gift Annuities**, email us at staff@levitt.com or write to our P.O. Box.



“Come Home!”

Zola
Tours to
Israel



See [page 36](#)
for details



The Way of Perfect Peace A Classic Lesson in Handling Worry

by John Parsons
Hebrew for Christians
Hebrew4Christians.com



בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיִךְ דָּעָהוּ וְהוּא יַיָּשֶׁר אֶרְצוֹתָיִךְ

“In all your ways know Him, and He will make your paths upright” (Prov. 3:6)

בְּ	כָל־	דְּרָ	כָיִ	ךְ	דָּ	עָ	הוּ	וְ	הוּא	יַ	יָ	שֶׁ	ר	אֶרְ	צוֹ	תָיִ	ךְ		
(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)
or-choh	tey-kha	ye-ya	sheir	ve-hoo	da-ei	hu	de-ra	khey-kha	be-khol	your paths	will make	upright	and He	know Him	your ways	in all			

When we lose sight of the truth that God is in complete control of all things, we tend to grow anxious. Feeling worried comes from focusing on ourselves, a perspective that can make us feel alone, forgotten, and even victimized in this world. Worry moves us to defend ourselves, to seek refuge in our own devices, and to forfeit the will of God according to the dictates of lesser fears. The sages say it is not permitted to worry: “To worry is a sin. **Only one sort of worry is permissible: to worry because one worries.**” We should worry that we worry because worrying indicates our hardness of heart and unbelief. God’s name YHWH (יהוה) means “Presence,” “Breath,” “Life,” and “Love.” So why be anxious for “tomorrow”? We really only have this moment, but this moment is entirely sufficient when we walk in the light of God and seek to know Him in all our ways.

The first part of the “Shema” (Deut. 6:4–9) admonishes us to remember the truth of God “when you sit in your house, when you walk in your ways, when you lie down, and when you rise up.” “In all your ways know Him;” that is, in all that you put your hand to do, look for God’s Presence and guidance (1 Cor. 10:31). This is something you must do: As King David stated, “I have set the Lord *always* before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved” (Psalm 16:8). “Let the peace of God rule in you” (Col. 3:15).

The Name of the LORD is “I-AM-WITH-YOU-ALWAYS,” which implies that we always live within His Presence and care, even if we are sometimes not conscious of this truth (Matthew 28:20). As it is written in the prophets, *hen al kapayim hachotikh*: “Behold I have engraved you on the palms of My hands” (Isa. 49:16). Remember the One who stretched out His hands and died for your healing; remember that He said, “Do not be anxious about tomorrow... each day has its own trouble” (Matthew 6:34). Again, “do not be anxious for any reason, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God, and the healing peace of God — the very Shalom of Heaven — which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Yeshua the Messiah” (Phil. 4:6–7).

“He’s got the whole world in His hands.” We experience inner peace when our minds are settled on Him (Isaiah 26:3). ★



[Return To Eden DVD Set](#)

Ten 30-minute programs on 2 DVDs

Return to Eden tells the Bible's story from Genesis to Revelation. The Lord bridged the relationship gap (caused by mankind's sin in the Garden of Eden) by creating a special relationship with a people and a land that eventually led to the Messiah. David and Kirsten Hart present this series that features teaching from Dr. Jeffrey Seif, interviews, insights from worship leader Sarah Liberman, and music composed by Zola Levitt.

Out of Eden Adam and Eve's sin led not only to man's expulsion from the Garden of Eden but, more importantly, to the loss of personal fellowship with the Lord. To bridge this relationship gap, God instituted the sacrificial system.

Back to Eden The journey to restoring a relationship with God has no shortcuts. God tested Abram's faith. The Tabernacle allowed people access to the Holy God by providing the setting for sacrifice necessary to atone for sin.

Recreating Paradise For 369 years, the Israelites could approach the Lord via the Tabernacle in Shiloh. The Menorah symbolizes not only the Jewish people but also the Tree of Life.

Eden and Old Testament History The Lord wants to restore fellowship with His creation and is rebuilding us and making us a testimony to His faithfulness.

Eden and New Testament Prophecy Sin leads to loss, and rebuilding can take generations. In the end, the Lord will renew His relationship with His people and dwell with them forever.

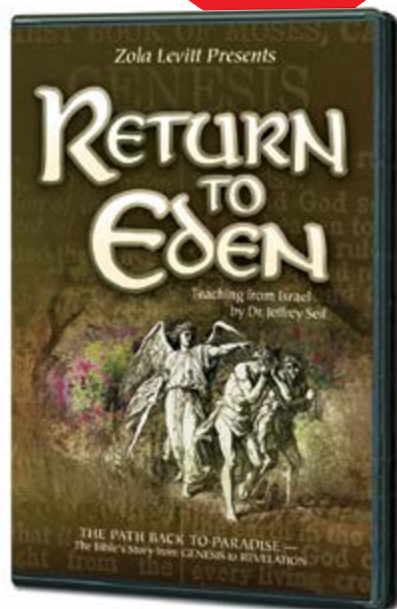
Eden and Israel Solomon's Temple was a reconstitution of the Garden of Eden. Today, the Lord is bringing the Jewish people back to their ancestral homeland.

Jesus and the Return to Eden When Messiah returns, New Jerusalem itself will be the Temple of God.

Paradise Restored Adam and Eve started in the Garden of Eden paradise. Believers will spend eternity with the Divine in a similar paradise. The choice one makes now to accept Jesus or not dictates where one will spend eternity.

Bonus Interviews – Part 1 Extended interviews with: Doron Keidar, Cry for Zion; Dr. Seth Postell, academic dean of Israel College of the Bible in Netanya; and Guy Erlich, owner/director of Balm of Gilead Farm.

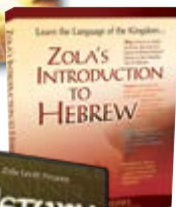
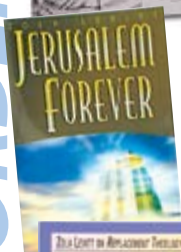
Bonus Interviews – Part 2 Extended interviews with: David Parsons, vice-president of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem; singer Pat Boone; and Yehuda Glick, member of Israel's Knesset.



ORDER FORM

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___	Seven Churches	\$3	_____
___	The Seven Feasts of Israel (p.20)	\$3	_____
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New!

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 Dallas TX 75225

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___	Coming: The End! Russia/Israel in Prophecy	\$10	_____
___	Genesis One	\$5	_____
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___	The Iranian Menace (pictured)	\$8	_____
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___	"What About Us?	\$8	_____
___	Whose Land Is It?	\$6	_____
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___	The Bible: The Whole Story .. (7 programs, 2-DVDs)	\$39	_____
___	Called Together	\$49	_____
___	The Dark Prince	\$59	_____
___	Eretz Israel	\$49	_____
___	Ezekiel & MidEast 'Piece'	\$49	_____
___	Journey of Restoration	\$59	_____
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___	The Seven Feasts of Israel (p.20) (7 prog., 2-DVDs)	\$49	_____
___	Sons of Israel	\$59	_____
___	Times of the Signs	\$49	_____
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___	Zola Teaches the New Testament (pictured) (6 CDs)	\$29	_____
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Music CDs: Hear samples at levitt.com/music

___	Beloved Thief (pictured)..... (Zola's Musical CD)	\$12	_____
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Please fill out area below and send the entire page.

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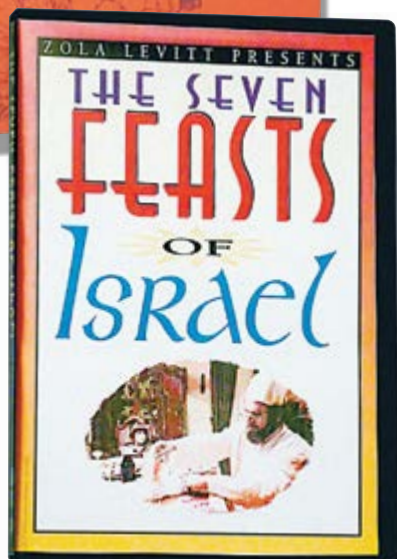
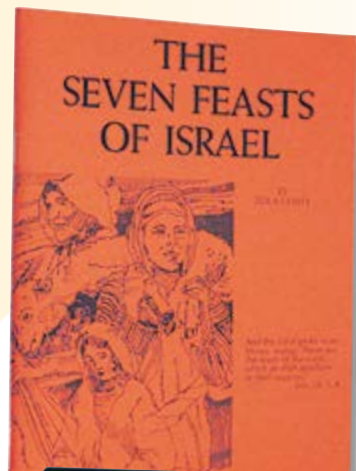
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The Seven Feasts of Israel

Study booklet, teaching CD, and DVD (7 programs on 2 DVDs)

An explanation of the commandments of Jehovah to Moses on Mount Sinai regarding the festival days and their deep significance. The elegant and beautiful system of the special days of holy convocation and how each one has been or will be fulfilled in prophecy.

Passover/Unleavened Bread The Messiah, clearly presented.

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Atonement An awesome day of confession and repentance.

Tabernacles Thanksgiving, Old Testament style!

Hanukkah/Purim The delightful festivals of joy when Israel rejoices in the blessings of the Lord.

(Please see the related "Classic Zola" article on p. 4.)



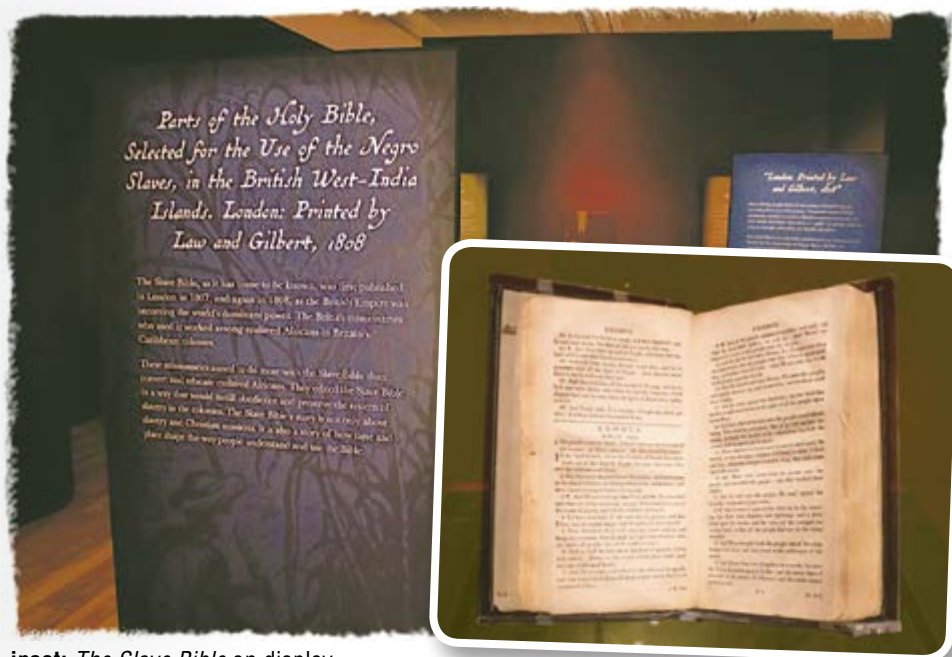
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GOCOMICS.COM/NONSEQUITUR



The Slave Bible

BY BECKY LITTLE (r) History.com



inset: *The Slave Bible* on display

background: The Museum of the Bible exhibit in Washington, D.C.

When slavery was legal, its proponents often justified it with the Bible; specifically, a verse that tells servants to obey their masters (Ephesians 6:5). Abolitionists could and did use a lot of verses to argue against slavery, but you wouldn't find those in the heavily-redacted Slave Bible.

Most of the Old Testament is missing, and only about half of the New Testament remains. The reason? So that the enslaved Africans in the Caribbean islands of Jamaica, Barbados, and Antigua couldn't read or be read anything that might incite them to rebel.

The Slave Bible was actually titled ***Parts of the Holy Bible, selected for the use of the Negro Slaves, in the British West-India Islands.***

It's not clear who the Slave Bible's editors were, but "they really highlighted portions that would instill obedience," explains Anthony Schmidt, a curator at Washington, D.C.'s Museum of the Bible, where a copy of the Slave Bible is on display. There are only two other known copies.

The first Slave Bible was published in 1807, three years after the Haitian Revolution ended. That revolution was the only slave revolt in history in which enslaved people successfully drove out their European oppressors and formed a new nation.

The Slave Bible doesn't include Moses leading the Israelites to freedom, but it does include Joseph's enslavement in Egypt. Passages that emphasized equality between groups of people were also excised. This included: "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus*" (Galatians 3:28). The Slave Bible also doesn't contain the Book of Revelation, which tells of a new Heaven and Earth in which evil will be punished. ★





Letters to ZLM

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

In Need of Prayer

Dear ZLM,

I'm sorry for all the letters I sent you over the years. I have struggled with some mental and emotional problems in the past and take medication for depression. I realize that this doesn't excuse my peculiar letters to you, but I wanted to explain my situation.

I'm doing better now and hope something good can come out of my letters. I apologize again and won't write any more. But I will keep sending my monthly donation by mail. Thank you, E.H.



Dear E.H. —

I thank you for your faithful giving, but no apology is necessary for any letters that you regret. You can rest assured that writing to us about your psychological issues has landed you on our office's prayer board. Our staffers enjoy reading novel letters and emails that highlight the traits of our fellow Believers' individuality. Even correspondence with rants can provide constructive criticism that we take to heart and act upon.

The *something good* that has stemmed from our praying for you is that you're doing better! Thanks for letting us know. Of course, you're welcome to keep writing even if our small staff can't always respond. Short of that, you might find keeping a daily or weekly journal helpful. Another option: Clicking on "[Discussion](#)" at [levitt.com](#) offers free Messianic fellowship opportunities at ZolaBoard. Blessings for your continued recovery as you seek God's guidance and love. — Mark

Kosher Diet Advised, Not Required

Dear Mark Levitt,

I have a lawsuit against my former prison because they discontinued serving me kosher meals. I plan to name you as an expert witness, so please expect to be contacted by my attorney. I will donate 10% of any award to all the Messianic ministries who have been discipling me. — M.P. (CA)

(continued next page)



Dear M.P. —

An unsaved rabbi would be a better expert witness than I for your purpose, though I'm flattered you've attempted to appoint me. You will want to seek an Old Testament-only rabbi who is either Orthodox or Conservative. (Most Reform Jews don't keep kosher and probably wouldn't testify that you should, even if you've converted to Judaism.) Be sure to confirm that you've jumped through whatever hoops your rabbi may require for him to deem you sufficiently Jewish, since he certainly wouldn't mandate a kosher diet for a gentile.

As Believers in Yeshua's New Covenant, you and I are under the New Law and not required to maintain a kosher diet. That said, I commend your endeavor from a nutritional standpoint since many of the Old Testament's dietary restrictions make for healthy living. For example, seafood with scales is healthier than crustaceans like lobster and crab, which are high in cholesterol.

Our ministry's *Covenants of God* television series covers the Edenic, Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Land, Davidic, and New covenants. It teaches that the New Covenant rests upon the sacrifice of Christ and secures eternal blessedness for Believers. It is absolutely unconditional.

M.P., if your attorney does contact me, I will offer to donate this fine TV series to your facility's library. It is described at store.levitt.com/video/DCG and available for free online viewing at levitt.tv/media/series/DCG. Blessings, Mark ★



[Israel's Right to the Land!](#) booklet by David L. Hocking

Just as its title implies, this booklet answers head-on the question: "What right does Israel have to its land?" Featuring an introduction by Zola, *Israel's Right to the Land!* pulls abundant evidence from the Scriptures, and directly addresses the 12 key issues that resolve this topic once and for all.

Let's spread the Word on who owns the Land ("from the river of Egypt to the River Euphrates"—Genesis 15:18) by divine right!

Eradicating Mosquitoes

SCIENCE: BY ARIELLA GENTIN (r) TimesOfIsrael.com



Our nemesis, the mosquito

A 28-year-old graduate of the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design's Industrial Design school, Yehuda Hermann, believes he may have found a way to solve the humanitarian crisis created by disease-carrying mosquitoes.

Every year, some 750,000 people die from mosquito-borne diseases around the world. In the past, chemical disinfectants have been used to kill these pests en masse, but the chemicals cause harm to the water, animals, and even human beings in the surrounding areas. So, Hermann decided to try something else. He developed a biological pesticide, called Biosive, that infects the mosquitoes without affecting the surrounding ecosystem.

Female mosquitoes are attracted to carbon dioxide because it signals the presence of a living entity that contains proteins, which they need before they lay their eggs. Hermann has built a container that emits carbon dioxide to attract the mosquitoes. Inside the container, he inserted a material containing the Bacillus bacteria, which is a pesticide for mosquito larvae. As the mosquito flies out of the container, "like a bee in a flower" that picks up pollen, the mosquito becomes a carrier of the pesticide.

After leaving the container, the mosquito will go on to lay eggs, which she does on water. Because the mosquito is infected with the bacteria, the larvae die a few hours after being born.

Hermann's technology is unique because the whole area within a radius of 800 feet from where the mosquito laid her eggs becomes a deathbed for all future larvae: The pesticide dissolves into the water in which the

(continued next page)



Yehuda Hermann, graduate of the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem

Photo: Ariella Gentin/Times of Israel



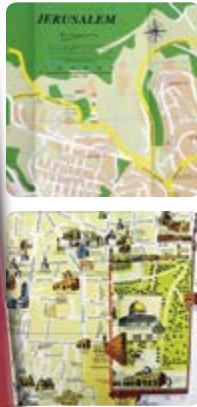


mosquito laid her eggs. If other mosquitoes lay eggs in those waters, their larvae will also die in a few hours.

Hermann intends the containers to be placed inside garbage cans. That way, when people take out their garbage, they can refill the containers with biological material. Garbage cans are also advantageous because they are low to the ground, which is close to where mosquitoes live. ★



left: The jihadist shouts: "Israel is the cause of destruction in the world!" right: Israeli inventions



[Pictorial Map of Jerusalem](#)

The most important city map in the world! A marvelous and complete display with over 1,000 names of streets, neighborhoods, etc., with color pictures, churches, Biblical sites, and all the rest, beautifully presented.



[Pilgrim's Map of the Holy Land](#)

A very special map of modern Israel that also provides sites of Biblical importance. Scriptures are given right on the map so that the reader can locate the cities and towns of Biblical significance. Delivers hours of spiritual pleasure.



Preventing Peanut Allergies in Children



MEDICINE: BY JUDY SIEGEL-ITZKOVICH (r) BreakingIsraelNews.com



Q. Can we give our healthy 10-month old daughter peanuts?

Prof. Arthur Eidelman, emeritus professor and former head of pediatrics at Shaare Zedek Medical Center and editor of *Breastfeeding Medicine*, comments:

A. I strongly endorse giving children of this age soft snacks with peanut butter (such as smooth peanut butter or corn puffs with peanut butter, which are extremely popular among Israeli children). Parents should give such snacks to children at a young age, after they start eating solid foods, as early exposure can get the body used to peanuts before an allergy develops.

Don't give children actual peanuts, as these pose a serious choking hazard. **Instead, give food made from peanut butter.** In 2000, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommended that any child at high risk of peanut allergy (from a family with a history of peanut allergy or other food allergies or eczema) should not eat peanut products before the age of three. But eight years later, the AAP stopped recommending this. (In Western countries, peanut allergy has doubled over the past decade and is the leading cause of food allergy-related deaths in the U.S.)

Around this time, British researchers noted that peanut allergy in Jewish children living in the UK was about 10 times higher than in Jewish children in Israel. Since they shared a similar ancestry, the difference, they reasoned, had to be something that they were doing.

They learned that UK children rarely ate peanut products before their first birthday, while their Israeli counterparts regularly ate creamy peanut butter. They studied 600 babies who were allergic to eggs or suffered from eczema — two conditions that are known to accompany peanut allergies. Divided into two groups, one group was given smooth peanut butter regularly, while the other received no peanut products until their fifth birthdays. The study included children who tested positive for a peanut allergy as infants (those with strong positive tests, however, were not included in the study).

(continued next page)





At five years, only 3% of the children who ate peanut products were allergic to them, compared with 17% of those who didn't eat peanuts. As a result, the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases released [guidelines](#) to help pediatricians and parents understand and safely apply these findings.

All infants who don't already test positive for a peanut allergy are encouraged to eat peanut-enriched foods soon after they've tried a few other solid foods. **Children who suffer from severe eczema or egg allergy should first be tested for peanut allergy**, and their parents should consult with doctors about whether and when to expose them to peanut products. Those found to have an allergy should get their first taste of peanut products in the doctor's office.

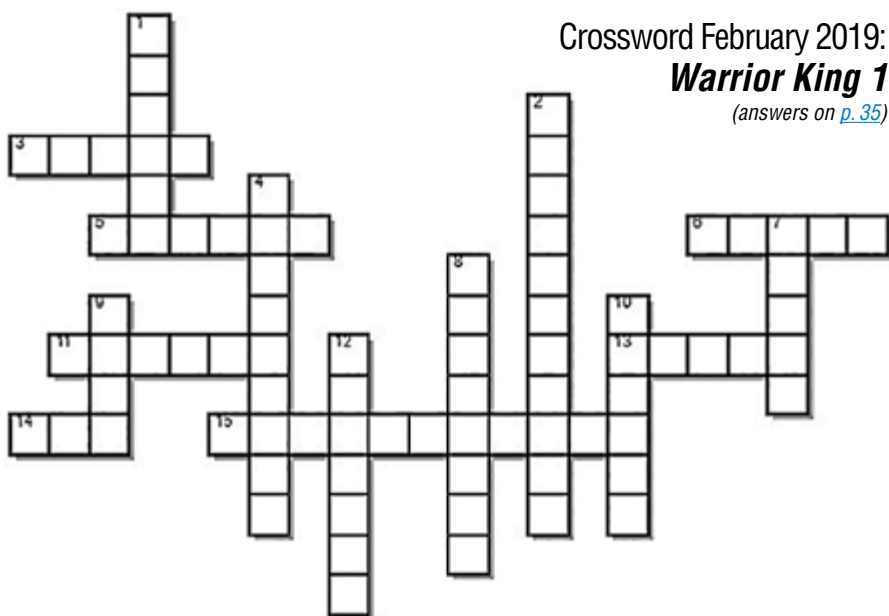
No testing is needed for babies with mild to moderate eczema, although parents should still talk with their doctors about their child's needs. These babies should try peanut products at around six months of age.

Babies who don't have any eczema or food allergy can have peanut products along with other foods as early as four to six months. ★

Crossword February 2019:

Warrior King 1

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



ACROSS

3. And ___ was the youngest... (1 Sam. 17:14 KJV)
5. ...and chose him five smooth ____ (1 Sam. 17:40 KJV)
6. And ___ said unto David... (1 Sam. 17:17 KJV)
11. ...for the ___ is the Lord's (1 Sam. 17:47 KJV)
13. ...Let no man's ___ fail... (1 Sam. 17:32 KJV)
14. ...Samuel took the horn of ____ (1 Sam. 16:13 KJV)
15. Now the ___ gathered together... (1 Sam. 17:1 KJV)

DOWN

1. ...Arise ___ him... (1 Sam. 16:12 KJV)
2. ...Look not on his ____ (1 Sam. 16:7 KJV)
4. ...so Saul was ____ (1 Sam. 16:23 KJV)
7. ...and I will ___ thee... (1 Sam. 17:46 KJV)
8. Then ___ and David made a covenant... (1 Sam. 18:3 KJV)
9. And David came to ____ (1 Sam. 16:21 KJV)
10. ...The Lord hath not ___ these. (1 Sam. 16:10 KJV)
12. ...and gave him the sword of ____ (1 Sam. 22:10 KJV)





Australian Prime Minister
Scott Morrison

Australia Recognizes West Jerusalem As Israel's Capital

By Josef Federman and Fares Akram
APNews.com

Australia has decided to formally recognize West Jerusalem as Israel's capital, but won't move its embassy until there's a peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced recently. Morrison added that Australia would recognize East Jerusalem as Palestine's capital only after a settlement has been reached on a two-state solution.

Australia becomes the third country to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, following the U.S. and Guatemala. Unlike its predecessors, however, Australia recognized only the *western* part of the city. The decision, therefore, is unlikely to please either side entirely.

Israel Destroys Hezbollah Border Tunnels

By Sarah El Deeb / APNews.com

As Israeli excavators dug into the rocky hills along the frontier with a Lebanese village, a crowd of young Lebanese men gathered to watch.

The mood was light as the crowd observed Israel's military operation—“Northern Shield”—aimed at destroying attack tunnels built by Lebanese Hezbollah militia. The young men

posed for selfies, with the Israeli crew in the background, as they burned fires and brewed tea to keep warm.



UN peacekeepers watch Israeli excavators

But Lebanese soldiers were visibly on high alert, deploying to new camouflaged posts behind sandbags and inside abandoned homes. About two dozen UN peacekeepers stood in a long line, just ahead of the blue line demarcating the frontier between the two countries technically still at war.

(continued next page)



Lebanese soldier positioned at the site where Israeli excavators work

To
Index

Back to
p. 11



Red-roofed Israeli homes on a hill overlook the diggers, who had to clear peach trees to make room for their work. Lebanese residences, some of them luxury summer homes, sit atop hills hundreds of yards from the wall.

The scene highlights the palpable anxiety that any misstep could lead to a conflagration between Israel and Lebanon that no one seems to want. See article “Our Shield in Time of Terror” on p. 10.

Anti-Zionism = Anti-Semitism

By Daniel Schwammenthal / WSJ.com

“Anti-Zionism isn’t the same as anti-Semitism,” we keep hearing. A new study suggests that for Jewish Europeans, the distinction is without a difference.

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights polled some 16,500 Jews in 12 countries where 90% of the EU’s Jewish population lives. Eighty-five percent say anti-Semitism is a problem in their country. As a result, 34% avoid visiting Jewish events or sites, and 38% have considered emigrating.

The most common anti-Semitic comment, which 51% said they hear “frequently” or “all the time,” was “Israelis behave ‘like Nazis’ toward

the Palestinians” — a claim that demonizes the Jewish state while diminishing the crimes of real Nazis.

The counterargument states that anti-Zionism is a legitimate political position that has nothing to do with anti-Semitism. But anti-Zionists discriminate against the Jews alone among the peoples of the world and call for the Jewish state’s economic, cultural, and academic boycott. What sense would it make to say: “I don’t think Ireland has a right to exist, but I’m not anti-Irish”? ★



Dry Bones



The West's History with Islam



BY RAYMOND IBRAHIM (r) FrontPageMag.com



Battle of Varna, Stanisław Chlebowski (1835–1884)

Last year, European Commission First Vice-President Frans Timmermans chaired a roundtable with ten Muslim imams from six EU Member States. Afterward, Timmermans announced: “The Commission is strongly committed to promoting diversity in Europe. Islam is part of our history and Islam will be part of our future.”

Such assertions are as true as the assumptions they are based on, and whether such assumptions are grounded in historical facts or fictions. The true, historically documented role that Islam played paints a picture different from what Timmermans describes.

7th through 9th Century

In the early 7th century, sword-waving Arabs burst out of the Arabian Peninsula and in a few decades conquered some two-thirds of what then constituted

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Image: United States of America: Federal government

The “Age of the Caliphs,” showing the Umayyad Caliphate, a Muslim dynasty that ruled the Islamic world from A.D. 660 to 750 and Moorish Spain from 756 to 1031





the Christian world — from Syria and Egypt in the east to Carthage and Spain in the west and everything in between. One hundred years after the death of their prophet in 632, they were in the heart of France where, thanks to their defeat at Tours in 732 and other Frankish victories, all of Europe was not conquered.

But where lands could not be subjugated, bodies could. **For the next few centuries, the jihad turned into a giant slave trade of European flesh, as slave raids left virtually no part of Europe untouched.** (Arab gold in large measure fueled Viking raids in northern Europe.)

10th through the 18th Century

In the 10th and 11th centuries, the Turks — who embraced the jihad ethos even more than the Arabs — converted to Islam and became its new standard bearers. Although they had notable victories and conquests, only with the coming of the Ottomans was the jihad on Europe renewed in earnest. In the late 1300s and early 1400s, much of the Balkans was brutally subjugated and Constantinople — Islam’s original archenemy — horrifically sacked (in 1453).

The Ottoman advance continued unabated and, in 1683, Vienna was encircled by hundreds of thousands of Muslims. As had happened nearly a millennium earlier when the Islamic advance into Europe was stayed in 732, a Christian victory at Vienna only caused Muslims to collapse back to their more modest role as slave traders of white flesh. Between the 15th and 18th centuries, Muslim slavers from the Crimea and the Barbary Coast enslaved more than five million Europeans — including in the late 1700s, American sailors, precipitating the Barbary Wars.

Today

Perhaps the most telling aspect of this history is the evident continuity of hostility in distinctly Islamic terms. These include the Muslim notion that all infidels have three choices: conversion, willing capitulation via *jizya/dhimmi* status, or death; the willful and mass destruction of churches, crosses, and anything Christian; the sadistic atrocities that beggar description; the shouts of “*Allahu Akbar*” and other jihadi slogans; the invocations of Koranic promises of a carnal paradise for those who fall in jihad. All these characteristics are present in virtually every encounter between Muslims and Europeans.

Such is the true role Islam played in Europe’s past.

Islam’s role in the present is built on Europeans being entirely ignorant — when not willfully twisting — **this unwavering history of hostility**, welcoming Muslims into their lands en masse and in the name of “diversity,” suffering accordingly, and then wondering what they, the European host nations, did wrong.

Considering the unwavering part that Islam played in the past and continues to play in the present, it remains to be seen if the West will build its future atop facts or fictions, getting its just deserts in either case. ★



On Dec. 14, 2018, the Strasbourg Christmas market reopened under heavy security after a terror attack

Photo: courtesy/Sky News



2,000-year-old “Pilate” Ring



ARCHAEOLOGY: BY AMANDA BORSCHEL-DAN (r) TimesOfIsrael.com



Pilate presents Jesus, as depicted in *Ecce Homo* (Behold the Man), 1871, by Antonio Ciseri

An intriguing 2,000-year-old copper alloy ring bearing the inscription “of Pilatus” may be only the second artifact [after the Pilate Stone] testifying to the historicity of the infamous Pontius Pilate. Unearthed 50 years ago, the ring was overlooked until recently, when it got a good scrub and second look.

Pilate, a Roman prefect who ruled the Roman province of Judea from circa 26–36 A.D., is mentioned in several accounts in the New Testament as having ordered the trial and crucifixion of Yeshua.

The ring was found among hundreds of other artifacts in 1968–69 excavations directed by archaeologist Gideon Foerster at a section of Herod’s tomb and palace at Herodium that was used during the First Jewish Revolt (66–73 A.D.). Current dig director Roi Porat recently asked that the engraved copper sealing ring be given a thorough laboratory cleaning and scholarly examination.



Aerial view of Herodium

The 104-year-old Israel Exploration Society then published the scientific analysis of the ring in its biannual *Israel Exploration Journal*. It was also popularly publicized — with slightly differing conclusions — in *Haaretz*, under the headline “Ring of Roman Governor Pontius Pilate Who Crucified Jesus Found in Herodian Site in West Bank.”

Archaeologist Porat said that, to him, all explanations are equally possible for who historically owned the simple copper ring.

“It was important to publish a careful scientific article,” he added. “**But in practice we have a ring inscribed with the name Pilate and the personal connection just cries out.**” (While the name Pontius was common for Romans

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Photo: G. Foerster, via Hebrew University

during the Second Temple Period, Pilate was not.)

The IEJ's analysis was written by scholars including several archaeologists and academics from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Epigrapher Leah DiSegni, of the Hebrew University, is credited with deciphering the inscription. While it is unclear exactly when the ring was forged, its discovery in a room constructed of secondary building materials offered an archaeological layer that dates to no later than 71 A.D.

At the center of the ring is an engraved krater, a large wine vessel, which is encircled by minute "partly deformed" Greek letters spelling out "of Pilatus." Interestingly, according to DiSegni, the direction of writing for the two words is different, and one word is "disturbed by a defect" in the metal.



A closer look

According to the scholars, the bezeled ring, which has a narrow outer rim, was cast in one unit by a less-than-expert craftsman. There is evidence that the "mold for this ring was engraved quickly before pouring the melted metal or that the device was not prepared by a master smith."



Views and cross-section of finger ring possibly belonging to Pontius Pilate

Photo: C. Amit, IAA Photographic Department, via Hebrew University; Drawing: J. Fohrman



The design at the center of the ring was likewise not elite. They reference similar vessel motifs on a still unpublished clay sealing bulla (amulet) that was discovered in the Temple Mount Sifting Project (a ZLM benevolence fund) and that archaeologists have tentatively dated to the first century A.D., and also on a bronze *pruta* coin dating to the same archaeological layer in which the ring was found.

The analysis concludes that there is nothing in the ring's design that makes it particularly either Roman or elite. "We propose, therefore, that this ring was made in a local workshop, perhaps in Jerusalem," write the authors.

However, they don't believe that the Pilate described in historical texts and the New Testament would have worn such a simple ring. "Simple all-metal rings like the Herodium ring were primarily the property of soldiers, Herodian and Roman officials, and middle-income folk of all trades and occupations," they write. "It is therefore unlikely that Pontius Pilatus, the powerful and rich prefect of Judaea, would have worn a thin, all copper-alloy sealing ring."

As to whose ring it actually was, the authors offer a few suggestions, including other Early Roman Period men called "Pilate." Likewise, the name may have referred to those under the historical Pilate's command, a member of his family or "some of his freed slaves."

"It is conceivable," write the authors, "that this finger ring from a Jewish royal site might have belonged to a local individual, either a Jew, a Roman, or another pagan patron with the name Pilatus."

"There is no way of proving any theory 100% and everyone can have his own opinion," said Porat. Regardless, "it's a nice story and interesting to wrap your head around." ★

4 Myths About Hamas

IDF.IL



The scene of a public bus bombing in Haifa in 2003. A Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up, killing 17 people and injuring 53.



Myth #1: "Hamas is not a terror organization."

Reality: Hamas is a terror organization recognized as such by Canada, New Zealand, Israel, Egypt, Japan, the European Union, Australia, Jordan, and the United States.

Hamas's terror attacks include the Haifa bus suicide bombing (March 2003) that killed seventeen people, and the kidnap and murder of three Israeli teenagers (June 2014), leading to Operation Brother's Keeper and subsequently Operation Protective Edge.

Hamas's charter (1988) calls for the destruction of Israel and for jihad against Israeli civilians.

Myth #2: "Hamas puts providing for its civilians as a top priority."

Reality: One would expect Hamas, which controls the Gaza Strip and is responsible for the lives of the millions who live there, to treat providing for its civilians as a top priority. Sadly, it's not true.

Since Hamas's election in 2006, the Gaza Strip has deteriorated year after year, because of three different things that Hamas does:

1. Uses civilian infrastructure as terror training facilities, e.g. converting a five-story building meant for a national library, government services, and housing into a terror training facility, and building military infrastructure next to schools, houses, and mosques.

2. Misuses funds gifted from the international community for the welfare of Gazans, and instead invests in terror activities, e.g., over \$120 million since 2014 to build terror tunnels into Israel.
3. While firing rockets at Israel, Hamas hit the main power line through which Israel supplies electricity to Gaza. Rather than aiming at targets, Hamas fires rockets with apparent disregard for their own people.

Myth #3: "Hamas runs the Gaza Strip democratically."

Reality: Hamas came to power in a democratic way, but has ruled Gaza through terror ever since.

Myth #4: "The 2018 weekly "demonstrations" were peaceful protests by the people."

Reality: Since March 2018, Hamas has been organizing riots, claiming them to be peaceful, populous-initiated "protests." In reality, **the riots offer cover for infiltration attempts and the use of arson kites and fire bombs.** The Gaza Strip is half a mile away from Israeli communities, making infiltration a danger to Israeli civilians. Hamas uses its own civilians as human shields for these terrorist activities.

It's important to understand who Hamas is in order to understand who is accountable for the constant terror that Israel faces and for the poor state the Gaza Strip is in today. [See article "Our Shield in Time of Terror" on p. 10.](#) ★



JEWISH HUMOR, ETC.



A cheerful heart is good medicine —
Proverbs 17:22

Business Sense

Mr. Mandelbaum, a successful businessman, calls his son-in-law to the office. "Welcome to our family! You are now my partner, fifty-fifty. What do you think about that?"

The son-in-law replies, "I hate factories. Can't stand the noise."

"Understood," says Mandelbaum. "Then you can manage the office affairs."

"I hate office work," says the son-in-law. "I can't sit all day behind a desk."

"Wait a minute," says Mandelbaum. "Before you married my daughter, you told me that you have good business sense."

"I do," says the young man. "Would you like to buy my share in the company?"

Knowledge

Rebecca proudly told her friend Sarah, "My son Benny has master's degrees in philosophy, critical thinking, literature, and ancient history."

"You must be proud of him," said Sarah.

"Yes, I am," replied Rebecca. "He can't get a job, but at least he knows why." ★

Dry Bones



Answer Key for February 2019 Crossword (p.27)

<i>Across:</i>		<i>Down:</i>	
3. David	13. Heart	1. Anoint	8. Jonathan
5. Stones	14. Oil	2. Countenance	9. Saul
6. Jesse	15. Philistines	4. Refreshed	10. Chosen
11. Battle		7. Smite	12. Goliath



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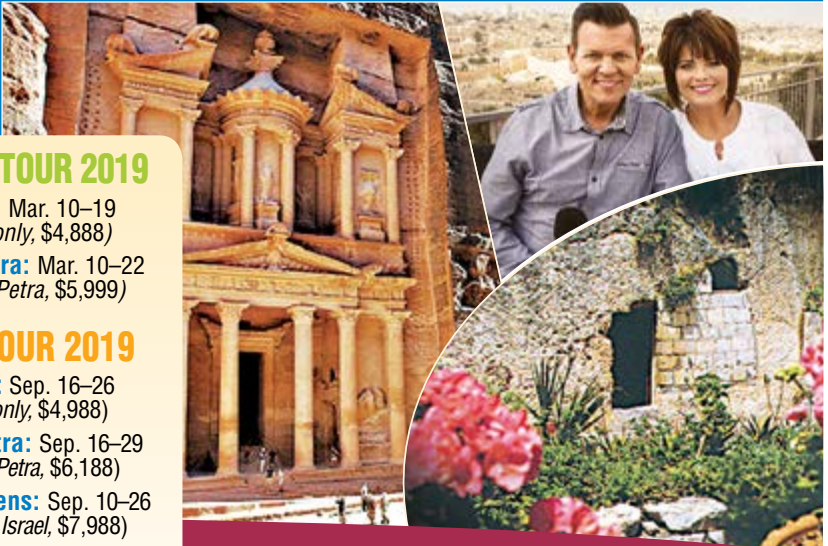
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