

LEVITT LETTER

“BRETHREN, MY HEART’S DESIRE AND PRAYER TO GOD FOR ISRAEL IS THAT THEY MIGHT BE SAVED.” – ROMANS 10:1

It's Not About Israel

By David A. Harris, Executive Director of the American Jewish Committee, *The Jerusalem Post*

A number of voices in the international community have recently identified the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the root cause of many of the Middle East's problems. British Prime Minister Tony Blair and former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan have been among the most prominent of these voices.

In a February 2007 article, Tony Blair reiterates what he has expressed in previous public statements: “How can we bring peace to the Middle East unless we resolve the question of Israel and Palestine?” Achieving peace, he continues, “would not only silence reactionary Islam's most effective rallying call, but fatally undermine its basic ideology.”

Kofi Annan, addressing the UN Security Council said, “The Israeli-

Palestinian conflict is not just one regional conflict amongst many. No other conflict carries such a powerful symbolic and emotional charge even for people far away.”

True, genuine peace between Israel and the Palestinians would remove one of the long-standing conflicts in the Middle East. But to suggest that such a settlement is a necessary precondition for peace in the Middle East and would take the wind out of radical Islam's sails is unsupported by the facts.

Let's assume for a moment that Israel did not exist. Would that have changed the basic story line of the bulk of recent events in the Middle East?

Would Iraq and Iran have chosen

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American Jews Welcome Muslim U.S. Ambassador to the UN

BridgesforPeace.com



Zalmay Khalilzad

Jewish groups in the United States say U.S. President George W. Bush's choice for America's new ambassador to the United Nations is a boon for Israel. The appointment of Zalmay Khalilzad, the first Muslim to serve in the post, is considered to be a positive sign that U.S. support for the Jewish state will continue.

According to the Vice Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Malcolm Hoenlein, “Khalilzad is considered to have a positive attitude toward Israel and the U.S./ Israel relationship.” Hoenlein, whose umbrella organization is the central coordinating body for 50

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not to pursue an eight-year war that cost more than a million fatalities? Would Iraq have decided not to invade Kuwait in 1990? Would it have rethought its use of chemical weapons against both its own Kurdish population and Iran?

Would Syria have refrained from slaughtering over 10,000 of its own citizens in 1982? Would it have relinquished its hold on Lebanon, as demanded by multiple Security Council resolutions?

Would Iran abandon its hegemonic ambitions in the region? Would the Shiite-Sunni split evaporate into thin air? Would the Sudanese government stop its collusion with Arab militias to end the massive murder and displacement in Darfur?

Would the poverty and widespread illiteracy that dampen hope and create a fertile recruiting ground for radical Islamic movements suddenly be alleviated? Would Saudi women instantaneously have the right to drive; would non-Muslims finally enjoy equal rights in all those Arab countries where Islam is the official religion; and would the Baha'i no longer experience persecution at the hands of the Iranian government?

In reality, the destabilizing factors in the Middle East run far deeper than the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The annual Arab Human Development Report speaks of three overarching explanatory factors for the region's unsatisfactory condition: the knowledge deficit, the gender deficit, and the freedom deficit. Unless these three areas are addressed in a sustained manner, the Middle East is likely to continue suffering from instability, violence, and fundamentalism, irrespective of what happens on the Israeli-Palestinian front.

Consider some of the important findings in the Arab Human Development Report and related studies:

The total number of books translated into Arabic in the last 1,000 years is fewer than the number translated in Spain in one year. Greece translates five times as many books into Greek annually as the 22 Arab countries combined translate into Arabic.

In the 1950s, per-capita income in Egypt was similar to South Korea's; Saudi Arabia had a higher gross domestic product than Taiwan. Today, Egypt's per-capita income is less than 20 percent of South Korea's; Saudi GDP is about 50 percent of Taiwan's.

Dr. A.B. Zahlan, a Palestinian physicist, noted, "a regressive political culture is at the root of the Arab world's failure to fund scientific research or to sustain a vibrant, innovative community of scientists." Also, "Egypt, in 1950, had more engineers than all of China." That is hardly the case today.

According to the 2005 UN Human Development Report, only two Egyptians per million people were granted patents (and for Syria the figure was zero), compared to 30 in Greece and 35 in Israel. In the 2005 UN report the adult literacy rate for women aged 15 and older was 43.6 percent in Egypt and 74 percent in Syria, while for the world's top 20 countries it was nearly 100 percent.

According to the current Freedom House rankings, the only country in the Middle East listed as "free" is Israel. Every Arab country is at best "partly free," or worse, "not free."

The sad truth is that it is precisely political oppression, intellectual suffocation, and gender discrimination that explain, more than other factors, the chronic difficulties of the Middle East. To be sure, there exist no overnight remedies for these maladies that would allow the region to unleash its vast potential, but they are at the heart of the problem. It would be illusory to think otherwise. ★



Secretary of State Rice with Khalilzad

American Jews... *continued from page 1*

national Jewish organizations, said he expects Khalilzad to maintain the U.S.'s current policies on Israel.

He added that Khalilzad's background may also be a plus for both the U.S. and Israel in the world body. "Having a Muslim ambassador may help improve communication with some member states at the UN," he said. But the final word on the American agenda remains in the hands of the president, he added, saying, "I don't see any major shift in U.S./Israel policy."

Khalilzad's appointment was also met with positive reactions from officials at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, who said they "look forward to working with him." ★

The Gathering Storm

By Patrick Cox, Contributing Editor



Patrick Cox

The situation in the Middle East grows more precarious daily. Iranian President Ahmadinejad promises incessantly both the destruction of Israel and his country's achievement of nuclear status. Hezbollah officials in Lebanon admit openly they are financed by Iran, and no one seriously disputes that the coordinated Palestinian and Lebanese kidnappings of Israeli soldiers, as well as the subsequent missile bombardments of Israel, were directed from Tehran.

United Nation "demands" that Iran abandon its nuclear goals have failed utterly and the UN "peacekeeping" forces sent to Southern Lebanon are more aptly described as official human shields — as the UN presence effectively prevents Israel from disrupting the rebuilding of Iran's military capabilities in Lebanon's border regions. Thus protected, Iran's Hezbollah proxy is flexing its lethal muscles and demanding more control of the Lebanese government from both Christians and Sunni Muslims — who clearly loathe the Shi'a militia.

It is this strife between Shi'a and Sunni Muslims that I want to discuss, as it is key to understanding what is happening in the Middle East. Iran's dedication to the destruction of Israel has, in fact, as much to do with its struggle with Sunni Islam as it does Jews and Christians.

The roots of this rivalry stretch back to the inheritance struggle following the death of Mohammed in 632. On one side of the fight over property and power was his family, led by Ali ibn Abu Talib — the dead leader's cousin and son-in-law. Ali claimed that Mohammed intended leadership to pass through bloodline, and his followers are known today as the Shi'a. On the other, Sunni, side were Mohammed's aids, who believed that his property and authority should be theirs to manage.

Betrayals, assassinations, and labyrinthine plots, within and between these two factions, ensued for generations. The administrators ultimately won the upper hand and their Sunni doctrine holds sway among 90 percent of all Muslims today, with Sunni majorities in over 40 nations. The Shi'a are majorities only in Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan, and the tiny island financial center of Bahrain.

Iran's ally Syria, interestingly, is governed by the minority Alawi sect, an inordinately secretive group whose name reflects their historical link to Ali. The Alawi were not even accepted as Muslims until the 1970s when Iranian

Shi'a clerics declared them such. Many Sunni, however, do not accept the Shi'a as Muslims, so they naturally do not accept the Alawi. For most of Islam's history, the Shi'a have been a persecuted and disdained minority, denied access to power, wealth, and their holiest sites by the Sunni. This prejudice is ethnic as well as doctrinal as most Sunni are Arabs, while most Shi'a are racially Persian and their power limited to what is today Iran.

For the first time in history, however, this is dramatically changing. Iran has been supporting and arming the Shi'a in Lebanon since the civil war began in 1975. With high immigration and birth rates, the Shi'a have grown from a small minority to the largest power bloc in Lebanon, with more than 40 percent of the total population, greater than the Christian population, which was a solid majority when Lebanon gained independence in 1943. The Sunni account for about 20 percent of the Lebanese.

This demographic conquest of Lebanon, however, is only part of the Shi'a story as two of the most hostile Sunni-dominated countries on Iran's borders have been neutralized recently. Afghanistan's Sunni Taliban had been a constant threat to Iran, and massacred many thousands of Afghan Shi'as. Iraq's Sunni minority, led by Saddam Hussein, killed approximately 300,000 of the majority Iraqi Shi'a and 800,000 Iranian Shi'a during the Iran/Iraq war. Whereas Iran once had to invest a significant portion of its wealth in defending itself from its neighbors, those threats are largely gone.

There is much more about this to discuss, in particular Jimmy Carter's role, but with limited room here, I'll return to this subject another time. Just let me point out that conspiracy theorists who claim that the liberation of Iraq

was for the sake of Israel have it entirely, laughably, wrong. Former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon took pains not to criticize American foreign policy publicly, but made it plainly known to Washington that he feared neutralizing Iraq would empower Iran, a country he always considered a far greater threat to Israel.

President Bush admitted in his State of the Union speech that the U.S. is, in effect, in a proxy war with Iran as that country supplies the Iraq insurgency with men, money, and munitions. Iran believes it can sow enough discord that the U.S. will abandon the country to the Shi'a majority, extending Iran's realm into oil-rich Southern Iraq as well as Lebanon and the Palestinian territories through its clients in Hamas — currently waging a violent civil war against the Sunni-backed Fatah.

If this happens, Iran would be in a position to threaten Sunni control of Mecca and Medina as well as Jewish control of Israel. Behind the scenes, the Sunni nations are making their own plans. ★

Iran's dedication to the destruction of Israel has, in fact, as much to do with its struggle with Sunni Islam as it does Jews and Christians.



Letters to ZLM

Dear B.H. –

Happily it was voted down at the assembly. Why? Because individual Christians within the denomination stood up and said “no,” and the denomination listened. We each make a difference, do we not?

— Jeffrey Seif

“I’m Wiccan”

Dear *Levitt Letter* Editor,

Thank you for continuing after Zola’s passing. I am neither Christian nor Jewish; I’m Wiccan, but I love and respect the teachings of Yeshua and imagine a world that followed His ways. Your *Introduction to Hebrew* is the best language course I’ve ever used.

Shalom
J.

Wiccan! Why, J? I fear for you. That’s witchcraft, is it not? I am glad you are deriving benefit from the *Levitt Letter*. Mindful of your comment, I am curious how you can benefit from Jesus’ teachings while making His adversary your lord, for any belief system that turns its followers away from God is inspired by Satan. I personally think you would be better served by making Jesus your Lord and Satan your adversary. Thanks for writing. We’ll keep sending you the *Levitt Letter*.

— Jeffrey Seif

“More Cartoons”

Dear Staff,

Don’t let anyone convince you to cut out some of the cartoons in the *Levitt Letter*. If anything, add four to six more.

Sincerely, — J.T.G.

Dear J.T.G.–

I agree. — Jeffrey Seif

Dear ZLM,

Thank you so much for your faithfulness in sending me the *Levitt Letter* each month. I am an 80-year-old widow on a widow’s pension and cannot send a regular offering. I’ll understand if you have to stop sending the newsletter. I always pass it on to someone else.

In Christ’s love,
O.R.

Action or Not?

Dear Jeff,

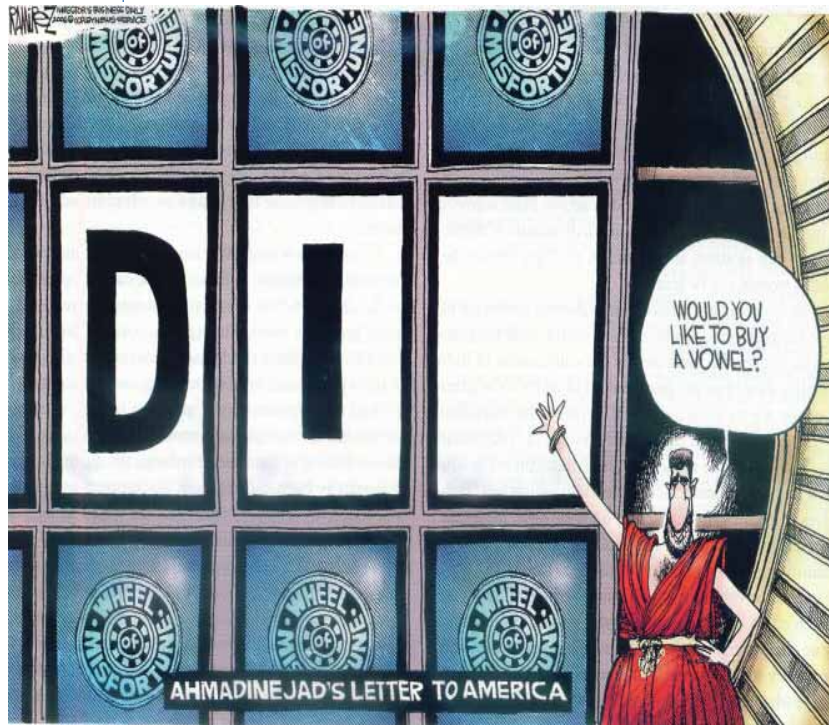
What is the status of the Presbyterian Church’s decision to switch their investments from Israel to Palestinian organizations?

I remember Zola speaking about such a change, but a new Presbyterian minister in our town claims that it didn’t happen because of the surrounding controversy; that he was part of some committee that decided not to divest.

I want to speak intelligently about this. Can you please confirm what action the Presbyterians did or didn’t take?

Thank you,

B.H.



Dear O.R. –

It blesses us to bless you with free newsletters, and you return the favor by sharing them. Despite your humility, you play the powerful role of amplifying this ministry's outreach. If only we could inspire all of our readers to do as you do. For your efforts we thank you and ask you, as a fellow soldier, to please keep up the good work.

See you in the Kingdom,

— Mark Levitt

Left Behind

Dear Jeff & Sandra,

We were saddened by Zola's promotion last year because we were left behind. Perhaps our work still isn't finished.

You're doing an admirable job taking the reins from Zola. We appreciate still seeing Zola on brief segments of your programs. However, we're wondering if you would rebroadcast in their entirety the programs in which Zola announced his terminal illness and played a composition for Sandra as his Valentine. We recently saw segments, but there was much more that Zola shared with his audience that we'd like to have as his last will and testament to us.

Yours in Christ,

R.N.S.

Dear R.N.S. –

Thanks for sharing our grief. You can special order any of our TV programs by calling our office at (214) 696-8844 during business hours. You can also see our TV programs free at www.levitt.com by clicking on "Internet TV" or by going straight to www.levitt.tv.

To make a meaningful addition to your library for preserving Zola's legacy, please consider ordering two titles that are described in the enclosed supplement to our catalog: *In Loving Memory* and *Israel, My Love*.

Hal Back—ZLM Next?

Dear ZLM,

I just noticed that TBN has put Hal Lindsey back on Friday nights, and judging by his last show he hasn't let up on criticizing terrorists. Anyway, I just sent an email to TBN thanking them for putting Hal back on and urging them to put your program back on too.

Maybe if we passed the word around and enough people did the same, they would give in to pressure and put it back on. I sure miss you all. Thank goodness for the *Levitt Letter* and all your hard work.

S.H.

Dear S.H. –

Thanks. Anything is possible—even the impossible!

Though preferring reconciliation in all matters, our ministry is looking into another major Christian network that would carry our message into both Europe and the Middle East. This addition could prove to be our largest expansion of airtime since going onto the *iNetwork* (PAX) in November 2003.

— Mark Levitt



Thomas Jefferson's Koran

By Ted Sampley, www.usvetdsp.com

Keith Ellison, now officially the first Muslim United States congressman, placed his hand on the Koran, the Muslim book of jihad, and pledged his allegiance to the United States during his ceremonial swearing-in.

The Koran Ellison used once belonged to Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States and one of America's founding fathers. Ellison borrowed it from the Rare Book Section of the Library of Congress; it is one of the 6,500 Jefferson books archived in the library.

Ellison, who was born in Detroit and converted to Islam while in college, said he chose to use Jefferson's Koran because it showed that "a visionary like Jefferson" believed wisdom could be gleaned from many sources.

Ellison was right about Jefferson believing wisdom could be "gleaned" from the Muslim Koran. At the time Jefferson owned the book, he needed to know everything possible about Muslims because he was about to advocate war against the Islamic "Barbary" states of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripoli.

Ellison's use of Jefferson's Koran as a prop illuminates a subject once well-known in the history of the United States, but mostly forgotten today—the Muslim pirate slavers who enslaved millions of Africans and tens of thousands of Christian Europeans and Americans in the Islamic "Barbary" states.

Over the course of 10 centuries, Muslim pirates cruised the African and Mediterranean coastline, pillaging villages and seizing slaves. It was typical of Muslim raiders to kill off as many older men and women as possible so the preferred "booty" of only young women and children could be collected.

Young non-Muslim women were targeted because of their value as concubines in Islamic markets. Islamic law provides for the sexual interests of Muslim men by allowing them to take as many as four wives, and to have as many concubines as their fortunes allow.

Boys, as young as 9 or 10, were often mutilated to create eunuchs who would bring higher prices in the slave markets of the Middle East. It was estimated that only a small number of the boys subjected to the mutilation survived after the surgery.

When American colonists rebelled against British rule in 1776 and lost Royal Navy protection, American merchant ships were attacked and their Christian crews enslaved by Muslim pirates operating under the control of the "Dey of Algiers" — an Islamist warlord ruling Algeria.

The Continental Congress, in 1784, appointed John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin to negotiate treaties with the four Barbary States, agreeing to appease the Muslim slavers by paying tribute and ransoms in order to retrieve seized American ships and buy the freedom of enslaved sailors.

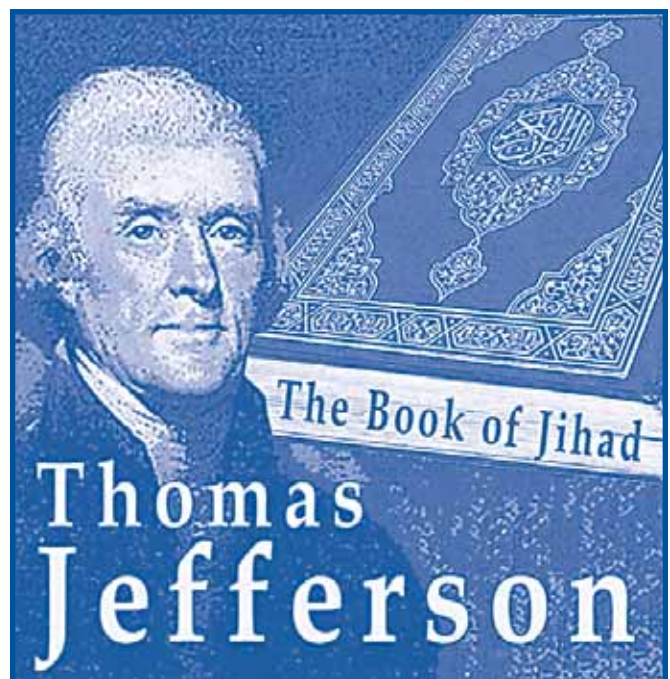
Adams argued in favor of paying tribute as the cheapest way to get American commerce in the Mediterranean moving again. Jefferson was opposed. He believed there would be no end to the demands for tribute and wanted matters settled "through the medium of war." He proposed a league of trading nations to force an end to Muslim piracy.

In 1786, Jefferson, then American ambassador to France, and Adams, then American ambassador to Britain, met in London to negotiate a peace treaty with Sidi Haji Abdul Rahman Adja, the "Dey of Algiers" ambassador to Britain.

During the meeting Jefferson and Adams asked the Dey's ambassador why Muslims held so much hostility towards America, a nation with which they had no previous contacts.

Later, the two future presidents reported to the American Congress the ambassador's answer: that Islam "was founded on the Laws of their Prophet, that it was written in their Koran that all nations who should not have acknowledged their authority were sinners, that it was their right and duty to make war upon them wherever they could be found, to make slaves of all they could take as prisoners, and that every Musselman (Muslim) who should be slain in battle was sure to go to paradise."

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For the following 15 years, the American government paid the Muslims millions of dollars for the safe passage of American ships or the return of American hostages. The payments in ransom and tribute amounted to 20 percent of the United States government's annual revenues in 1800.

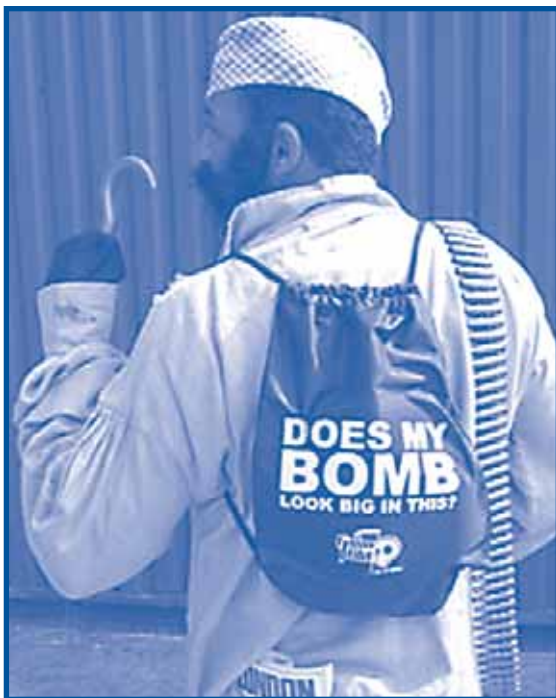
Not long after Jefferson's inauguration as president in 1801, he dispatched a group of frigates to defend American interests in the Mediterranean, and informed Congress. Declaring that America was going to spend "millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute," Jefferson pressed the issue by deploying American Marines and many of America's best warships to the Muslim Barbary Coast.

In 1805, American Marines marched across the desert from Egypt into Tripolitania, forcing the surrender of Tripoli and freeing all American slaves.

During the Jefferson administration, the Muslim Barbary States, crumbling as a result of intense American naval bombardment and on-shore raids by Marines, finally officially agreed to abandon slavery and piracy.

Jefferson's victory over the Muslims lives on today in the Marine Hymn, "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli..."

It wasn't until 1815 that the problem was fully settled by the total defeat of all the Muslim slave-trading pirates. Jefferson had been right. The "medium of war" was the only way to put an end to the Muslim problem. Mr. Ellison was right about Jefferson—he was a "visionary" wise enough to read and learn about the enemy from their own Muslim book of jihad. ★



This spoof on would-be terrorists suggests now that he's blown off one hand, he's worried about his appearance!

Tortured For a Faith He Did Not Possess

By Mark Ellis, www.crosswalk.com

The following is an introduction to a young Islamic student who, during nine years of bouncing around the Middle East, crossed paths with Christian after Christian. He met with them, at first to convert them, but later to learn with them. He even endured repeated persecution for simply discussing their faith with them. Their bombardment of love eventually broke through his wall of hate. Read his full story at www.levitt.com/news.

"When I was 15, I received the Gospel through a man who ripped a few pages apart from a Bible and gave them to me," says Hussain Andaryas, editor and producer of Afghan Christian Media. Andaryas immediately suspected the man on the street corner was Russian—dispensing Soviet propaganda. He grew up in Kabul, Afghanistan, during the time of the Russian invasion, and his parents were staunch anti-Communists.

He didn't know the man was a Christian or that the pages came from the Bible. "The man may have had only one Bible to give to people, so it was like a lottery. I got all of Matthew's Gospel and part of Luke." Afraid of his parents' reaction, he read the pages with a flashlight under the covers of his bed.

As he studied the genealogy in Matthew, many of the names sounded familiar. He realized the man must have given him a Bible, but he was still suspicious of the contents. "I was taught the Gospels were corrupt, changed by men in the West according to their wants," he says.

He liked chapter five of Matthew until he got to Jesus' words in verses 43 and 44: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, 'love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.'"

Andaryas instinctively rejected these words of Jesus.

"This was very hard for me because my ethnic group—the Hazaras—was hated by almost every other ethnic group in Afghanistan," he says. Many looked down on Hazaras because of their Mongol ethnic roots and Shia religious affiliation (most of Afghanistan is Sunni). As Andaryas pondered Jesus' words, the idea of loving people who hated him seemed impossible.



Persecution Growing Fastest in Islamic World

By Jeremy Reynolds, ASSIST News Service

As many as 250 million Christians worldwide will face persecution and repression in 2007, just for following Jesus Christ.

Release International, a voice for the persecuted church, has found that most persecution takes place in four distinct “zones;” those of Islam, Communism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. But persecution is growing fastest of all in the Islamic world.

Governments in even moderate Muslim countries often fail to safeguard the rights of their Christian minorities. According to Release, abuses suffered by Christians include kidnapping, forced conversion, imprisonment, church destruction, torture, rape, and execution.

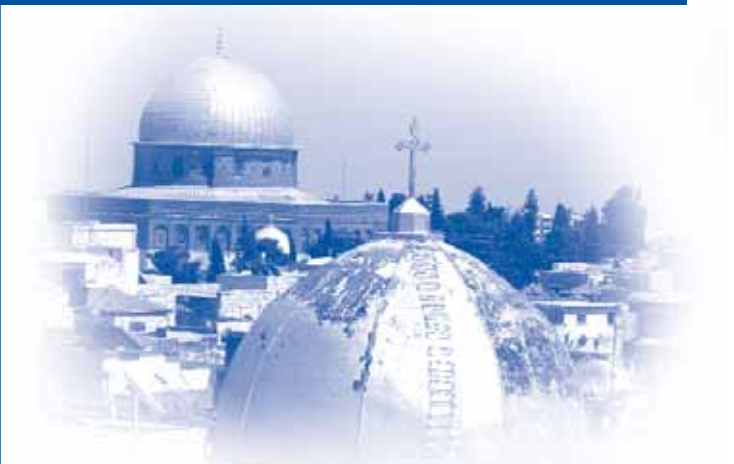
One of the world’s worst abusers of religious freedom is Saudi Arabia, guardian of Islam’s holiest sites Mecca and Medina. A Muslim found “guilty” of converting to Christianity could face the death sentence for apostasy. And anyone who leads a Muslim to Christ faces jail, expulsion, or execution.

“There’s a conspiracy of silence around Saudi,” said Release International’s CEO Andy Dipper, “probably because the West wants their oil and their money. But this is a government that hands out the death sentence for its own citizens who want nothing more than the freedom to choose their own faith. And while Saudi bans all Christian literature, it spends billions of dollars each year propagating Islam around the world.”

But some of the most violent persecution in the Islamic world is beyond government control. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the world has been made dramatically aware of Islamist global networks. Although the best known is al-Qaeda, there are others who exploit religious tensions for their own political ends.

A rising number of extremists interpret the call to jihad as a call to violence. Release added that extremists apparently regard it as their religious duty to force Christians and non-Muslims to convert to Islam. Those who refuse must be driven out or killed.

For report specifics, visit www.levitt.com/news.



Christianity offers:

“These are the things that ye shall do; **Speak** ye every man the **truth** to his neighbor;” Zechariah 8:16

“**He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness; but a false witness, deceit.**” Proverbs 12:17

“For my mouth shall **speak truth**; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.” Proverbs 8:7

“And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not **speak the truth**: they have taught their tongue to **speak** lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity.” Jeremiah 9:5
“...the LORD abhors the ... deceitful man.” Psalm 5:6

According to Christian ethics, lying is a sin.

Islam offers:

“Verily the most honourable of you in the sight of God **is the most pious among you**; verily, God is knowing, aware!” 49:13
Shi’a interpret the phrase above as “**he among you who exercises *Taqiyya* most.**”

In Islamic jurisprudence and theology, the use of *taqiyya* against the unbelievers is regarded as a virtue and a religious duty.

Taqiyya (pronounced *tark-e-ya*) is precautionary dissimulation or deception, and keeping one’s convictions secret. A synonymous term, *kitman*, is mental reservation and dissimulation or concealment of malevolent intentions.

Taqiyya (or *kitman* or ‘holy hypocrisy’) has been diffused throughout Arabic culture for over fourteen hundred years since it was developed by Shiites as a means of defense and concealment of beliefs against Sunni unbelievers. As the Prophet said, ‘*He who keeps secrets shall soon attain his objectives.*’

Like many Islamic concepts, *taqiyya* and *kitman* were formed within the context of the Arab-Islamic matrix of tribalism, expansionary warfare and conflict. *Taqiyya* has been used by Muslims since the 7th century to confuse and split ‘the enemy.’ A favored tactic was ‘deceptive triangulation;’ to persuade the enemy that jihad was not aimed at *them*, but at another enemy. Another tactic was to deny that there was jihad at all. ★

The Mystery of Persia

By Zola Levitt (1987)



Today one of my co-workers asked me to explain the attitude and behavior of Iran.

After all, here is a sovereign nation, somewhat backward but organized enough to function in international commerce and trade, doing its utmost to alienate the rest of the world. Iran has almost no friends left. It is condemned by the most radical Muslim states in the Middle East.

But when I use the expression “almost no friends left,” I am thinking of one nation upon which Persia has not fired. That nation is Russia.

I can only think that Iran’s atrocious behavior of the moment is taking it to its rightful place for the calamitous End Times events, most emphatically, the coming Russian invasion of Israel.

Persia (Iran) and Magog (Russia) are to be allies in the fateful satanic enterprise (Ezek. 38:2, 5). Nations move according to political and economic reasons, but more pointedly they always move according to God’s plans. Iran has a destiny. In a word, Iran is making itself so obnoxious to so many nations that in the end, only Russia, for reasons of its own, will be available as an ally. Look for some remarkable transitions in Iran or Russia that will drive the two closer together. And “look up, your redemption draweth nigh.”

Twenty years ago, Zola perceived an Iranian threat that only now is becoming the focus of world attention. How did he do it back in 1987? He read his Bible. Here in 2007 we’ll do likewise, and keep you informed of the Good News behind the news. — Jeff. ★

Iran: Mahdi Will Defeat Archenemy In Jerusalem

By Yaakov Lappin, www.yanetnews.com

A triumphal religious prophecy has appeared on an Iranian official state website, heralding the return of the Shiite messiah. “Shiite messiah will kill archenemy in Jerusalem, could come during spring equinox.”

According to the website, “Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance) will appear all of a sudden on the world scene with a voice from the skies announcing his reappearance at the holy Ka’ba in Mecca.”

The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) website said in a program called “The World Towards Illumination,” that the Mahdi will reappear in Mecca and form an army to defeat Islam’s enemies in a series of apocalyptic battles, in which the Mahdi will overcome his arch villain in Jerusalem.

Iran behind 80 percent of terror attacks in world

According to the website, “After his uprising from Mecca all of Arabia will submit to him and then other parts of the world as he marches upon Iraq and established his seat of global government in the city of Kufa.

“After his appearance the Imam would remain in Mecca for some time, and then go to Medina... a descendant of the Prophet’s archenemy Abu Sofyan will seize Syria and attack Iraq and the Hejaz with the ferocity of a beast. Finally Imam Mahdi sends troops who kill the Sofyani in Beit ol-Moqaddas (Jerusalem), the Islamic holy city in Palestine that is currently under occupation of the Zionists,” the IRIB added.

According to the Iranian series, the Mahdi will reappear on Earth with Jesus: “The Mahdi will come with Jesus, son of Mary, accompanying him. Imam Mahdi will be the leader while Prophet Jesus will act as his lieutenant in the struggle against oppression and establishment of justice in the world. Jesus, himself, had given the tidings of the coming of God’s last messenger and will see Mohammad’s ideals materialize in the time of the Mahdi.”

Jesus will be Mahdi’s lieutenant

The website added that prayers for the Mahdi’s return were said daily in Iran: “In our time, many pray for his appearance and each day they renew their allegiance to him.”

The IRIB website is filled with details of the Mahdi’s return, including descriptions of physical attributes of “the perfect human being.”

“He will appear as a handsome young man, clad in neat clothes and exuding the fragrance of paradise. He has a radiant forehead, black piercing eyes, and a broad chest. He very much resembles his ancestor Prophet Mohammed.”

A saying attributed to the Prophet’s 6th infallible heir, Imam Ja’far Sadeq, says “the Mahdi will appear on the spring equinox and God will make him defeat Dajjal the Impostor, or the antiChrist as the Christians say, who will be hanged near the dump of Kufa.”



I typed the word “Jews” in the lauded www.google.com search engine, and immediately turned up 40,900,000 responses. Along with the 40,900,000 responses, my “Jews” entry also turned up an ominous warning in the upper right-hand corner of the screen: a disclaimer, what Google calls an “offensive search results” warning.

“If you recently used Google to search for the word ‘Jew,’” the warning noted, “you may have seen results that were *very disturbing*... Some people concerned about this issue have created online petitions to encourage us to remove particular links or otherwise adjust search results ... Google [however] cannot be influenced by these petitions.” (Italics mine.)

“Google” is perhaps the most popular search engine in the country. Is “Google.com” —the Internet information source used by high school and college students—an “objective,” truth-loving source, that takes pains to not be biased or “manipulated” by others, or is it biased?

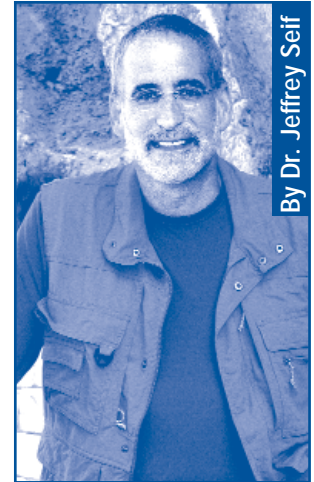
Their condescending and misleading objective-loving rhetoric notwithstanding, Google’s satellite map places the city of Jerusalem



within “Palestinian” territories, and even refers to parts of Jerusalem as being within the “occupied territories.” This uncritical acceptance of Islamic doctrine and disavowal of Israel is even more flagrant than the UN’s, which simply refers to the area as the “disputed territories.” If google.com wants to be “objective” as it claims, why does it uncritically accept the Muslim position and tacitly castigate Jews? Why? Because it is *not* unbiased at all. Duh!

Google.com and Levitt.com have something in common: *we are both biased*. The difference, however, is that we are up front about it. I, for example, admit to being influenced by assumptions that affect the outcome of my determinations. Imperfect though I am, *I try to look at life and history through a biblical lens*, and my perspectives are guided accordingly: *I have a biblical bias*. Similarly, being of Jewish extract, I admit to having a *Jewish bias*. For example, given my mother’s having been smuggled out of Nazi Germany, having been traumatized there, and having died in a mental hospital thereafter, biased as I am, I do take offense at those who say “there was no Holocaust,” and that we “Jews just made it all up.” In like manner, I take issue with wannabe nuclear nations’ incessantly and vociferously calling for the destruction of the biblically sanctioned State of Israel.

A Note from Jeff



By Dr. Jeffrey Seif

Believing that we at Zola Levitt Ministries need to tell our story on cyberland’s “information highway,” we are ramping up our website development efforts. I will soon be reporting to you on the fruits of our efforts.

Beyond that, and in the interest of furthering our reach through more traditional means, we are researching the prospects for broadcasting into Europe. As the Church continues to weaken there, and as Islam continues to grow in leaps and bounds, I (born to German Jews) am feeling the need to return to my parents’ continent to promote our Messianic-Jewish version of the Gospel to the untold millions of Europeans who never heard anything like it. You may soon be hearing how your donations are being spent to reach a whole new continent!

Our biblically biased ministry exists, in part, to expose and counteract the anti-Jewish and anti-biblical versions of reality foisted upon us by biased news media, and by misguided, biblically illiterate clergy. Without question, He compels us to take the Gospel to more and more people.

Like Zola before me, I am persuaded that this ministry is needed now, as ever. Like Zola, we are determined to tell our story, to outlive our critics, and to advocate forcefully for the Gospel from a decidedly Jewish perspective. I trust you are being blessed by the new TV series *Daniel and the Last Days’ Battle for Planet Earth*. Sandra Levitt, Tony Derrick, producer Ken Berg, and I are filming in Israel again, and we are anxious to show you the fruits of our labors in the upcoming series.

Speaking of anxious, I love speaking in churches and am anxious to visit yours. Sandra and others are available, too. I do hope you’ll contact us and arrange for one of us to visit, especially this summer when I’ll be driving through the Southwest and speaking wherever I’m asked — Colorado, California, Arizona, and New Mexico. If you think your church or organization might be interested in having me speak, please contact Scott at 214-696-8844.

Here is your opportunity!

Your Messenger,

Will King's new photojournal, *Disengagement Through the Lens: A Glimpse at Gush Katif Before and After*, can be ordered on page 23. Here he tells us about the event that sparked it:

Israel's Withdrawal from Gaza

By Will King, www.imagesofisrael.com



As many of you remember, Israel under Prime Minister Ariel Sharon decided to withdraw in August 2005 from 21 settlements in Gaza and another four in northern Samaria. The highly controversial Disengagement Plan was fought against by all sides as being bad for Israel's security, a bad political precedent, and against religious and Zionist ideals of the state.

As a journalist in Israel during this difficult time, I reported on the disengagement for Zola Levitt Ministries. I spent several days in Gaza and northern Samaria during the actual evacuation, though access to some locations was limited due to security measures in place at the time. Along the way I documented the disengagement not only in my writing, but with my camera as well. While the mainstream media gave very matter-of-fact coverage, my book shows the emotion of the disengagement through pictures.

Disengagement Through the Lens walks through almost every step in the disengagement process: the appearance of some of the settlements before; the forced evacuation and emptiness during; the final, terrible destruction of the settlements at the hands of the Israelis themselves. The book ends with a look at the town of Hebron, where King David first ruled. In January of 2006, eviction orders were issued to several Jewish families there, the first move the government made against Jewish settlers after the disengagement.

Prime Minister Olmert had promised to evacuate many more settlements in Judea and Samaria after he was elected, however the conflict with Hezbollah last summer put those plans on hold. Israelis have come to understand that unilateral moves, such as the withdrawals from southern Lebanon in 2000 and Gaza in 2005, don't lead to peace, but rather to more violence.

However, under a constant barrage of peace initiatives from Europe and America, how long can Israel hold out before being forced to evacuate more settlements in the name of peace? With more evacuations apparently on the horizon for Israel, this book reminds us that there is a human and physical cost of such operations. ★

See www.chabad.org/library/article.asp?AID=306272
(Another powerful presentation of the very same issue.)



Will's notes and photos, collected in his new book, offer an emotional and human counterpoint to the just-the-facts coverage by the mainstream media. ZLM is pleased to offer this photo-journalistic publication to our readers and viewers. See page 23 to order.

Quantico Mosque Leader Promoted

www.WorldNetDaily.com

In a special ceremony, the Pentagon recently promoted a Wahhabi-trained Muslim chaplain who catered to al-Qaeda detainees at Guantanamo and fought to establish the first mosque in Marine Corps history.

Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England personally promoted Navy chaplain Abuhena Mohammed Saifulislam from lieutenant to lieutenant commander. Pentagon officials say the ceremony was unprecedented.

"It's unusual for a deputy secretary to personally promote an officer of that rank," said one official who wished to go unnamed. "No one has known of such a high-level dignitary doing that."



Saifulislam and Sec. England

England also personally dedicated a new Islamic center at Marine headquarters in Quantico, Va., on the advice of Saifulislam, a Bangladesh immigrant who became a U.S. citizen in 1995. The Muslim chaplain, who is stationed at Quantico, recited verses from the Koran at the dedication ceremony, which included representatives from the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), several leaders of which have been convicted on terrorism-related charges.

Saifulislam, which is Arabic for "Sword of Islam," received his religious training at a radical Islamic school raided by federal agents after 9/11. The Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences, based in Leesburg, Va., is run by Taha Jaber Al-Alwani, an un-indicted co-conspirator in the Sami al-Arian terror case. A federal affidavit used to obtain a warrant to search the school alleges Al-Alwani gave at least \$50,000 in jihad money "to support suicide bombings."

Multiculturalism appears to trump concerns about Islamist infiltration of the military. Following the Marine's lead, the Army in October dedicated a new mosque at West Point. ★

Shalom from sunny Florida. I am on the road again, blessed to return to Florida for the winter speaking engagements Zola started six years ago. He loved coming here. He would say, "Someone has to do it." Believe me, he was more than willing to be that someone. A little preaching, a little golf. My son, Will, came in from Israel to join me for a while, and I got to show him the spots that were special to Zola and me. I was afraid coming back without Zola would be difficult, but it has been comforting—kind of like meeting with a friend after a time apart. It is familiar going to the restaurants, golf courses, and parks that I visited with Zola. Good memories. I think that is what God had in store for me this trip: good memories. I don't think I could have made the Florida trip any sooner, and I was grateful to have Will with me. God's timing is perfect.

Time has been both my enemy and my friend. At times I have felt that my life was speeding way too fast, and at others, it just would not move. The phrase "light at the end of the tunnel" has new meaning for me. This past year has felt like a tunnel. But, God is the light at the end that I head for, and I have been comforted. It is not that I have had no pain; rather, that I have had someone to lean on. Psalm 34:19 says, "A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all." John 16:33 expresses, "In this world you will have trouble, But take heart! I have overcome the world."

I spoke at a wonderful church in Sebring one Sunday morning and that night I was scheduled to speak at a church in Inverness, a two-and-a-half hour drive away. By the time I finished meeting with the pastor, packed, and got back on the road, I had about an hour to spare before my next engagement—just enough time for a quick dinner at one of Zola's favorite places: Taco Bell. We ate there every time we went to Inverness, so I had to eat there. Again, good memories. Because I planned to drive the one-and-a-half hours back to Orlando that night, I had no hotel room for a freshen-up before speaking. So, I did what I could. Yes, I put on my make-up in the ladies' room of the Taco Bell. I also changed from my comfy road clothes to my more-presentable speaking clothes. When I came out of the restroom in

Shalom From Sandra



my high heels and not my sneakers, the other diners looked at me and shook their heads. It was too small a place not to notice that I went in looking one way and came out looking another. It really was funny. God has a way of keeping me humble. Laughing at myself was something I really needed.

Everywhere I go in Florida I am overwhelmed by people's encouragement for the continuation of this ministry. People really are watching the new programs and reading the *Levitt Letter*. I love the feedback both Jeff and I get from you personally, and in your letters and emails. I promised Zola that we would move this ministry forward, and that is what we plan to do. Again, thank you for your prayers and support.

For more good times, go to Israel. You will have better memories from Israel than from anywhere else you ever travel. I promise: Israel will change your life. I know *my* life has not been the same since I went to Israel. Our June tours are just plain fun (this year we will go from June 5 -15). It was my dream to take students and their parents, along with educators, to Israel in the summer. The timing is wonderful because school is out. Besides, as Zola used to say, the knowledge gained from one tour of Israel is like ten years of Sunday school. We dig at an archaeological site, the weather is good, and the fellowship is always incredible. Jeff, Tony, and I do the teaching. While you are planning your summer vacation, make Israel a priority. Make the time. It is your home.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.
Blessings, — Sandra Levitt

Sandra will be speaking in churches throughout the Midwest this summer. If you think that your church or organization might be interested in having Sandra speak, please contact Scott at 214-696-8844.

Tree of Life

By John J. Parsons



עֵץ-חַיִּים הִיא לַמְחַזְקִים בָּהּ וְתַמְכִּיהָ מְאֻשָּׁר:

She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her:
and happy is every one that retaineth her. – Proverbs 3:18

עֵץ	חַיִּים	הִיא	לַ	מְחַזְקִים	בָּהּ	וְ	תַמְכִּיהָ	מְ	אֻשָּׁר
(1)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(3)	(1)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(3)
me'u-shar	ve-tom-khey-ha	bah	la-ma-cha-zi-kim	hi	eitz-chai-yim				
are blessed	and all who retain her	her	to them who lay hold (of)	(is) she	tree of life				

Etz Chayim –Tree of Life

The “Tree of Life” is mentioned ten times in the Scriptures. In the Torah it first appears in the center of the paradise of Eden (Gen. 2:9; 3:22, 24), but it is soon lost to humanity on account of Adam’s transgression. In the book of Revelation, it reappears in the center of the Paradise of God (Rev. 2:7, 22:2), resurrected on account of the faithful obedience of Jesus as mankind’s “last Adam” (1 Cor. 15:45). Those who have washed their robes by means of His righteousness are given access to this Tree in the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. 22:14). The paradise lost by Adam has been regained by the greater *ben-adam*, Son of Man, Yeshua the Messiah.



In the book of Proverbs, the Tree of Life is a metaphor for the life of **wisdom** (*chockmah*), which is the implied subject of our verse above (see Proverbs 3:13). Traditional Judaism identifies *talmud Torah* (the study of Torah) as the Tree of Life, promising wisdom to those who “lay hold of her” (a Torah

scroll has wooden rods called *atzei chayim* — the “trees of life” — used to roll the parchment). According to the rabbis, the eternal life that was lost in Eden was restored to humanity with the giving of the Torah at Sinai.

As Christians, we understand that the Tree of Life is Jesus Himself, who is the center of the true Paradise of God (Rev. 22:2). He is the Seed, Root, Trunk, Branches, and Fruit that comes from Heaven. The first Adam lost access to God by means of his transgression (eating from the tree of the “knowledge of good and evil”), but the “greater Adam” reclaimed our access by means of His obedience, resisting the power of evil even to the point of death upon the “tree” of the cross (Phil. 2:8). His resurrection life is the firstfruits of all who put their trust in Him (1 Cor. 15:20; Jas. 1:18).

Yeshua is the “Tree of Life in the center of the Paradise of God,” and all who retain Him are forever blessed indeed.



Israeli Economy Among World’s Best

Susan Lerner, *The Jerusalem Post*

Israel’s economy ranks 15th in the World Economic Forum’s Global Competitiveness Index for 2006-2007, establishing it as one of the world’s most competitive economies. Its success results from Israel’s culture of innovation, supported by first-class institutions of higher education and scientific research. In contrast, US economic competitiveness fell significantly as high budget and trade deficits combined with low health and education standards to worsen America’s business environment.

To see country rankings and market factors, visit www.levitt.com/news.



On Friday, April 27, 1973, I delivered this speech, written by Zola, to the Beth Sar Shalom Messianic congregation in Dallas. At the time, I was a newspaper delivery boy, and Zola had written only his first couple of books. —Mark

Mark's Bar Mitzvah Speech

Delivered by Mark Levitt



Mark Levitt

I am Mayer Eliezer ben Zelig Five-al Halevi—
Mark Louis son of Zola Philip the Levite

And today I am a man.

This is my Bar Mitzvah. Bar Mitzvah means “Son of the Commandment.” Today is the Sabbath following my 13th birthday, and I now take my place as a full-fledged member of my tribe. My father, and his father, and their fathers’ fathers reaching back thousands of years to the time of Moses, were members of the great tribe of Levi.

Today, I am not only a man, but a Levite. Today I am a priest.

In the Torah, in the Book of Deuteronomy, chapter 10, verses 8 and 9 give the very special will of God for my tribe. The Hebrew tells us, *“Bo-ace hahee heevdeel adonai ess shavet Halevi Losace ess arone berees adonai La-amode leaf-nay adonai L’sharso ool-vorake beeshmo ud hayome hazeh. Al cane lo hoh-yoh L’levi chalek v’nachaloh eem ehchove adonai hoo nachaloso ka-ashare dee-bear adonai elohecho lo.”*

In English, this means, “At that time did the Lord separate the tribe of Levi, to bear the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister unto Him, and to bless in His name unto this day. Therefore, there was not assigned unto Levi any portion of inheritance with his brethren: the Lord is his inheritance, as the Lord thy God hath spoken to him.”

My forefathers were, therefore, separated as a tribe to minister to the Jewish people and to bless them in the name of the Lord. They became the high priests of Israel, as God willed.

The Levites stood as God’s representatives

on Earth, going among His chosen people. They prayed for the people and exhorted them to greater faith. They carried out the sacrifices in the mighty temple of Jerusalem. They set the stage for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

My ancestor, Jesus, was not of the tribe of Levi. His tribe was Judah. Revelation 5:5 describes Him as “The Lion of Judah.”

It was God’s will that His Son come as a plain man, an honored son of Judah, but not a high priest. In fact, it was my ancestors of Levi, at the time of Christ, who were unable to recognize their true high priest—the ultimate fulfillment of their millennia of sacrifices and priestly works.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

Zola Levitt Presents TV Airing Schedule

iNetwork (PAX) Airing Day & Time by Zone

Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day	9:30 am Thurs	8:30 am Thurs	8:30 am Thurs	9:30 am Thurs
DirectTV—Channel 255		Dish—Channel 181		

ABC-FAM Airing Day & Time by Zone

Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day	10:00 pm Sun or 1:00 am Mon	11 pm Sun or 2 am Mon	12:00 am Mon	1:00 am Mon
DirectTV—Channel 311		Dish—Channel 180		

INSP Airing Day & Time by Zone

Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day	3:30 am Wed 5:30 pm	4:30 am Wed 6:30 pm	5:30 am Wed 7:30 pm	6:30 am Wed 8:30 pm

Daystar Airing Day & Time by Zone

Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day	3:00 pm Fri	4:00 pm Fri	5:00 pm Fri	6:00 pm Fri
DirectTV—Channel 369		Dish—Channel 263		

TCT on DirecTV

The newest addition to our TV Airing Schedule, posted at www.levitt.com, is Channel 377 (TCT) on DirecTV:

Wednesday 2:30 PM Eastern
Friday 8:30 AM Eastern

NOTE: If you are unable to view ZLP at the day and time stated, please contact your local cable company or refer to your satellite directory.



But, it is my privilege today, at my Bar Mitzvah, to honor Jesus, my brother in Judah, the Son of God, the King of the Jews. I am a Christian.

Although I am today a priest of Israel, I serve a higher priest. Although I am a man today, I serve a better Man. I am the son of a Levite, but I serve the Son of God.

It is still, in our time, not understandable to many Christians that Jesus Christ is Jewish. He is as Jewish as I am, and my father is. He came to his own and they rejected Him, but He is to reign in the future on the throne of David.

Only a Jew may sit on the throne of the great King David. Jesus was thoroughly a Jew in His Earthly ministry. When he had only a few hours before His crucifixion, He sat down with His disciples and celebrated Passover. In the Book of John, we see Him making a dangerous and secret trip of 100 miles on foot to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles at Jerusalem. He told the Samaritan woman, "We Jews know what we worship... salvation is of the Jews."

What a statement! "Salvation is of the Jews." True enough, a Jew came to save the world from sin; and He chose all Jewish disciples and all Jewish Apostles to take forth His message. All of the initial Christian churches were wholly Jewish.

There was a time when a Gentile-Christian was an impossibility. Today, the Hebrew-Christian, like my father and me, is quite a rarity.

But, every letter of God's Word must be fulfilled. Salvation is still of the Jews.

I met the Lord Jesus Christ two years ago. Perhaps, the testimony of one who has been a man only since sun-

down today will not be meaningful to many. But, I can tell you that God is real, that He redeems His promises, and answers prayer. I can tell you that I have no fear of life, and certainly no fear of death. Sin has no power over me, and I stand with my Lord, my Brother, in complete confidence.

When the Lord called me, I was a child. Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." Today I am a man, but still a child in respect to God. The Book of John relates, "To all those who received Him — the Messiah — He gave the power to be children of God."

To conclude this Bar Mitzvah message, I would like to take this opportunity to bless you people in the name of the Lord, which is my privilege as a Levite. This is the first blessing I will utter as a man and as a priest, and I give it to you with thanks.

Please bow your heads:

Dear God, we see in the Torah, in the Book of Numbers, that you gave my ancestor, Aaron, the brother of Moses, the first high priest of Israel, Your very Words to bless the people. In Your kindness and wisdom You have brought me to my Bar Mitzvah, and You have brought this congregation of people for me to bless.

Therefore, in the name of God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, I, Mark Louis, the Levite, do hereby pronounce upon these people the sacred blessing of my brother Aaron:

Y'voreecho adonai v'yeeshmor-echo... "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Amen. ★



“Stop Posing As a Jew Who Is Also a Christian.”

To Jeff, who encouraged Jews to write him a letter —

I'm not searching to understand your Messiah. I'm still waiting for the One who will truly bring world peace. Anyone can look around and see the Messiah has yet to arrive!

I'm writing this letter to help, or at least to beg, you to change your behavior. If you really understood Jewish history, you would never consider attempting to pose as a Jew who can also be Christian.

For years I viewed Messianic Churches like yours as a simple way for the naive to try to merge two good peoples. Now that you are trying to sell your church to Jews, I feel differently. Unfortunately, you and your whole group will disappear to the Jewish people, as have so many others through the generations. This is the unfortunate result of a poor Jewish education, rampant assimilation, and a weak personal constitution.

It is a fraudulent notion that you call yourself and your organization anything other than a Christian person, and a Christian Church. I view your work similar to those who would place a fraudulent hechsher on a treif chicken. See, it's perfectly healthy. We don't need to follow those tough old rules. It's Kosher!

Our Jewish sages refer to you as a M'shumad, one who smashes the Jewish people. I plead with you to please stop. Young Jewish people, who never properly learned about their own faith (similar to the brave Kibbutznik you had on your program, who was raised among atheists, nebech) should not be misled into thinking

Dr. Jeffrey L. Seif
filming TV from the
Mount of Olives



you are a Jew. You are not. This happened as soon as you chose to adopt another faith.

You can do Teshuvah and return home as a ger tzedek, and a baal teshuvah. It is among us your Jewish neshamah can be revived to make the world a better place. Please forward this note to your friend Marty in Texas.

— D.L. (Cantor)

In speaking of me/us being akin to placing a “hechsher” on a “treif” chicken, the Cantor (a synagogue leader) is accusing me of certifying as “clean” (“hechsher”) what is “unclean” (“treif”). For him, it's not “kosher” to claim to be a Jew who believes in Jesus. Worse yet, for him I am a “M'shumad,” a traitor — not a Jew in good standing at all. To the contrary, I am construed as one who destroys Jews. He suggests I do “Teshuvah,” repent that is, and that I position myself as one returning to the fold — as a “ger tzedek” (a “righteous returnee”). As a result my Jewish breath (my “neshamah”) will be restored, says he. Of course, I do not agree with his conclusions, but I do appreciate that Cantor DL cared enough to write and share them. I'll try to get some back and forth going, and let you know what comes of it. — Jeffrey Seif ★



The Lost Boys of Sudan

Kairos Journal

The late 1980s were a bad time for Dinka tribesmen in southern Sudan. The iron-fisted Islamic government in Khartoum was systematically displacing, robbing, enslaving, and even eradicating these tall tribesmen, who did not share their Muslim faith, who lived on coveted land, and who resisted assimilation. Nine-year-old Abraham Nhial was one of millions caught in this press, but God in His sovereignty protected him as he was passed from Christian to Christian.

When the Sudanese army destroyed his village, Abraham joined a host of fellow orphans in a trek for the Ethiopian border. Savage lions took some. Others fell to hunger, disease, and drought; but thousands made it to the safety of refugee camps across the border. It was here that Abraham met and joined the family of God.

Raised to believe in a pagan creator god, Nhialic, Abraham came to Christ in Ethiopia's Dimma camp. Instead of following his father in sacrificing white animals to appease Nhialic, Abraham accepted the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. John 3:16 was the instrument. Camp pastor John Machar Thon was its bearer.

After several years in Ethiopia, the Lost Boys, as these child refugees without parental guidance had come to be known, were forced to flee once again. Escaping warfare, they raced toward Gilo River crossings, only to find there were no boats. Through drownings and crocodile attacks, two thousand lost their lives. Most found their way to a new camp in Kenya, where Abra-

ham emerged as a spiritual leader, and Episcopalians ordained him a minister. In this service, Abraham met the Episcopal Migration Ministry, which pressed him to finish high school in Kenya and arranged his journey to America.

Resettled in Atlanta, Georgia, Abraham and other Lost Boys found help from Jubilee Partners, a Christian organization that taught them to navigate America's social and technological waters and helped them with employment and education. In this connection, he completed his GED and enrolled in Atlanta Christian College to pursue the Bachelor of Science in biblical studies.

Abraham was, in turn, able to bless his people. In 2003, he returned to Kenya with Houston's Aid Sudan Foundation. He has also spoken to the gates of power. The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention brought him to Washington, D.C., to help alert Congress to the plight of the Sudanese. While there, he met Sudan's prime minister, the same one who oversaw the atrocities that destroyed his village. When Abraham told him he loved him and wished peace for his country, the prime minister replied, "Why do they call you a Lost Boy? They need to call you Peace Boy."

Indeed. Abraham found in Christ the "peace which passes all understanding," a peace that has been communicated and demonstrated to him by countless fellow Believers. First a beneficiary of God's providence, he has become an agent of that providence, receiving from God other needy people God is shepherding in His providential care. This is the normal, and marvelous, Christian pattern. ★



Pastor Trashes "Levitt Letter"

By Dr. Jeffrey L. Seif



Jeffrey Seif

A well-intended friend of the ministry wrote of his attempt to leave editions of the *Levitt Letter* in his Lutheran church. His pastor objected and a discussion ensued, over a cartoon caption's legitimizing a pre-emptive strike on Iran (Sept. '06, p. 24); then, the magazine was removed, deemed unfit for Christian consumption. Afterward, the friendly supporter wrote to say that he believes we ought to "take the high ground" and "stick with positive messages." Graciously, he expressed continuing support for our ministry, but asked that we give serious "consideration to this matter," and categorically reject the possibility or acceptability of an Israeli pre-emptive strike.

On the basis of the Matthew 5:38-48 "turn the cheek" doctrine, some argue that Christians are prohibited from bearing arms. Others accept that circumstances sometimes demand military action. Relying in part on Romans 13:1-4, they argue that God endorses authorities to "bear the sword" for such purposes, "self-defense" being chief among those purposes. If he objected because he doesn't classify a pre-emptive strike as "self-defense," then I must argue that his definition is antiquated and reminds me of what I'll call the "Pearl Harbor" trigger factor.

Though tensions in 1941 had been mounting for some time, it wasn't until Japan mercilessly struck the Americans on the island paradise that America said: "OK, you want a war... Now you have it!" Off we went in the aftermath, with few raising objections on the grounds of Christian conscience. As per the Romans text, the American authorities were perceived as legitimately allowed to "bear the sword."

The 1941 definition of "self defense," as we shall see, is both outdated and woefully deficient, given exigent circumstances associated with modern, nuclear warfare. Let me present an explanation that I hope will convince the Lutheran pastor and you, my readers, to consider why I believe

we must adjust our understanding of what constitutes "self-defense."

A holocaust-denying, religiously-inclined, fanatical Iranian president is pressing toward nuclear armament. All the while, he expresses that he will annihilate Israel in the interest of advancing the dawning of an Islamic messianic age, one he understands himself to be chosen to help inaugurate. In response to his brazen disregard for civility, we take notice, present various articles and commentaries, consider various options—one being a pre-emptive strike—and are castigated. Our magazines are thrown out of a church foyer; the person who put them there is corrected by his minister; and we get a well-intended, gentle tutorial letter on Christian ethics.

Never mind the personal offense! I'll just focus on the ethical question: Should Israel wait for its own "Pearl Harbor" trigger to justify a response?

I think not.

Should Israel wait for its own "Pearl Harbor" trigger to justify a response?

I graduated from one of the best police academies in Texas. There, I learned about the employment of "lethal force," taught in conjunction with what police call the "Use of Force Continuum." After the academy and at the department level, I was drilled with standard policies for the "Use of Force," both during and after my field training components.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



My education and experience taught me the following: Both conventional police science instruction and contemporary police experience teach that if a non-compliant criminal suspect is within twenty-one feet of an officer, with a knife and/or gun in hand, and refuses legitimate orders, points a weapon in the officer's direction and moves toward the officer, the officer is justified in using lethal force in "self defense." Why twenty-one feet? Once within that range, it has been scientifically proven that the criminal can get to the officer faster than the officer can react. Must a cop wait until a knife is *at* his/her throat, or actually *in* the throat, to take the threat seriously? No. "Officer safety" allows for a pre-emptive response once the criminal is in the kill zone, and twenty-one feet defines the kill zone.

Where is the "kill zone" in an Iranian nuclear conflagration?

If a nuclear-armed Iran pushes the "hot button," a nuclear attack on Israel is but seconds away. Expecting Israel to "sit out" and wait until Iran puts a knife to its throat (i.e., fires first) seems unreasonable and irresponsible. The 1941 definition of self-defense doesn't sufficiently take into consideration practices in which response margins are measured in split seconds, not minutes, hours, days, weeks, or months.

Furthermore, and more importantly, the conventional doctrine of "self defense" becomes applicable when the threatened party, to use police doctrine, has specific facts that would lead a reasonable person to believe that life-threatening, criminal activity is afoot. The legitimate use of force, then, is *not* assessed when a distant American pastor thinks Israel can defend itself, but rather, *when Israel feels it needs to defend itself*.

Because a pastor has a right — indeed a mandate! — to keep his flock from destructive heresies, I don't begrudge a pastor judging material unfit and throwing it out. I think he is mistaken in this case, however, for the reasons noted above. ★

In Praise of Christian Zionists

By Michael Freund, www.jpost.com

They number in the millions and wield increasing power and influence across the United States. From year to year their voice grows stronger and more resolute, as their role in shaping policy, and the future of American society continues to expand.

Guided by faith, they love Israel passionately and pray for its well-being, rejoicing in its successes and grieving over its setbacks. They are America's Bible-believing

Christians, and it is time for Israel to reach out to them in a far more sophisticated and comprehensive manner.

A great deal has already been written about the close ties that have developed between the two, as Israeli officials have at last begun to appreciate the depth and feeling of American evangelical support for the Jewish state. Indeed, what was once unthinkable has now become routine, as leading Christian pastors and Israeli government representatives regularly confer with one another, exchanging ideas and views on the principal issues of the day.

But in far too many instances, Israel's attitude toward evangelicals has been short-sighted and ill-advised, with the relationship often focused on soliciting dollars rather than devotion. And that has got to change, because far greater things are at stake here than just boosting revenues from tourism. For as strong and robust as the American Jewish community might be, it cannot and will not last forever, as recent demographic trends make clear. That leaves evangelical Christians as the best hope for ensuring that bedrock US support for Israel remains firm and unwavering in the decades to come.

In other words, thank God for Christian Zionists. Like it or not, the future of the relationship between Israel and the US might very well hinge far less on America's Jews than on its Christians.

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Could this soon become standard issue for airline pilots?

According to polls, an estimated 47 percent of American adults claim to be “born-again” or “evangelical.” Even if the figure is an overstatement, it still means tens of millions of Americans identify themselves as evangelical. And this translates into an enormous well-spring of support for Israel, as an August 2006 study by the Pew Research Center revealed. According to the report’s findings, “Seven-in-ten white evangelicals (69%) believe God gave Israel to the Jewish people and a solid majority (59%) believes that Israel is the fulfillment of biblical prophecy.” These are more likely to sympathize with Israel in its dispute with the Palestinians.

No wonder so many evangelicals have taken to calling themselves “Christian Zionists.”

Their sympathy and concern for Israel is apparent in the emails I receive in response to my columns in *The Jerusalem Post*. They are sincere and caring, and full of love and concern for Israel and its plight.

Sure, there are some evangelicals who would like to convert Jews, and they make little or no attempt to hide their agenda. But most simply wish to bless Israel because they truly believe God wants them to.

And it is this genuine and heartfelt affection that contains the potential to forge a historic alliance, one that could help heal some of the painful wounds of the past even as it paves the way for a close and meaningful partnership in the future.

By adopting a few simple, but significant steps, Israel can lay the groundwork for ensuring that the bond with U.S. Christians continues to deepen.

First, Israel should appoint a roving ambassador tasked with responsibility for maintaining relations with Christians in America. This should not be just an honorary title. Instead, the government should appoint a person of faith, one who can communicate with evangelicals in terms they both understand and appreciate.

Second, Israel should reach out to Christian leaders and their communities, and initiate the establishment of “prayer battalions” in churches across the United States. Like rapid-deployment forces used by the military, these battalions could be mobilized at a moment’s notice to pray for specific issues, such as the return of Israel’s missing soldiers or the threat posed by Iran’s nuclear ambitions.

Such an undertaking would have nothing to do with asking for funds, but everything to do with tapping into the vast reservoirs of faith and belief that underscore Christian backing for the Jewish state.

And you can be sure that if a person is moved to pray for Israel, chances are that his sense of affinity will only continue to grow.

Christian support for Israel is broad, profound, and deep. If cultivated properly, it can blossom into a lasting friendship of historical, political, and diplomatic significance.

Michael Freund served as former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Deputy Director of Communications.



GET FUZZY



BY DARBY CONLEY

Nice Guys Don't Always Finish Last

By Duane Shank, www.beliefnet.com

In these days of war and more war, of too many athletes who make the news for drug use or arrests, it's nice to have a good news story to celebrate.

Cal Ripken, Jr. of the Baltimore Orioles and Tony Gwynn of the San Diego Padres were elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame by the Baseball Writers' Association. That fact was never in doubt since both retired five years ago, but the confirmation is cause for celebration. Both were stars on the field — Ripken an All Star 19 times, and Gwynn 15. Both are in the record books — Gwynn with eight batting championships and “Ironman” Ripken with 2,632 consecutive games.



Cal Ripken, Jr.

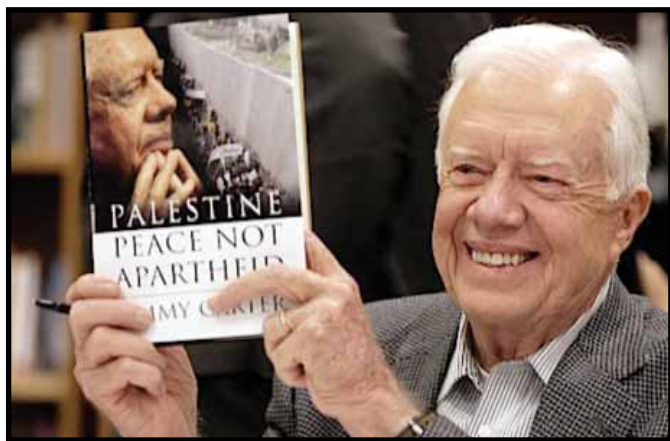


Tony Gwynn

And, both are gentlemen loved by their communities off the field.

What made them special, in this age of mercenary ball-players who go wherever the dollars lead them, was that they spent their entire careers with their hometown teams — Ripken for 21 years in Baltimore and Gwynn for 20 years in San Diego. Both were offered more money to change teams during their careers, but both stuck by their teams and their cities.

Watching them play for twenty years was a constant reminder of why baseball is such a special part of each summer. And it's almost spring training.



Carter Center Advisers Resign In Protest

By Giovanna Dell'Orto, *The International Herald Tribune*

Fourteen members of a Carter Center advisory board, who worked to build support for the human rights organ-

ization started by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife, have resigned in protest over Carter's latest book. The resignations are the latest in a backlash against Carter's book *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, which has drawn fire from Jewish groups, been attacked by fellow Democrats, and led to the December resignation of Kenneth Stein, a Carter Center fellow and a longtime Carter adviser.

In their letter of resignation, the members of the Center's Board of Councilors wrote of Carter, “you have clearly abandoned your historic role of broker in favor of becoming an advocate for one side.”

The board is responsible for building public support for the Carter Center. It is not the organization's governing board.

The book follows the Israeli-Palestinian peace process starting with Carter's 1977-1980 presidency and the peace accord he negotiated between Israel and Egypt. It doles out blame to Israel, the Palestinians, the United States, and others, but it is most critical of Israeli policy.

Members said they were concerned by the book's “one-sided approach” and then “watched with great dismay” as Carter defended it in comments to the press, especially as he implied that Americans might be afraid to discuss the conflict in fear of a powerful Jewish lobby.

Toronto Bookstore Picketed for Israel Donation

www.jta.org

Protesters picketed a Toronto bookstore because its owners made a donation to an Israeli cause.

A group of about 25 picketers waved Palestinian flags on Bay Street as they urged a boycott of the Indigo Bookstore chain because its owners, Heather Reisman and Gerry Schwartz, contributed to an organization that assists Israeli soldiers.

The Canadian Jewish News reported that Reisman and Schwartz pledged to fund 100 scholarships annually for the next three years through the Heseg Foundation for Lone Soldiers, a charitable organization that assists Israel Defense Forces graduates without parents or extended family in Israel.

The protesters said they were from the Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid.

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Campus Anti-Semitism

By Anna Bolman, *The College Zionist*

As a nation, the Jewish people are stronger than ever, with many successes in medicine, science, technology, and other endeavors. The anti-Semitism that our grandparents experienced in the 1930s and '40s fortunately does not exist in the United States.

But a new kind of anti-Semitism has arisen in its stead, expressed as extreme anti-Israel and anti-Zionist bias and propaganda. One of the key playing grounds for this new anti-Semitism is on American college campuses, and it is occurring inside and outside the classroom. The good news is that there are legal tools available to address the problem.



Students at Columbia University protest an anti-Israel speaker on their campus.

Colleges and universities should be institutions of academic integrity, encouraging critical thinking and allowing for the expression and discussion of diverse ideas, including ideas that might be controversial or unpopular. Yet at many colleges and universities across the nation, classes about Israel and the conflict in the Middle East are beyond controversial; they are fueling anti-Semitism and a hateful bias against Zionism and the State of Israel. Many academic departments are failing to teach a diversity of perspectives about the Middle East conflict. They employ professors who use their classrooms as their own political soapboxes and present lectures that omit the facts and disregard reality. Academic integrity should allow for the expression of differing opinions, but it should not permit professors to teach outright lies to their students.

The bias against Israel in the college classroom should concern all of us. As Lebanese-born Arab reformer Brigitte Gabriel stated, "What is at stake [on campuses] is our future; the students of today will become tomorrow's leaders."

The author continues, giving several examples of anti-Semitic behavior and activities on major universities; then she informs students of the legal remedies and avenues available to them. See her full article at www.levitt.com/news



Web video capture

Little Mosque on the Prairie

www.theGlobeandMail.com

Little Mosque on the Prairie, the new Canadian Broadcasting Corporation comedy about Muslims living in a small prairie town, generated tons of conversation and hype before it even premiered to a record two million viewers in January.

The inspiration for the show's storylines comes from the real-life experiences of Zarqa Nawaz, the show's creator, consulting producer, and writer. She was born in Liverpool, raised in Toronto, and moved to Regina ten years ago with her husband and children. The mother of four says she hopes her children will see the new face of Canada in the show.

"I'd like them to be able to watch TV and see people who also look like them," she said.

"I think people are assuming because of the title and the subject matter that it's going to be really controversial and political. But it's just a comedy that happens to have Muslim people in it, and it's meant to make people laugh," Ms. Nawaz said. "It's about relationships and human interactions and life in a rural setting. But it's really the first comedy of its kind in North America, and that's why it's so intriguing."

Some of our readers are too young to remember the situation comedies, such as *Hogan's Heros*, *McHale's Navy*, and *M.A.S.H.*, which trivialized war and even made it seem like a reliable source of laughs. The program title *Little Mosque on the Prairie* is modeled after the wholesome American TV series *Little House on the Prairie*. If North Americans laugh hard enough and long enough, we may forget that Muslims hope to Islamize the world, whether we like it or not. — Jeff ★

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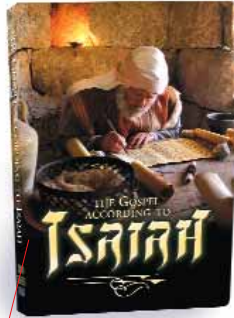
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