

ISRAEL MY GLORY



*A BIBLICAL
LOOK AT
ANTISEMITISM*

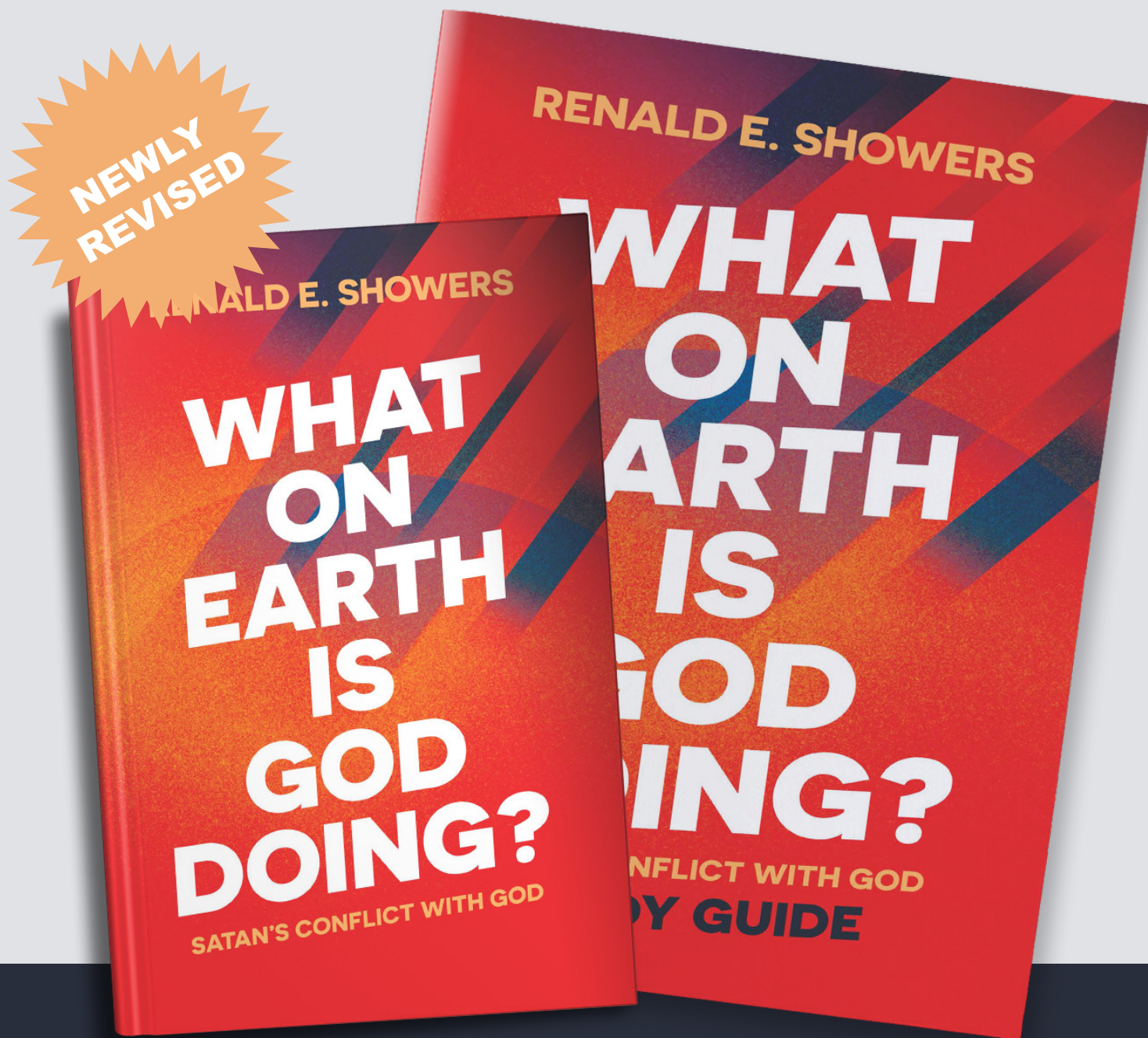
**THERE IS A
CERTAIN
PEOPLE**

**PAGE 14
THE NEVER-ENDING HATRED**

**PAGE 18
VILLAINOUS ANTIOCHUS**

**PAGE 20
'AWAY WITH THEM!'**

CONNECT THE PIECES OF HISTORY IN GOD'S PLAN FOR THE WORLD!



What on Earth Is God Doing?

Where have we come from? Why are we here? And where are we going?

Discover the answer to these existential questions as you learn how God has worked throughout time! Travel through history as you explore the amazing narrative of God's great plans for the world and His war of the ages against Satan. Dr. Renald Showers' newly updated and brilliant work will help you fully grasp how God has used the major moments and movements of world history to bring about His perfect order.

US \$10.95; Outside US \$13.25

What on Earth Is God Doing? Study Guide

Make your study of God's plan personal with this new and improved study guide! Featuring engaging questions, charts, and graphics, this workbook is a perfect way to learn about God's handiwork together in your personal study, Sunday school class, or church small group!

US \$7.00; Outside US \$8.50

See enclosed envelope for ordering details.

CONTENTS

11

Finishing Without Regrets

A prominent doctor says most people die with three common regrets. Scripture tells us how to avoid that fate.
Steve Herzig

14

The Never-Ending Hatred

Why does antisemitism refuse to die? What fuels this illogical, never-ending hatred?
Ty Perry

18

Villainous Antiochus

Here is a look at the madman who tried to Hellenize the Jewish people and destroy Judaism before Jesus was born.
Les Crawford

20

'Away With Them!'

Jewish people have been expelled from country after country in yet another method of Jewish ethnic cleansing.
Bruce Scott

26

Pale of Settlement: Czarist Russia's Giant Ghetto

What do you do when you inherit a large Jewish population? Russia's solution was to confine the Jews to the Pale.
Cameron Joyner



Page 20

MORE IN THIS ISSUE

- | | |
|---|--|
| 4 From the Editor | 32 Facing Replacement Theology |
| 5 Inside View | 35 Unearthing Truth With Randall Price: Archaeology and Jericho (Part 3) |
| 6 Editorial: Social Media's Antisemitic Underbelly | 36 Rightly Dividing: Paul's Joy |
| 7 Eye on the Middle East: The Israel-Lebanon Maritime Agreement | 38 Faith for Living: Aidan's Crucible |
| 8 The Friends of Israel in Action | 40 Jewish World Update |
| 23 The Berean Box | 42 Apples of Gold |
| 24 The Infamous Pogroms | |
| 25 Israel's Beautiful Tomorrow | |
| 30 M for Murder | |

FROM THE EDITOR



As a child, I asked my dad, “Why didn’t Jewish people fight the Nazis?”

He replied, “They couldn’t fight. You don’t understand.”

Today, I understand better as I see America turning into pre-World War II Germany. “A movement is now afoot in the United States,” wrote James Sinkinson for JNS.org, “to drive Jews out of higher education—both teachers and students. . . . It is reminiscent of nothing less than the movement to expel Jews from the educational system in Nazi Germany.”

“The UC [University of California] Berkeley Law School’s branch of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) . . . convinced nine law school organizations to adopt a bylaw refusing to invite or sponsor any speaker who supports ‘Zionism, the apartheid state of Israel and the occupation of Palestine,’” Sinkinson reported. SJP has been linked to Hamas.

Many say the action establishes “Jew-free zones,” which it does. Across America, Jewish professors now complain of open antisemitism; and Jewish students and professors are intimidated and harassed simply for being Jewish.

How far will things go? We know from Scripture the human heart is deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). How wicked? A few years ago, I read an article in *Haaretz* by Gili Izikovich that involved the account of a prominent woman, Margit, “the daughter and heiress of European baron and tycoon Heinrich Thyssen,” who held a large dinner party in Rechnitz on the Austrian-Hungarian border in March 1945:

At the height of the evening, just for fun, 12 of the guests boarded trucks or walked to a nearby field, where 180 Jewish slave laborers . . . were assembled. They had already been forced to dig a large pit, strip, and get down on their knees. The guests took turns shooting them to death before returning to the party.

You can read the article online: “My Aunt Had a Dinner Party, and Then She Took Her Guests to Kill 180 Jews.”

This issue of *Israel My Glory* is about antisemitism—its root, its forms over the years, and how it is infiltrating the church today. We pray you take this subject seriously, remembering, “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds” (2 Cor. 10:4), and that you oppose antisemitism and spread the love of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ, which can change the heart.

Waiting for His Appearing,
Lorna Simcox
Editor-in-Chief



MISSION STATEMENT

The Friends of Israel is a worldwide evangelical ministry proclaiming biblical truth about Israel and the Messiah, while bringing physical and spiritual comfort to the Jewish people.

ADMINISTRATION

Executive Director and President: Jim Showers

Executive Vice President: Steve H. Conover

Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer: John Wilcox

Vice President for Ministry Advancement: Tom Geoghan

Vice President of North American Ministries: Steve Herzig

Vice President of International Ministries: Mike Stallard

ISRAEL MY GLORY

Editor-in-Chief: Lorna Simcox

Senior Editor: Jesse King

Associate Editor: David M. Levy

Contributing Editors: Peter Colón • Steve Herzig • Chris Katulka
Dan Price • Randall Price • Tom Simcox • Mike Stallard

Magazine layout and design: JD Lemming

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairman: David R. Benner

Vice Chairman: Laurence H. Murray

Secretary: William King

Daniel L. Anderson • J. T. Beckman • Jonathan W. Glock • Dean E. Good
Mark Jenkins • Randall Price • Jim Showers • Robert C. Sullivan
William E. Sutter • Jim Vogel

Emeriti: W. Sherrill Babb • Philip Brodsky • Elwood McQuaid • Ken Murray
Charles Scheide

OFFICES

USA: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc., PO Box 908
Bellmawr, NJ 08099 • 800-257-7843 or 856-853-5590

CANADA: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry—Canada, PO Box 428 STN A
Brampton, Ontario L6V 2L4, Canada • 888-664-2584

AUSTRALIA: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, PO Box 171
Melrose Park SA 5039, Australia • 08-8276-1333

NEW ZEALAND: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, PO Box 58579
Botany, Auckland 2163, New Zealand • 0800-11-22-62

TO PLACE AN ORDER

In the USA: Call 800-345-8461, Monday–Friday,
8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Eastern time).

In Canada: Call 888-664-2584, Monday–Friday,
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Eastern time).

Online: Go to foi.org.

For magazine subscription rates, please see the enclosed envelope.

To subscribe online, go to israelmyglory.org.

Copyright 2023 The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc.
All rights reserved.

Printed in the USA by Waveline Direct.



A

A few years ago, a friend sent me a page from the December 27, 1937, issue of *Life* magazine. In it was an article titled “Christmas in

Naziland,” with a photograph of an appalling Christmas ornament depicting a dead Jewish man hanging from a gallows with two vultures perched on top.

The ornament was mass produced by an Austrian company and sold, *Life* said, “by Austria’s Anti-Semiten [sic] Bund to provide Christmas relief for poverty-stricken Austrian Jew-haters.” The horrific creation shows how rampant the antisemitism was that infected Nazi Europe in the 1930s.

Hatred of Jewish people was so popular that this hideous depiction of the murder of a Jewish man was considered appropriate at the time of year when people celebrate the birth of a Jewish boy, Jesus Christ.

Today, we see the alarming growth of antisemitism around the world. Many people, both inside and outside the church, oppose the State of Israel’s existence and see it as the root cause of violence in the Middle East. Meanwhile, the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement continues to gain influence in its efforts to destroy the Jewish state.

As horrific and inhumane as antisemitism is, it remains one of the greatest proofs that God has not rejected Israel, despite what others say. Antisemitism grows out of Satan’s rebellion against God and his attempts to eliminate the one, unique people through whom God is accomplishing His plan to redeem the world and restore His Kingdom on Earth.

The Bible clearly teaches that God created Israel to bring salvation to mankind. When He made His covenant with Abraham, God promised to bless all the nations of the world through him (Gen. 12:3). In making that promise, said the apostle Paul, God was preaching “the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, ‘In you all the nations shall be blessed’” (Gal. 3:8). God viewed the salvation of the world as coming through Abraham’s descendants.

The gospel is the means of Satan’s defeat through Jesus Christ. Since Israel is the channel through which God will complete His redemptive work, Israel is Satan’s greatest threat. Antisemitism and its effort to eradicate the Jewish people are Satan’s best chance to thwart his forthcoming, eternal judgment from God. Without Israel, Jesus Christ can’t return to Earth, restore God’s Kingdom on Earth, or sit on David’s throne to rule over Israel from Jerusalem, as God promised.

Satan has tried many times to wipe the Jewish people from the face of the earth. In Exodus, Pharaoh brought his army against them, but God intervened and provided a way of escape through the Red Sea. The book of Esther tells of Haman’s diabolical plan to eliminate the Jewish people. But God used Queen Esther to save her people from annihilation.

Even the psalmist cried to God for help against those who conspired against Israel—people who said, “Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more” (Ps. 83:4). The Holocaust in Nazi Europe was one of Satan’s more recent attempts to destroy God’s Chosen People.

But herein is proof that God is not finished with Israel. If He were finished, there would be no reason for Satan to expend such effort to annihilate the Jewish people.

Antisemitism has been around since Israel’s beginning and will remain as long as Satan sees Israel as the path through which Jesus will return and destroy him. This is why hatred of the Jewish people has spanned the centuries of time and continues to this day.



by **Jim Showers**,
executive director and president of
The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry

SOCIAL MEDIA'S ANTISEMITIC UNDERBELLY

Twitter and Instagram recently locked rapper Kanye West out of his accounts after he posted, “I’m a bit sleepy tonight but when I wake up I’m going full death [sic] con 3 on JEWISH PEOPLE.”

West is a social media influencer with more than 49 million followers between the two social media platforms. What he says, sells, and shares reaches a global audience in seconds. His antisemitic post followed an interview with Fox News’s Tucker Carlson in which the rapper claimed Jared Kushner, former President Donald Trump’s Jewish son-in-law, arranged the peace agreements between Israel and the Arab nations “to make money.”

In a separate interview, West claimed Kushner “is an example of how the Jewish people have their hand on every single business that controls the world.” Besides being untrue, his statement is a textbook antisemitic trope that singles out the entire Jewish race for the world’s problems. His words follow a disturbingly familiar pattern: When there is no one left to blame, you can always point the finger at the Jewish people.

Since being barred from these social media platforms, the rapper has claimed, “Jewish people have owned the Black voice”; and he invokes racial stereotypes about Jewish people controlling media and money.

To all his critics, West says he cannot be labeled antisemitic because Black people are Jewish, too, a view held by the Black Hebrew Israelites (BHI). BHI is a fringe religious movement that rejects major tenets of Judaism while asserting that people of color are the true children of Israel.

West didn’t invent Jew-hatred on social media. It has long been a problem that plagues these giant tech companies. But he is certainly adding fuel to the fire that’s already burning.

A study tracking antisemitic posts on Twitter found that in the week of May 7–14, 2021, more than 17,000 tweets included variations of the phrase *Hitler was right*. The hashtag #Covid1948 was also repeatedly used to connect the birth of the State of Israel in 1948 to the spread of

the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you’re not an active Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram user, you might think these trends don’t affect you. But even if you don’t get your news from social media, many people you know do. A 2021 Pew Research poll found that nearly half (48 percent) of U.S. adults get their news from social media “often” or “sometimes,” while 31 percent regularly get news from Facebook, 13 percent from Twitter, and 11 percent from Instagram. Social media platforms also spread Holocaust denial. A report by *The Guardian* found that nearly two-thirds of young American adults had no clue that 6 million Jewish people were killed during the Holocaust, and more than one in 10 believe Jewish people caused the Holocaust.

Social media’s version of Holocaust education often opposes truth. A recent study found that 19 percent of Holocaust-related content on Twitter promotes Holocaust denial and distortion. That number stands at 17 percent on TikTok, 8 percent on Facebook, and 3 percent on Instagram.

Since his offensive post, West has lost millions of dollars in business partnerships, as high-profile companies such as Balenciaga and Adidas have cut ties with him. But many still fear his post and comments will lead to physical violence against the Jewish community. Jewish people make up only 2 percent of the U.S. population, yet they are the target of 60 percent of the country’s hate crimes. West’s words quickly emboldened antisemites to share his message, as a banner reading “Kanye is right about the Jews” hung above a Los Angeles highway days after his comments.

West needs to understand the danger of antisemitism before he ends up inciting violence. If West is really the born-again Christian he says he is, he should retract his words and take a stand against hatred of the Jewish people because God loves His Chosen People (Gen. 12:3). And He will love them forever (Jer. 31:3).

by Chris Katulka

THE ISRAEL-LEBANON MARITIME AGREEMENT

Israel and Lebanon, two long-time adversaries that are technically at war, recently reached an agreement on where to demarcate the maritime border between their countries. The compromise, mediated by the Biden administration mere weeks before Israeli elections, temporarily resolves the question of natural gas ownership in disputed waters off the Mediterranean coast.

Israel hopes the agreement, though not a formal peace pact, will stabilize its northern border, while Lebanon hopes the deal will generate revenue to support its struggling economy.

The long-running dispute originally involved 860 square kilometers (332 square miles) of waters between the southern boundary of the Lebanese claim, known as Line 23, and the northern boundary of the Israeli claim, known as Line 1. In late 2020, Lebanon, presumably at the behest of the Iranian terrorist proxy Hezbollah, demanded an additional 1,430 square kilometers (552 square miles) of waters south of Line 23, which extended the Lebanese claim to Line 29. Lebanon's original Line 23 claim did not affect Israel; but its Line 29 claim did because it extended Lebanon's territorial claim well into the northern half of the Karish natural gas field, which lies in Israeli waters. Predictably, Israel rejected Lebanon's amended claim.

In June 2022, Israel announced it would begin developing the Karish field, which is believed to have at least 68 billion cubic meters (2.4 trillion cubic feet) of natural gas south of Line 29. Hezbollah

threatened to attack Israel's offshore gas infrastructure if the maritime dispute was not resolved by September. "Our eyes and missiles are locked on Karish," said Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah.

In July, under U.S. mediation, Lebanon announced it would reverse its claim back to Line 23 if Israel ceded an additional 80 square kilometers (31 square miles) south of Line 23. The Israeli government conceded.

In the final deal, which does not address disputes over their shared land border, the two sides agreed that Lebanon would retain full rights over the Qana prospect, an unproven natural gas deposit located to the northeast of the Karish field, over which Israel would retain full rights. In addition, the deal grants Israel approximately 17 percent of the royalties of the part of the Qana field that extends into Israeli waters.

Lebanon's top negotiator, Elias Bou Saab, described the deal as a "game-changer." Yair Lapid, Israeli Prime Minister at the time, agreed. "This is a historic achievement that will strengthen Israel's security, inject billions into Israel's economy, and ensure the stability of our northern border," he said.

Not everyone is happy with the deal because it gives Qana entirely to Lebanon. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called it "historic capitulation" to an enemy.

Commentator Alex Nachumson believes



*
Yair Lapid

Hezbollah will understand Israel's concession as proof that it can get its way in any dispute with Israel, including the terror group's territorial claims on the Golan Heights within Israel's sovereign borders. "Let there be no mistake, Israel's concession will embolden Hezbollah, Iran, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and numerous other terrorist entities that are constantly probing for Israel's weaknesses," he wrote. "They will see the agreement as an Israeli defeat."

Middle East analyst David Schenker said the agreement is a mixed bag. "The compromises Israel made demonstrate how far it will go to make peace with its Arab neighbors. It is an unprecedented positive step with Lebanon. Unfortunately, as long as Beirut remains a satrapy of Iran and dominated by its proxy, it's unclear how any agreement—no matter how beneficial to Lebanon—will prevent the next Israel-Hezbollah war."



by **Soeren Kern**,
a geopolitical analyst
based in Europe

Building Bridges, Bringing Hope

We enter 2023 thanking God that more than 90 people have graduated from our Friends of Israel (FOI) Bridges program, an eight-week, immersive, online internship program that trains students of all ages in Jewish ministry, dispensational hermeneutics, and FOI's unique mission. In a short time, Bridges has become a vital ministry that helps identify and educate new field staff for FOI.

The program, launched in 2021, is designed to give participants the tools they need to confidently share the love of the Messiah through acts of service within their local Jewish communities.

Carrie Gould, one of our first Bridges graduates, was commissioned to full-time ministry

with FOI in February 2022. Bridges gave Carrie the training and experience necessary to be approved by the FOI Board of Trustees. Recently, she was asked to speak to a group at the United Nations about combating antisemitism.

Our interns log in from around the world to invest in Bridges, and all we ask of them is their time and attention. The program is completely free to those who want to learn about Israel and the Jewish people. Here is what some of our alumni say about it:

"The whole Bridges internship was great!"
—Charlie (Lagrange, WY)

"Many thanks for this life-changing and amazing program."
—Olivia (New Brunswick, Canada)

"Bridges was a strong encouragement to step out of my comfort zone to extend love and care to my local Jewish community."

—Marilyn (Fort Wayne, IN)

"I have already recommended the program to several friends."

—Alyssa (Houston, TX)

Bridges does more than provide biblical knowledge. It helps participants put into action everything they learn. We continue to hear stories of our alumni's service in the Jewish community.

Ben Vasquez (Atlanta, GA), a 2021 Bridges graduate, connected with a local rabbi in the Atlanta area. During the Hanukkah season, Ben took the rabbi a basket full of Israeli snacks and goodies. After exchanging pleasantries, Ben explained that Jesus celebrated Hanukkah, which is why the Jewish holiday means so much to him as a Christian.

The rabbi was unaware of this truth. So he and Ben opened a Bible to John 10:22 and, together, read how Jesus, the Good Shepherd, celebrated the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah). It was a wonderful opportunity to build bridges between the Jewish and Christian communities and bring hope.

Ben's confidence to visit his local synagogue, make new friends, and explain why he loves Israel and the Jewish people stemmed from what he learned in our free, online Bridges internship program.

If you have a passion for Israel and the Jewish people and want to build bridges and bring hope to the Jewish community, we encourage you to enroll in Bridges. Visit foi.org/bridges to learn more about how God can use you to serve Him and bless His Chosen People.

If you would like to support Bridges and programs like it in North American Ministries, please visit foi.org/NAMOutreach. You can also call our toll-free ministry-support line at 800-257-7843. Thank you for your prayers and financial support.



*
Carrie Gould (right)

Healing Hearts in Argentina

The Friends of Israel medical clinic in Buenos Aires, Argentina, is a busy place. Recently, a man named David, who lives in the Jewish quarter of the city where the clinic is located, managed to call our team's 24-hour ambulance service before dropping to the ground, unconscious.

A bicycle repairman, David owns a shop and had visited the clinic several times for various ailments. This day, while riding his bike, he began to feel intense chest pain, "as if an elephant's foot were standing on me," he said. Having had heart trouble in the past, he took one of his nitroglycerin pills and stayed conscious long enough to pull out his cell phone and call the FOI doctors for help.

As our team worked on him, David regained consciousness and shared how glimpses of his life "flashed before [his] eyes." He related how his 47 years of seeking God had given him no inner peace, and his religious life left him empty. He bore the haunted expression of a man questioning everything about his life and pursuit of God.

That day, David gripped our doctors' hands as he asked himself seriously, for the first time, what would happen to him if he died on the sidewalk. Our team tended to both David's medical and spiritual needs. After stabilizing him and taking him to the clinic, our workers shared Scripture with him and introduced him to the Messiah. David's desire to know God and have inner peace had become more urgent to him than his heart trouble.

As our doctors worked out his treatment plan, they invited David to one



*
Dr. Alfredo Espinoza (left) talks to patients at the clinic.

of their ongoing "patient reunion" Bible studies at the clinic. David now attends regularly and is discovering God's love for him through Messiah Jesus.

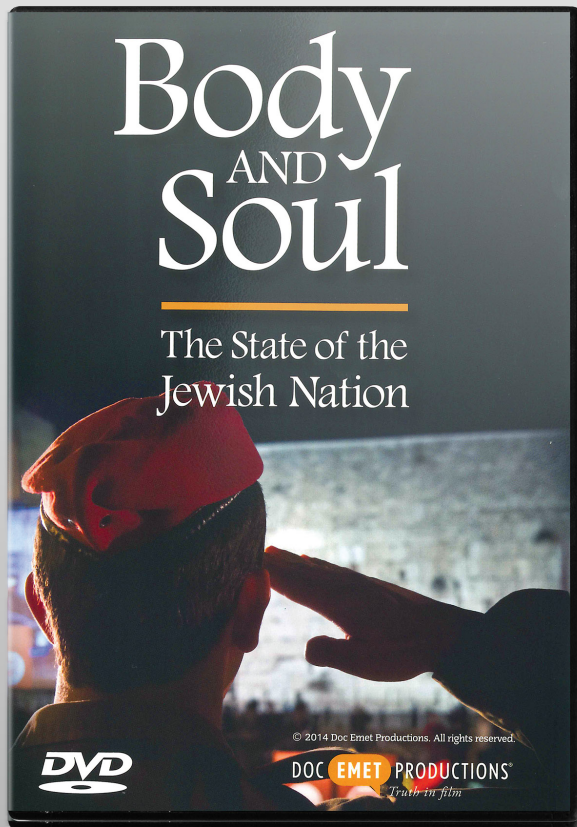
Stories like David's happen every day at the FOI clinic. Our doctors provide medical services in local hospitals, homes, retirement communities, and even on the streets of Buenos Aires. They've also dedicated themselves to 24-hour ambulance service, nurse-training programs, and even rural health initiatives in communities throughout Argentina. They have a passion to share Messiah Jesus, and God gives them many open doors.

Please pray for Alfredo, Asunta, and Juan Carlos Espinoza, two generations of medical doctors serving Jesus and FOI in Argentina. And please pray with us that God continues to open doors for the gospel and our teams around the world to show the love of God to His Chosen People.

We invite you to join our Argentina team and other ministries like this around the world. Please visit foi.org/INT outreach, or call our toll-free ministry-support line at 800-257-7843. Thank you for joining the work with your prayers and financial support.



*
Dr. Juan Carlos Espinoza

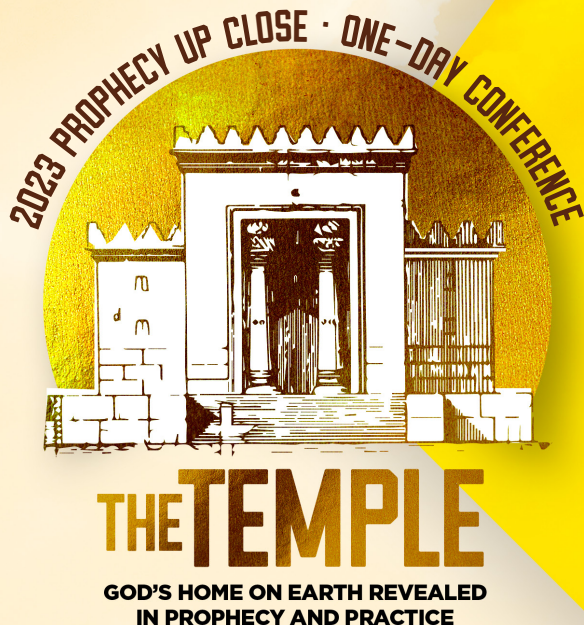


Body and Soul DVD

Many say the nation of Israel is illegitimate and has no right to exist, but they ignore the fact that the Jewish people have a 3,000-year-old claim to the Land of Israel. This timely documentary presents the epic history of the Jewish people's unbreakable relationship with the Holy Land. Leading voices on the history of Israel teach about biblical history, Zionism, the Holocaust, the Six-Day War, and the rebirth of Israel, highlighting the immovable place of prominence the homeland has in the hearts of the Jewish people.

US \$14.95; Outside US \$18.00

See enclosed envelope for ordering details.



**DISCOVER THE
SIGNIFICANCE
OF THE FOUR TEMPLES—
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE!**

**JOIN US FOR A ONE-DAY
CONFERENCE IN YOUR AREA.**

[FOI.ORG/PROPHECY](https://foi.org/prophecy)



FINISHING WITHOUT REGRETS

**A PROMINENT DOCTOR SAYS MOST PEOPLE DIE WITH THREE COMMON
REGRETS. SCRIPTURE TELLS US HOW TO AVOID THAT FATE.**

BY STEVE HERZIG

When the apostle Paul sat in a cold, dark Roman prison, he chose his final words carefully as he took inventory of his life, knowing it soon would end. He told Timothy, his son in the faith,

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing (2 Tim. 4:7–8).

Paul died secure in his faith, satisfied in his life, and devoid of regrets. But many people facing death have many regrets and express them freely before they pass away.

Dr. Simran Malhotra, a hospice and palliative care specialist, interacts with dying patients all the time and says death is a great teacher, providing lessons and perspective on life. In an interview published in *Health Digest* titled “What Most People Say Before They Die,” she cited three common regrets: (1) not spending enough time with loved ones, including years lost with a loved one due to a trivial disagreement, (2) spending too much time at work, and (3) lacking the courage to pursue one’s passions.¹

Malhotra said these regrets taught her lessons that helped her “live a better life.” Though her framework is secular, her observations are insightful for believers in Jesus Christ.

The concept of death as a teacher is not new. King Solomon said it is “better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men; and the living will take it to heart” (Eccl. 7:2). So let’s take Solomon’s words to heart and examine these three common regrets by filtering them through Scripture.

Losing Time With Loved Ones

Life is short, no matter how many years we live. James 4:14 says, “You do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is

even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”

Forgiving someone who has hurt you can certainly be challenging, but it’s a requirement in order to keep relationships healthy. God values relationships and desires to have one with us. And God, who is perfect, forgives us over and over: “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy” (Ps. 103:8).

The apostle Paul wrote, “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). How can we do any less than forgive?

Luke 15:11–32 tells the story of the prodigal son, a tale of family turmoil. The prodigal devastates his father by taking his inheritance early, leaving the family, sowing his wild oats, and wasting all his money. Penniless and alone, the son humbly returns home, hoping he can become his family’s employee.

Instead, his loving father forgives him. He welcomes him home and restores him to his previous standing. The son humbles himself and repents, resulting in a restored relationship.

However, not all live happily ever after. The older son who stayed home and worked with the father bears a grudge, feeling his younger brother doesn’t deserve his father’s lavish welcome. Though the older son may have reason to be jealous, he would have done better to “be kind . . . tenderhearted, forgiving . . . even as God in Christ forgave [him]” (Eph. 4:32).

Why lose precious time with our loved ones because we’re too proud or angry to forgive?

Working Too Much

We’ve heard it said, “You never see a moving van following a hearse.” Working is important because if you don’t work, you don’t eat (cf. 2 Th. 3:10). But working so much that it affects your health and family relationships can produce deep regret. “Work to live,” Dr. Malhotra said. “Don’t live to work.”

In Exodus 18:13–18, we find Moses, the CEO of Israel, so to speak, constantly at the office, neglecting himself and his family. His father-in-law, Jethro, noticed his long absences and told him, “The thing that you do is not good” (v. 17). He was right.

Long lines of people waited “morning until evening” (v. 13) for Moses to make important decisions for them. Jethro warned Moses he would

wear himself out (v. 18). When work destabilizes your health and family, it's a sign you're working too much.

In part, God gave the Mosaic Law to Israel to prevent that problem. The Sabbath laws provide consistent, weekly physical rest and family time. God's command to rest can be seen today when observant Jews turn off their phones and computers on Shabbat, keep their cars in the garage, rest their bodies, and spend time with God and their families.

Christians are not under the Mosaic Law (cf. Rom. 6:14), but the principle of appointing a regular time for physical rest and family bonding is a good one. Jesus said, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" (Mk. 8:36).

Failing to Pursue Our Passions

Dr. Malhotra's patients have taught her, "Follow your heart, pursue your passions, and don't let others dictate how you should live your life." A believer's passion should be following Jesus Christ. To do that, we should obey Christ, who said, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Mt. 6:33).

Jesus will give us abundant lives that satisfy our deepest longings if we seek Him first. Pursuing any passion other than Christ has left many believers with regrets because those passions become mere pleasures. John Bunyan, the Puritan preacher and author of the Christian allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*, spent considerable time thinking about how pleasures operate in our lives.

In one of his sermons, wrote Tony Reinke for desiringgod.org, Bunyan said, "'Desires are hunting things.' Stalking through cornfields in boots, camo overalls, and a blaze orange hat is a fitting metaphor for the restless heart in search of pleasures," wrote Reinke. "Our hearts are hungry and our hearts hunt this world for something (or someone) to fill a void."² Without Christ, that void remains.

Final Words in Scripture

Long before hospice and palliative care existed, Scripture gave us the final words of people who died—words we should take to heart.

Samson, a judge in Israel before the days of the kings, regretted many of his actions. For the most part, he squandered his extraordinary physical strength and was captured by the Philistines, who gouged out his eyes, mocked him, and made him a slave.

But slowly his strength returned, and he pulled down a Philistine temple. His last words were to God: "Let me die with the Philistines!" (Jud. 16:30), indicating a repentant heart.

Stephen was a Jewish follower of Jesus who was martyred for his faith. His last words teach us what it means to have a forgiving spirit and a love for unsaved people. Immediately before he died, he said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" (Acts 7:56).

As his tormentors dragged him out of the city and stoned him to death, he called on God: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (v. 59); and "Lord, do not charge them with this sin" (v. 60). Then Stephen "fell asleep" in death (v. 60).

The thief on the cross teaches us that eternal life is for everyone who calls on the Lord Jesus for salvation: "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom" (Lk. 23:42).

Jesus replied, "Today you will be with Me in Paradise" (v. 43).

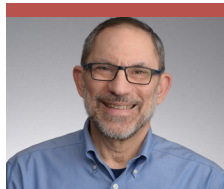
Jesus had no regrets as He accomplished the work His Father had sent Him to do: "It is finished," He said. "And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit" (Jn. 19:30). Those words and His sacrifice

make it possible for you and me to become new creatures in Christ and to limit our regrets so that we can be like the apostle Paul and finish the race well. ★

**JESUS WILL GIVE US ABUNDANT
LIVES THAT SATISFY OUR
DEEPEST LONGINGS IF WE SEEK
HIM FIRST.**

ENDNOTES

- 1 "What Most People Say Before They Die, According to Top Palliative Doctor, Simran Malhotra," healthdigest.org <tinyurl.com/simran-11>.
- 2 John Bunyan, cited in Tony Reinke, "What Your Passions Say About You," desiringgod.org, August 31, 2013 <tinyurl.com/deesire1>.



Steve Herzig

is the vice president of North American Ministries and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

THE NEVER- ENDING HAT



Why does antisemitism refuse to die? What evil fuels this illogical, never-ending hatred?

by Ty Perry

Imagine you're on your way to Sabbath morning services at your local synagogue. For you, this is a day of tradition. It may mean walking through the same doors your parents and grandparents walked through and reciting the centuries-old prayers and psalms of your people.

But as you arrive, you see them: the protestors. Their weekly presence has become a twisted sort of ritual as they proudly hold signs bearing antisemitic messages like "Jewish Power Corrupts" and "Resist Jewish Power."

For congregants at a synagogue in Ann Arbor, Michigan, this has been their reality for nearly 20 years. Every Saturday morning since September 2003, members of the anti-Israel group Witness for Peace, led by a Holocaust-denier, have protested outside Congregation Beth Israel.

Marc Susselman, an attorney representing the congregation in a lawsuit against Witness for Peace, told *The Detroit Jewish News* in 2020, "It is unacceptable for Jews to tolerate being harassed and insulted with respect to their religion and their support for the State of Israel as they approach their place of worship."

Antisemitism is indeed unacceptable. Yet this evil continues to spread and grow throughout the world. In 2018, French Holocaust survivor Mireille Knoll, 85, was stabbed 11 times and partially burned by two young men, one of whom reportedly said, "She's a Jew. She must have money."

The New York Times' global edition in April 2019 featured a cartoon of a yarmulke-wearing U.S. President Donald Trump being led by a dog on a leash with a Star of David around its neck. The dog's face caricatured Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. *Times* columnist Bret Stephens wrote, "The cartoon checked so many anti-Semitic boxes that the only thing missing was a dollar sign."

On January 15, 2022, congregants at a Reform synagogue in Colleyville, Texas, were held hostage by a British Pakistani man who complained, "Jews control the world. Jews control the media. Jews control the banks." Jews, of course, don't control any of those things; but facts never matter to antisemites.

Why does antisemitism continue? Why can we never put an end to this vile hatred? Why does antisemitism exist at all?

A few years ago, I went on a Holocaust-education trip to Poland where I visited concentration camps operated by the Nazis during World War II to exterminate the Jewish people. I saw Treblinka, Majdanek, and Auschwitz. Walking by the barbed-wire fences, standing in the gas chambers, and seeing the crematoria that Adolf Hitler used to commit Jewish genocide in the 1940s made these horrific places real in a way no book or documentary ever could.

These camps serve as poignant memorials to the victims of the Holocaust and as macabre reminders of man's sinful heart. But even more, they demonstrate that there is something more to antisemitism than meets the eye. It is an evil that defies human logic.

In truth, it is a manifestation of Satan's millennia-long struggle against God and His Chosen People. To understand antisemitism and its aggressive, deadly nature, we must understand the context of this war against God.

THE CONFLICT BEGINS

Throughout Scripture, God makes it clear that man was intended to exercise dominion over the created order (Gen. 1:28). Sadly, it didn't take long for man to sin against God, forfeiting to Satan mankind's right to rule the earth (Jn. 12:31) and resulting in the establishment of Satan's kingdom.

God, however, promised victory over Satan. A Redeemer would arise, the Seed of the woman, who would crush Satan's head (Gen. 3:15). From the moment that prophecy was given, Satan has waged a fierce battle against God and His plans for the world.

From Cain's cold-blooded murder of his righteous brother Abel to allowing demons to intermarry with human women, humanity failed to govern itself properly apart from God. People became so evil and corrupt that God released a global deluge to wipe the earth clean. Everyone on Earth drowned except for eight people: Noah and his family.

Noah found grace in God's eyes. Through this righteous man, God would repopulate the earth; and through Noah's son Shem, He would bring the Redeemer (Gen. 9:26).

Wherever the Jewish people have settled, persecution has followed.

Thus, Satan marked Shem's line for persecution. So virulent would his attacks be that hatred of Shem's descendants through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob eventually became known as *antisemitism*.

APOSTASY AND THE SEED OF BLESSING

Noah's descendants multiplied, both in number and in wickedness. They defied God's command to spread out and fill the earth; and, armed with a unified language, they apostatized rapidly, building both a godless culture and a tower on the plains of Shinar that symbolized their rejection of God.

Refusing to allow this apostasy to spread, God confused their language and scattered them around the globe. In the midst of these godless, idolatrous nations, God determined to create a new nation to be a witness for the one, true God (Isa. 43:10). For the task, He selected an unassuming idol-worshiper from Ur, a Shemite named Abram.

God made a covenant with Abram, whom He later renamed Abraham, promising him a land, seed, and

blessing. Furthermore, He promised to bless those who blessed Abraham's descendants and curse those who cursed them. Through this one man, the nations of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:1-3).

God gave the land of Canaan to Abraham, blessed him, and made his name great. At age 100, Abraham and his wife, Sarah, aged 90, welcomed their miracle son, Isaac. Isaac and his wife bore Jacob, whom God later renamed Israel. Of Israel's 12 sons, it would be through Judah that the Redeemer would come (49:10).

Though Abraham had other children, God gave His promise to Isaac and Israel (17:19; 35:10-12). Today we call it the Abrahamic Covenant. It is unconditional and eternal and guarantees land, nationhood, and blessing.

OUT OF EGYPT, INTO COVENANT

Israel's family eventually moved to Egypt, where God protected them through Israel's son Joseph, whom He elevated to prominence. Eventually, Joseph died; and a new pharaoh arose who feared the Israelites because they had grown into a multitude.

This pharaoh trafficked in antisemitism. He forced the Israelites into hard labor and ordered the murder of all

newborn males. So, God raised up Moses, whom He used to liberate the nation for His glory. In the desert at Mount Sinai, God met with Moses, giving him and his people the Law, known as the Mosaic Covenant (Ex. 19).

Since this was to be the nation through which the true knowledge of God and the Redeemer would come, it

must be a holy nation, a kingdom of priests (v. 6). The Law was intended to keep Israel separate from the pagans so that it could be a people separated to God for His purposes. This covenant was conditional.

So serious was it that, while obedience to it would result in untold blessings, disobedience would result in cursing and chastening. The most devastating of these curses was God's promise to scatter His Chosen People to the four corners of the earth, where nations would persecute them mercilessly (Dt. 28:6-68).

SCATTERED

Much of Israel's history throbs with sadness. The Israelites repeatedly committed spiritual adultery with the gods of the nations, often synthesizing their worship of Yahweh with that of foreign deities.

True to His covenant, God allowed His people to endure antisemitism and captivity because of their sin. From 740 to 722 BC, the Assyrians took the 10 northern tribes of Israel captive. Between 605 and 586 BC, the Babylonians took the tribes of Judah and Benjamin



captive. In both cases, the oppression was brutal.

An ultimate and thorough scattering occurred following the nation's rejection of its Messiah. Just as Jesus had prophesied, the Temple and Jerusalem were destroyed in AD 70, and the Jewish people were dispersed throughout the world (Mt. 24:2).

Yet, God, in His covenant love for Israel, promised them He would be a sanctuary in their dispersion, never allowing them to be entirely destroyed (Jer. 31:35–37; Ezek. 11:16).

Wherever the Jewish people have settled, persecution has followed. Expulsions, torture, pogroms, and genocide fill the pages of Jewish history. Much to the church's shame, the bulk of Jewish persecution has come at the hands of professing Christians who erroneously viewed antisemitism as a just punishment for Israel's rejection of Jesus.

Based on that logic, believers in Jesus should be free of persecution. But that is far from the case, since one in seven believers around the world suffers persecution for his or her faith.

So, how should Christians understand antisemitism?

A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

First, we must understand that antisemitism is a manifestation of Satan's conflict with God. Satan knows his time is short; and he is doing all he can to keep God's immutable plans from coming to pass, including the fulfillment of His covenant promises to Israel (Rev. 12:13–17).

Second, the prevalence of antisemitism is evidence not of God's hatred for His people but of His love for them (Prov. 3:11–12). This concept may seem counterintuitive, particularly to Jewish

victims of antisemitism. But it is true. The purpose for Israel's dispersion and persecution is not to punish God's people but, rather, to chasten them, leading to their repentance (Dt. 30:1–3).

Third, though God allows antisemitism and uses it for His purposes, Christians must never boast or speak against the Jewish people (Rom. 11:18). God promised to bless those who bless them and curse those who curse them (Gen. 12:3; Mt. 25:31–46). As believers, our hearts should reflect the Lord's heart (Rom. 10:1). In other words, the church should be Israel's best friend.

Satan will war against God until he is cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10), but all of Israel that is alive when the Lord returns will be saved (Zech. 13:8–9; Rom. 11:26–27). Then antisemitism will be a thing of the past (Zech. 8:23).

Until that day, we can expect acts of antisemitism, such as those Beth Israel faces, to escalate. As believers, we should obey Jesus' admonition, taken from the Torah: "Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind" and, Jesus added, "your neighbor as yourself" (Lk. 10:27). That includes loving the Jewish people. ★

Editor's Note: With this article, we begin a new column on antisemitism by Ty Perry that will run in each issue of *Israel My Glory*.



Ty Perry

is the Field Ministries manager and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry in Michigan.



VILLAINOUS ANTIOCHUS

A look at the madman who tried to Hellenize the Jewish people and destroy Judaism

by Les Crawford

The pages of history are filled with heroes and villains. Heroes protect people and fight evil, like Winston Churchill who led the people of Great Britain in World War II. Villains destroy people and pursue evil, like Adolf Hitler who exterminated 6 million Jews in the Holocaust.

The Bible records the lives of many heroes, like David who slew Goliath and ruled over Israel righteously, and many villains, like Haman who tried to kill all God's people in the days of King Ahasuerus.

Because it does not appear in Scripture, the name Antiochus Epiphanes may not ring a bell. Yet he was a true villain who tried to destroy Judaism and the Jewish people, first by assimilation and then by murder, during the inter-testamental period. In fact, he was so evil he is considered a type of the Antichrist.

COOPERATION

Prior to Antiochus's reign (175–164 BC), the Jewish people enjoyed good relations with the Greek Empire largely due to Alexander the Great's benevolence toward them. Even after Alexander's death and the distribution of his empire among his four generals, the Jews experienced tolerance and freedom.

But Greek settlers moved into Israel, including Jerusalem; and Jewish people spread across the empire, with many residing in Alexandria. Though they were allowed to continue practicing Judaism, elements of Greek culture and philosophy

soon took subtle root among them. This change was known as Hellenization, the assimilation of Greek culture by other ethnic groups, especially the Jews.

Alexandria was a significant Jewish center outside Judea and Samaria and a focal point for Hellenization. It was here in the 3rd century BC that the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek, commonly known as the Septuagint (LXX). The Septuagint enabled Greek-speaking Jews to access their sacred writings and gave Greeks access to them in the city's vast library. Assimilation had a binary effect, influencing both cultures, as the Greeks began to attend synagogues across the empire.

CORRUPTION

For some time, assimilation progressed peacefully; but a shift occurred in the Seleucid empire of Syria during the reign of Antiochus IV, a madman who called himself Epiphanes, meaning "God Manifest." The Seleucid empire ruled Judea.

Rival Jewish religious leaders fought for power by using financial incentives and cultural assimilation to gain Antiochus's support. He needed funds to finance his expansionist plans, so he happily agreed to back whoever offered the best deal.

One contender, Jason, brother of the high priest, Onias, bribed Antiochus for his endorsement as high priest using the lure of increased revenue from higher taxes. Jason also offered additional funds to establish a gymnasium and local training group (an *ephebate*) in Jerusalem to advance Hellenization in the Jewish capital.

Jason demonstrated his affinity for Greek culture when he changed his name from the Hebrew, Joshua, to the Greek, Jason. Antiochus agreed to this arrangement, and the process of Hellenization accelerated. Then came an ironic twist. A Benjamite named Menelaus used bribery to replace Jason as high priest. Acting as Jason's envoy, Menelaus delivered the

promised revenues to Antiochus and secured the office for himself by bribing Antiochus with more money.

Antiochus had no concern for the impact such a change would have on the Jewish population. The switch added to the tensions among Jews concerned about foreign influence on their religion and culture. Menelaus was foreign to this office, not being a member of the priestly Oniad family.

Menelaus's activities as high priest only increased Jewish resentment against him, but he retained Antiochus's support because Antiochus valued his loyalty. At that time, Antiochus was leading a campaign against Egypt. When Menelaus failed to deliver the promised revenue, Antiochus called him to account for his failure. While Menelaus was away from Jerusalem, Jason retook the office of high priest, expelling Antiochus's soldiers.

Many anti-Hellenistic Jews supported Jason despite his previous actions because of the increasing Hellenistic influence Menelaus advanced and his continued siphoning of Temple funds for Antiochus's expansionist agenda.

DESECRATION

Antiochus's military campaign against Egypt came to a humiliating end when Rome demanded he withdraw. Rome was expanding its influence into Egypt and would not tolerate Greek rivals for that region. The humiliation set Antiochus on the warpath against the Jews, earning him a new identity as Antiochus Epimanes, meaning "Antiochus the Mad" or "Maniac."

Considering Jason's actions a rebellion against him, he unleashed his fury on Jerusalem when he returned from Egypt. First, he killed Jason, the last of the Zadokite high priests. He also ordered the massacre of about 40,000 Jews and sold a similar number into slavery. But this was merely the beginning. His persecution of the Jewish people knew no limits.

Antiochus installed a Seleucid garrison to control Jerusalem and proceeded to stamp out the Jewish faith using murder and torture. Toward the end of 167 BC, he issued a series of devastating decrees that included forbidding Temple offerings and installing pagan altars and images for people to offer sacrifices of pigs and other unclean animals in the Jewish sanctuary. He also outlawed circumcision and Sabbath observance, and he burned Torah scrolls and forced dietary violations. Disobedience was punishable by death—usually a gruesome one.

The climax of the attack on Judaism came when Antiochus offered a pig on the pagan altar to Zeus that had been erected in the Jerusalem Temple. The desecration foreshadows the future, prophetic "abomination of desolation" associated with the Antichrist (Dan. 11:31; 12:11).

The action provoked courageous resistance from the Jewish people, but Antiochus's garrison initially crushed it. Under the leadership of Mattathias and his son Judah, the Jewish forces grew strong enough to defeat Antiochus's army. This victory enabled the rededication and restoration of the Temple, a remarkable moment in Jewish history celebrated annually in the festival of Hanukkah.

CULMINATION

In the end, Antiochus only succeeded in reinforcing Jewish culture in the heartland of Judaism and short-circuiting the growing influence of assimilation. His violent, brutal suppression of Jewish culture accomplished the opposite of what he had intended.

Had Antiochus succeeded, the core elements of Jewish identity and practice would have been eliminated, not assimilated. Again, God preserved the Jewish people for His purposes.

Elsewhere in the empire, among the Jewish Diaspora, Hellenization continued. Many Jews accepted the loss of circumcision and conformity to Mosaic laws while retaining the essence of their faith. They enjoyed exemption from emperor worship and could pursue their own worship without persecution for an extended season.

Hellenization connected Gentiles (Greeks/Romans) to the Jewish faith, as it assimilated Jewish culture into others to some degree. This process would pave the way for the preaching of the gospel in Jewish synagogues and elsewhere across the empire using the common language, Koine Greek, for both Jews and Gentiles.

Despite man's attempts to destroy the Jewish people and the culture God established among them, God's purposes will not be undone. ★

THE CLIMAX OF THE ATTACK
ON JUDAISM CAME WHEN
ANTIOCHUS OFFERED A PIG
ON THE PAGAN ALTAR TO ZEUS
THAT HAD BEEN ERECTED IN
THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE.



Les Crawford

is a Bible teacher and the field director of The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry in Australia.



'AWAY WITH THEM!'

JEWISH PEOPLE HAVE BEEN EXPELLED FROM
COUNTRY AFTER COUNTRY IN YET ANOTHER
METHOD OF JEWISH ETHNIC CLEANSING.

BY BRUCE SCOTT

“Get off my land. This is still my home, my land. Get off my land.”

This passionate statement by Tevye the Jewish milkman comes from the 1970s blockbuster Broadway musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. A constable informs Tevye that all Jewish residents of the little Russian *shtetl* (village) of Anatevka have three days to pack up and leave their homes forever. The tsar is expelling the Jews.

Where would they go? What could they take with them? Would they even survive?

Fiddler on the Roof is fictional, but it resonates with the sad truth of Jewish history. The story was borrowed from beloved Yiddish storyteller Sholem Aleichem (1859–1916), who grew up in a *shtetl* in the Russian Empire and knew the sting of antisemitism.

Why do some people hate Jews? Many don't have a reason. They simply hate Jews for being Jews. As the psalmist wrote, “Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head” (Ps. 69:4).

Antisemitism has precipitated some of the most horrific atrocities in world history. Slavery, property confiscation, forced conversions, military crusades, libels, confinements, beatings, torture, persecution, and genocide all have dogged the footsteps of God's Chosen People for millennia.

But there's another form of Jew-hatred and ethnic cleansing they've also experienced: forced displacement, or expulsion.

THE SCATTERING OF GOD'S SHEEP

Although today's Jewish population of 15 million accounts for barely two tenths of 1 percent of the world population, Jews can be found around the globe in what is known as the Diaspora (the dispersion).

Through Moses, God warned His Chosen People about the consequences of disobedience:

You shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess. Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other. . . . And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place (Dt. 28:63–65).

Sometimes Jewish people fled their homes to avoid being murdered. But often, as in the fictional *shtetl* of Anatevka, government or religious officials simply expelled them en masse.

The major dispersion began after the Romans destroyed the Second Temple in AD 70 and Roman Emperor Tiberius (r. AD 14–37) banished all Jews from Rome.¹ Some 30 years later, Emperor Claudius (r. AD 41–54) again expelled them from Rome (Acts 18:1–2), apparently over disturbances between them and Christians.² But these expulsions were merely the beginning.

As a result of the first Jewish war against the Romans (AD 66–73), 97,000 Jewish people were carried into captivity.³ During another failed revolt against Roman occupation (AD 132–135), thousands were sold into slavery and dispersed throughout the Roman Empire. “So many Jews were enslaved that at the Hebron slave market they fetched less than [the price of] a horse,” wrote one historian.⁴

After virtually destroying Jerusalem, Roman Emperor Hadrian renamed the area Aelia Capitolina and banned all Jews on threat of death; then he built on the ruins of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount.

In 624, probably because they refused to convert to Islam, the Muslim prophet Muhammad exiled hundreds of Jews from Medina in Saudi Arabia in an event known as the *Banu Qaynuqa*.⁵

In the centuries that followed, Jewish people were expelled from cities and kingdoms throughout medieval “Christian Europe,” including Germany, Austria, Hungary, the Papal States, and Italy. One such ill-famed expulsion resulted from the edict of English King Edward I (of William Wallace [*Braveheart*] fame) in 1290. Thousands were evicted from their homes and forbidden to return to England for almost 400 years. In 1394, King Charles VI expelled all Jews from France.

THE LARGEST EXPULSION

However, the most infamous expulsion occurred in Spain. On March 31, 1492, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella signed the Alhambra Decree (Edict of Expulsion),⁶ which was not made public until May 1, shortly after they commissioned Christopher Columbus to embark on his historic voyage to the New World.

The Alhambra Decree threw the Jews out of Spain lock, stock, and barrel, adding that any who remained would “incur the penalty of death and the confiscation of all their possessions.” They had until August 1 (9th of the Hebrew month Av) to comply. This expulsion dismembered the largest Jewish community in the world at the time.

The decree was intended to prevent practicing Jews from enticing converted Jews to abandon Catholicism and return to Judaism. During the previous 12 years, Ferdinand and Isabella instituted the Spanish Inquisition to purge heretics from their midst.

The Roman Catholic Church had used official inquisitions long before the Spanish Inquisition had its first *auto-de-fe* (“act of faith” public-penance ritual of convicted heretics) in 1481. But the Spanish Inquisition became notorious for its cruelty, torture (to extract confessions), and burning-alive executions. By the time it ended in 1834, “an estimated 31,912 heretics [mostly Jews, converted Jews, converted Muslims, and Protestants] were burned at the stake.”⁷

Ferdinand and Isabella believed the Inquisition ferreted

out Jews who “perverted” Jewish converts to Catholicism and “enticed” them to disgrace “our holy Catholic faith.” Convinced that all of Spain’s previous measures—Jewish ghettos, localized expulsions, and Inquisition tortures—were insufficient to correct so great an “opprobrium [disgrace] and offense to the faith and the Christian religion,” they resorted to a more definitive corrective: expelling the entire Jewish community, some 200,000 people, from Spain.⁸

However, the Alhambra Decree smacks of a possible ulterior motive: It said the Jews could sell or take their possessions with them “as long as they do not export gold or silver or coined money.” In effect, the expulsion also involved official, governmental extortion.

The Jews of Spain couldn’t win: They could (1) convert to Catholicism; (2) maintain their Jewish faith but leave behind everything they’d ever known or owned, hoping some country would admit them; or (3) remain Jewish, stay in Spain, and be killed.

Tens of thousands converted. Several hundred thousand left. The expulsion from Spain, where earlier the Jewish people had experienced a “Golden Age,” was one of the darkest chapters in Jewish history.

THEN CAME MARTIN LUTHER

It wasn’t only Catholics who advocated expelling the Jews. In 1543, Martin Luther, leader of the Protestant Reformation, wrote a 13-part booklet titled *On the Jews and Their Lies*.

It spewed such vitriolic hatred of the Jewish people that it influenced the German perception of Jews for centuries to come and helped Adolf Hitler and the Nazis justify their “final solution to the Jewish question,” a euphemism for the annihilation of European Jewry.

Toward the beginning of his ministry, Luther was more congenial toward the Jewish community, thinking Jews might believe the gospel after he restored the doctrine of justification by faith. But when they failed to accept the gospel, he began to despise them.

He wrote *On the Jews and Their Lies* three years before he died. It is a polemic against a Jewish publication in which the author debates an imaginary Christian. Luther not only challenged the Jewish author’s interpretation of Scripture but also vented his animosity toward all Jews. He held nothing back. “Next to the devil,” Luther wrote, “a Christian has no more bitter and galling foe than a Jew.”

He called Jewish people “venomous, bitter, vindictive, tricky serpents, assassins, and children of the devil who sting and work harm stealthily wherever they cannot do it openly.” He also gave credence to the commonly accepted libels of the

day that Jewish people kidnapped and mutilated Christian children and deliberately poisoned wells. (This very libel led to the massacre of thousands of European Jews during the Black Death plague in the mid-14th century.)

Luther had lost patience with the Jews and given up on them coming to faith in Christ. In his mind, the only course of action was for the civil authorities to destroy all synagogues, schools, and Jewish homes and to “eject them [the Jews] forever from the country. . . . Away with them!”

. . . so that you and we all can be rid of the unbearable, devilish burden of the Jews. . . . In my opinion the problem must be resolved thus: If we wish to wash our hands of the Jews’ blasphemy and not share in their guilt, we have to part company with them. They must be driven from our country. . . . We must drive them out like mad dogs, so that we do not become partakers of their abominable blasphemy and all their other vices.⁹

When the Nazis rose to power in the mid-1930s and implemented their racist policies, they particularly targeted the Jewish community. They made the lives of German and Austrian Jews so miserable between 1938 and 1940 that 60 percent of them, more than 400,000 people, fled and sought refuge elsewhere. When the Nazis officially slammed the door of emigration closed in October 1941, the Jewish people’s fate was sealed.

In the Nazis’ effort to make their empire *Judenrein* (“cleansed of Jews”), they deported European Jews to ghettos, concentration camps, and death camps. Millions were dispossessed of their belongings, wealth, families, and lives.

In the years surrounding the rebirth of Israel in 1948, as well

as after the 1967 Six-Day War, Arab nations and Iran took a page from the Nazi playbook. They persecuted their Jewish communities to such a severe degree with threats, confiscation of property, and violence that more than 850,000 Jews fled for their lives. Most went to the new State of Israel. In today’s dollars, the value of property these Jewish refugees left behind is estimated to be in the billions.¹⁰

These are merely a few examples of antisemitic expulsions. Sadly, many more exist. It’s hard to imagine the heartache of experiencing a hatred so deep it forces you to constantly uproot your life and flee to who-knows-where. As Moses predicted, “Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life” (Dt. 28:66).

THE GATHERING OF GOD’S SHEEP

However, God sees what has been done to His people Israel.

**BUT THERE’S ANOTHER
FORM OF JEW HATRED AND
ETHNIC CLEANSING THEY’VE
ALSO EXPERIENCED: FORCED
DISPLACEMENT, OR EXPULSION.**



And, unlike governments that turn a blind eye, He will not let antisemitism pass without bringing justice:

I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations (Joel 3:2).

God not only sees, but His heart beats with tender compassion. He promises to restore Israel fully to its homeland. One day He will gather His scattered people as a shepherd gathers his sheep:

For the Lord God says this: "Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and look after them. As a shepherd cares for his flock on a day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land. I Myself will feed My flock and I Myself will lead them to rest," declares the Lord God (Ezek. 34:11–13, 15, NASB).

When that day comes, Jewish people will not be forced from their homes and land ever again. They will live safely in their Anatevkas forever.

Tevye would be pleased. ★

ENDNOTES

- Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.3.5 (18:81–84); C. Suetonius Tranquillus, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, an English translation, "Tiberius," chap. 36, ed. Alexander Thomson (Philadelphia, PA: Gebbie & Co., 1889), Perseus Digital Library <tinyurl.com/5n87nes5>.
- 1 C. Suetonius Tranquillus, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, an English translation, "Divus Claudius," chap. 25," ed. Alexander Thomson (Philadelphia, PA: Gebbie & Co., 1889), Perseus Digital Library <tinyurl.com/3m5jartx>.
 - 2 Josephus, *War* 6.9.3 (6:420).
 - 3 Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Jerusalem: The Biography* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011), 143.
 - 4 A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1955), 363.
 - 5 "Edict of the Expulsion of the Jews (1492)," trans. Edward Peters <sephardicstudies.org/decreed.html>.
 - 6 "Christian-Jewish Relations: The Inquisition," Jewish Virtual Library <jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-inquisition>.
 - 7 Celia Prados Garcia, "La expulsión de los judíos y el retorno de los sefardíes como nacionales españoles. Un análisis histórico-jurídico," in F. J. García Castaño and N. Kressova (Coords.), *Actas del Primer Congreso Internacional de Migraciones de Andalucía* (Grenada: Institute of Migrations, 2011), 2,119–2,126.
 - 8 Martin Luther, *On the Jews and Their Lies*, Parts 11–12 (1543), in "Primary Texts on History of Relations" Dialogika Resources <tinyurl.com/2p9nwe72>.
 - 9 "Fact Sheet: Jewish Refugees From Arab Countries," Jewish Virtual Library <tinyurl.com/97f9hs5n>.

GOD IS OMNISCIENT

Omniscience means having complete and unlimited knowledge and understanding of all things. No one fits this description but God. He alone is omniscient. Only He possesses perfect knowledge of Himself and all His plans (Mt. 11:27).

Everything in existence manifests God's sovereign free will, which He alone decrees (Isa. 46:9–10). God's knowledge is intuitive; He instinctively knows what is true without conscious reasoning and does not acquire knowledge through observation. His knowledge never increases or decreases.

Thus, God is all-knowing, all-seeing, and all-wise. He knows all things because they exist in His being and plan. The past, present, and future are ever present to God because He consciously and eternally perceives them.

God knows all things because He created and sustains all things, and He oversees the operation of everything at every point in history. Job asked, "Can anyone teach God knowledge?" (Job 21:22). The answer is no because God knows all things (1 Jn. 3:20).

Even the days of our lives are controlled by God (Job 14:1–5). He knows our thoughts before we act on them (Ps. 139:2–4) and knows even the smallest details of life, such as the death of a sparrow and the number of hairs on our heads (Mt. 10:29–30).

God's divine foresight governs all nature. He ordains geographical limits on Earth, showing His sovereignty and authority over all nations throughout world history (Acts 17:26). "He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel" (Dt. 32:8).

God's knowledge is infinite and immeasurable in terms of space and time (Ps. 147:4–5). His "understanding is unsearchable" (Isa. 40:28) to the human mind. We cannot comprehend the magnitude of His being, yet He is knowable to mankind.

Knowing God is omniscient gives true believers assurance that they will never be forgotten during their lives on Earth and beyond. From eternity past, He set His love on them to establish an intimate relationship with them now and in their final glorification forever (Rom. 8:29–30; Eph. 1:11–12).

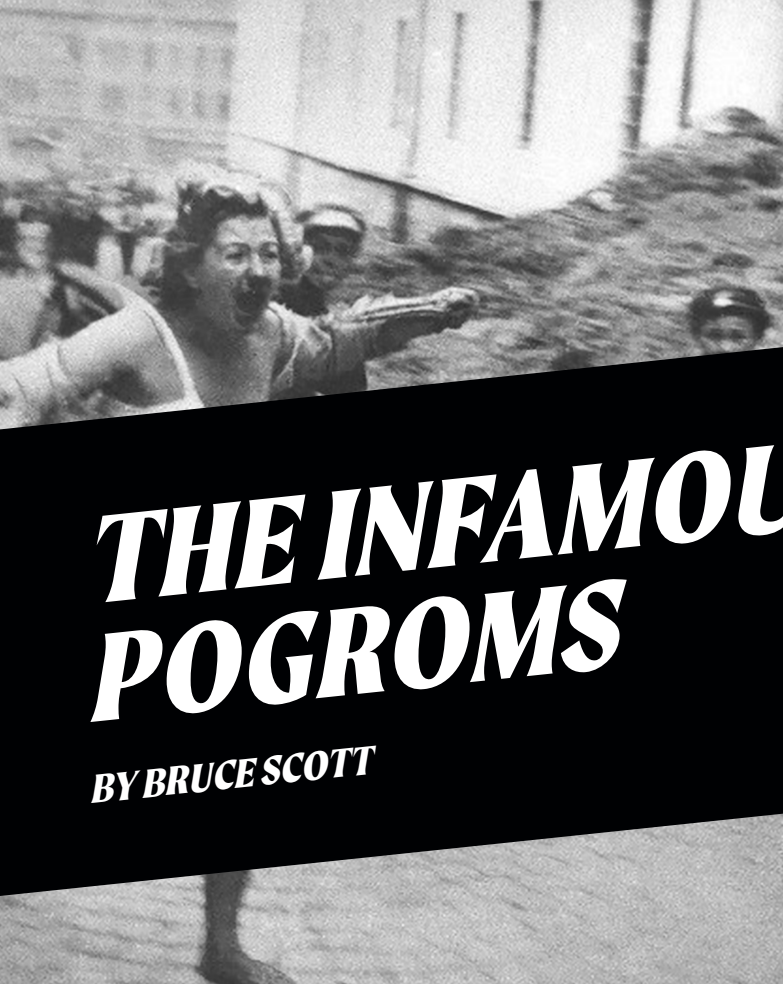
The apostle Paul searched the universe to see if anything could possibly separate believers from God's love or eternal presence. He concluded that nothing on Earth now or in the future can ever separate believers from God's love (Rom. 8:38–39). Remember, when you face troubled days, God is omniscient. He knows your situation and its outcome.

by David M. Levy



Bruce Scott

is the director of Program Ministries and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.



THE INFAMOUS POGROMS

BY BRUCE SCOTT

*
Men and youths with clubs attack a Jewish woman during a pogrom in Eastern Europe in 1941.

In AD 38 in Alexandria, Egypt, the Roman prefect (governor) Flaccus encouraged an Egyptian mob to attack the city's large Jewish community. After rounding up the Jews and shoving them into a small ghetto, rioters plundered their homes and shops and left them to starve. Any Jewish people caught outside the ghetto trying to buy food for their families were savagely beaten, stoned, or torn limb from limb.

Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria wrote, "The most merciless of all their persecutors in some instances burnt whole families, husbands with their wives, and infant children with their parents, in the middle of the city, sparing neither age nor youth, nor the innocent helplessness of infants."¹ Other Jews were imprisoned, scourged, tortured, or crucified.

It would have been bad enough had this been an isolated incident. But history reeks with examples of such pogroms—government-sanctioned (sometimes instigated) killing sprees—against the Jewish people.

In 1391, the antisemitic sermons of Catholic archdeacon Ferrand Martinez incited vicious pogroms in Spain. Forced conversion was the goal. Fanaticism was the fuel. Greed was the underlying hunger.

Synagogues were destroyed or turned into churches. Entire localities were decimated or plundered. More than 4,000 Jewish people were murdered, and more than 200,000 submitted to baptism rather than be killed.² A few civil authorities made feeble attempts to stop the terror. The religious authorities did nothing.

The pogroms of 1391 became a turning point in Spanish Jewish history and, with the abundance of new converts (converts to Catholicism), set the stage for the horrific Spanish Inquisition 90 years later.

In the mid-17th century, Ukrainian nationalist Bogdan Chmielnicki led a nine-year uprising against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth that controlled Ukraine at the time. Because many Jewish people collected taxes and helped Polish nobles handle their financial affairs, Chmielnicki and his Cossack followers associated Jewish people with Polish oppression. He told the Ukrainians that the Poles "had sold them as slaves 'into the hands of the accursed Jews.'"³

Wrote historian Herman Rosenthal, "With this as their battle-cry, the Cossacks let loose their wildest passions and most ruthlessly massacred about three hundred thousand Jews with such cruelties as the world had seldom witnessed (1648–1649)."⁴

Chmielnicki and his Cossacks used unspeakable tortures and wiped out more than 300 Jewish communities. The Chmielnicki pogroms paved the way for Jews throughout Eastern Europe in 1665 to accept and follow a charismatic Jewish mystic named Shabbetai Zvi, one of history's most infamous false messiahs, whom they hoped would rescue them from their suffering.

The word *pogrom* itself comes from a Russian verb meaning "to destroy." It came into use to describe violent mob attacks on Jewish communities under the czarist and early communist regimes of Russia between 1881 and 1921. At that time, millions of Jewish people lived in an area known as the Pale of Settlement (modern-day western Russia, parts of Poland, and most of Ukraine). It was a period of great political and social upheaval in the Russian empire.

Disgruntled Russian peasants resented the czars' wealth and luxurious lifestyles, and revolution was in the air. Looking

for a scapegoat to take the attention off their failures, the czars chose the Jews. The Jewish people were wrongly blamed for a host of economic problems, as well as the assassination of Czar Alexander II in 1881. The government's secret police published pamphlets calling for pogroms against the Jewish people, to which the frustrated populace greedily complied.

After the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, the Red Army encouraged people to go after the Jews. Ukrainian soldiers were no better. Hundreds of pogroms resulted. Looting and theft were commonplace. Jewish property loss was incalculable. In Ukraine alone between 1881 and 1920, there were "between 1,200 and 1,326 pogroms, with between 70,000 to 250,000 Jewish dead, and half a million left homeless."⁵

Consequently, millions of Jewish people immigrated to the United States, Palestine (Israel), and elsewhere.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Philo, *Flaccus* 1:29, 56, 68.
- 2 Henry Charles Lea, "Ferrand Martinez and the Massacres of 1391," *The American Historical Review* 1, no. 2 (1896), 209–219, [jstor.org <tinyurl.com/274j25an>](https://www.jstor.org/stable/274j25an).
- 3 Herman Rosenthal, "Chmielnicki, Bogdan Zinovi," [jewishencyclopedia.com <tinyurl.com/yj3xmy2h>](https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/10333-chmielnicki-bogdan-zinovi).
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Colin Tatz and Winton Higgins, *The Magnitude of Genocide* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2016), 26.



Bruce Scott

is the director of Program Ministries and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

Israel's Beautiful Tomorrow

This world is not a pleasant place. Between global pandemics, social unrest, skyrocketing costs, and rampant hatred, it's easy to want to toss in the towel and give up.

Many people try to look on the bright side but can't find

one. And the Bible teaches that the closer we get to the return of the Lord Jesus, the more everything will degenerate, particularly for the Jewish people and Bible-believing Christians.

Anyone even vaguely cognizant of today's political climate sees that antisemitism is now the norm and the tiny State of Israel struggles to survive in a world growing more pagan, more anti-Jewish, and more anti-Christian each day.

But everything will change when Jesus, the Messiah of Israel and Savior of the world, reenters our atmosphere. When this monumental event occurs, the world will find itself in chaos. At the battle of Armageddon on the plains of Megiddo in Israel, God will retake His earth and end the Times of the Gentiles, a historical period of Gentile domination of Israel that began with the destruction of the kingdom of Judah and the Temple in 586 BC. (See Daniel 2:44–45.)

For most of its history, Israel has endured hatred and satanic attacks simply because God chose that nation to bring His Word, His blessing, and the ability to enjoy a personal relationship with Him to a lost world. Consequently, Satan has worked tirelessly to eradicate the Jewish people.

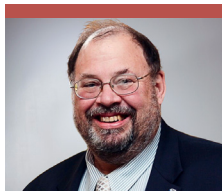
But Israel will endure forever because God has declared

in His eternal Word, "Israel shall be saved by the LORD with an everlasting salvation; you shall not be ashamed or disgraced forever and ever" (Isa. 45:17).

Today Israel is criticized, condemned, censured, and attacked daily. But the day is coming when Israel, the whipping boy of the United Nations, will become "the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath" (Dt. 28:13). Jerusalem, a burdensome stone to the world, shall be "beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth . . . the city of the great King" (Ps. 48:2).

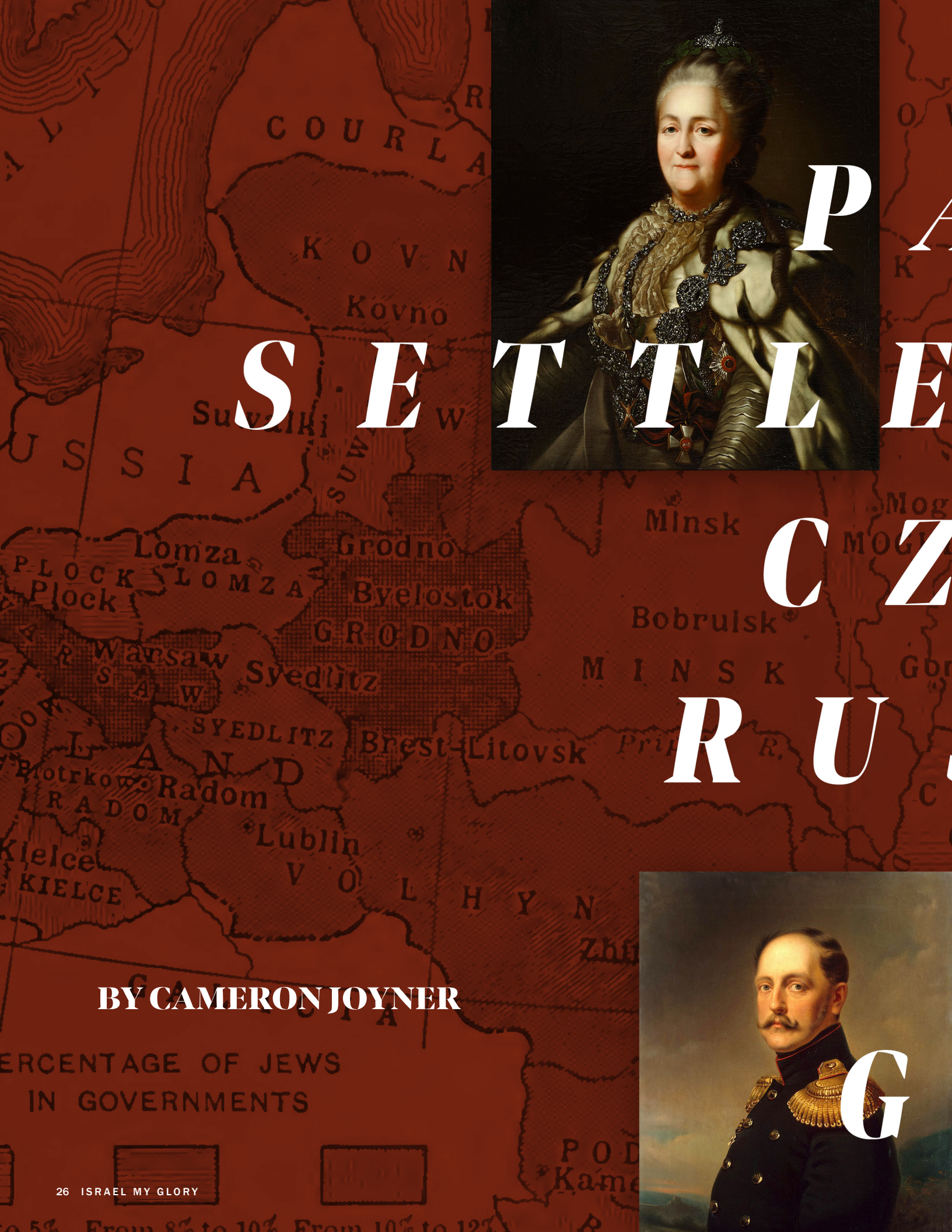
These blessings will occur because Jesus will return physically to reign and rule from Jerusalem over a world restored to Edenic conditions. What joy that day will bring for Israel and for Christians, as the true and rightful King will be ensconced on His throne in a rebuilt Temple on the Temple Mount (Zech. 6:13); and the Jewish people will enjoy peace and security in their own land, the land God gave them.

As for Church Age Christians, both Jewish and Gentile, we will be part of the administration of King Jesus as we "reign with Him a thousand years" in glorified, immortal bodies (Rev. 20:6). Until then, we must keep our eyes on the Lord and continue to trust Him and His promise that a great big, beautiful tomorrow will arrive at the end of a dismal and depressing today. ★



Tom Simcox

is the Church Ministries training coordinator and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.



PAR SETTLE CZ RU G



BY CAMERON JOYNER

PERCENTAGE OF JEWS
IN GOVERNMENTS

A L E O F

M E N T :

A R I S T

S S I A ' S

G I A N T

H E T T O



Here's a phenomenon worth investigating: How did God preserve the Jewish people as a distinct group while they were exiled from their homeland and scattered throughout the world?

The answer is a painful one. When God set them apart as a special treasure to Himself (Dt. 7:6), the byproduct became hatred and alienation. For millennia, the nations have ostracized the Jewish people and made their lives a misery.

But what Satan meant for evil, God meant for good, even if it didn't seem so at the time. God preserved Jacob's descendants through their bondage in Egypt, keeping them separate from the Egyptians, who would not intermarry with Hebrews. Similarly, He preserved their identity among the Gentiles because most countries segregated Jews from the rest of the population. A salient example is the Jewish experience in Eastern Europe where, for almost 150 years, Jews were confined to the infamous Pale of Settlement.

PERSECUTION IN THE PALE

The Pale consisted of territory Russia acquired from the partition of Poland in 1772.¹ Before then, czarist Russia had few Jews. Yet 80 percent of world Jewry lived in Poland, where Jewish people enjoyed a fairly normal life.²

When Poland was partitioned between Russia, Prussia, and Austria,³ Russia received the bulk of the area's Jewish population and didn't know what to do with it. So it created the Pale of Settlement in 1791. The term *pale*, from the Latin word *palus*, refers to a boundary stake and underscores the Jewish burden of being boycotted.

Many believe the idiom "beyond the pale," meaning "unacceptable," derives from the Pale of Settlement. The area encompassed parts of modern-day Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Belarus, Lithuania, Moldova, and Latvia and covered some 386,000 square miles between the Baltic and Black Seas.⁴

Well acquainted with the Russian Cossacks' brutality, the Jews in the Pale must have been terrified when jurisdiction over them passed to the czar. Earlier, in the Cossack-Polish War (1648), Cossacks massacred a group of Jews who refused to convert to the Russian Orthodox faith:

Killing was accompanied by barbarous tortures; the victims were flayed alive, split asunder, clubbed to death, roasted on coals, or scalded with boiling water. Even infants at the breast were not spared. . . . Scrolls of the Law were taken out of the synagogues by the Cossacks who danced on them while

*drinking whiskey. After this Jews were laid upon them and butchered without mercy.*⁵

Jewish historian Solomon Grayzel said that after Russia took over Poland, instead of trying to improve the economic conditions of the poverty-stricken population, it preferred to concentrate on "how most effectively to destroy Jewish life."⁶ Eventually, the czarist government expelled the Jews from the rural districts and forced them into what Grayzel said "was really a large-scale ghetto."⁷

Three government decrees (1783, 1791, and 1794) officially confined Russia's Jews to what became the Pale under the reign of Catherine the Great, who greatly restricted Jewish commercial rights.⁸ There, they lived in little villages called *shtetls*, mostly as tradesmen and shopkeepers.

At one point, the Jewish population inside the Pale reached about 5 million, which constituted 40 percent of world Jewry and 95 percent of Russian Jewry. In their isolation, the Jewish people spoke Yiddish and created a distinctive way of life for themselves, remaining separate from the Gentiles and Gentile practices.

Under the tyranny of the antisemitic Czar Nicholas I, however, Jewish people were forced to change their names; males were forced to change their clothes, trim their hair, wear short beards, and serve on the front lines of the Russian military. Grayzel called Nicholas I "one of the cruelest and most unimaginative tyrants that ever lived."⁹ As part of his attempt to "Russify" Jewish soldiers (some as young as 12), he also forced them to violate their dietary laws and eat pork.

Viewing the Jews as dangerous aliens, the czar seized Jewish children and put them into Christian schools. He also reduced the Pale in size and expelled Jews from the cities of Kiev, Sevastopol, and Nikolayev.¹⁰ During this period, Jewish people were accused of ritualistic murders, were heavily taxed, and experienced forced conversions and oppression. Worse, their lives in the Pale were plagued with pogroms.

*Three times, between the years 1881 and 1921, Jews were beaten, killed and burned out of their homes. Each attack was more brutal than the preceding. Mass destruction, thousands killed, hundreds of thousands wounded, orphaned, and rendered homeless—this was the legacy of pogroms.*¹¹

But we should also be outraged that people who called themselves Christians blasphemed the name of Jesus by acting nothing like the Savior toward the Jewish community from which He came.

The first wave of pogroms hit the Pale when Czar Alexander II, who was somewhat more permissive with Jewish freedoms, was assassinated in 1881.¹² People blamed the Jews, resulting in the harsh May Laws against the Jews under Czar Alexander III's reign (1881–1894).¹³ Those laws even allowed Christians within the Pale to force Jewish people from their homes.¹⁴

The second wave of pogroms occurred from 1903 to 1906, during the First Russian Revolution (1905).¹⁵ This period serves as the historical backdrop for the famous musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. *Fiddler* was composed from stories of Yiddish playwright Sholem Aleichem (1859–1916) and is set in 1905 during the reign of Czar Nicholas II (1894–1917). During this period, Jewish people suffered through more than 650 pogroms.¹⁶ The third wave came during the Bolshevik Revolution (1917–1923) as the country fell into communism.

In light of Jewish history under the czarist monarchy, it is no wonder Tevya, Sholem Aleichem's main character in *Fiddler*, humorously adapts the Aaronic blessing (Num. 6:24) to say, "May God bless and keep the czar far away from us!"

The pogroms were so terrible they galvanized a mass migration of Jewish people to the United States, particularly to New York, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Many of today's American Jews had parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents who grew up in the Pale.

TORN FROM THE BOOKS

The Pale of Settlement endured until World War I, when the Russian military high command expelled Jews from the area, which was in the war zone, because it didn't trust them. The government formally abolished the Pale in 1917.¹⁷

Unfortunately, when World War II broke out, the area of the former Pale suffered the most in the Holocaust because it was still home to a huge percentage of European Jewry. Of all the countries in Europe where Jewish people suffered, Poland and Soviet Russia rank at the top concerning lives lost (approximately 3 million and 1.3 million, respectively).¹⁸

I've heard many of my Jewish friends say, "The Jewish people are a traumatized people." Their statement captures what it means to be Jewish in light of a long and tragic history. Sadly, Catholic scholar Edward Flannery's often-quoted observation still rings true: "It is little exaggeration to state that those pages of history Jews have committed to memory are the very ones that have been torn from Christian (and secular) history books."¹⁹

Christians should be outraged at the antisemitism that has tormented God's Chosen People for centuries. We should mourn over the pain they have endured. But we should also be outraged that people who called themselves

Christians blasphemed the name of Jesus by acting nothing like the Savior toward the Jewish community from which He came.

Since, as Christians, we regard self-sacrifice as a staple of our faith, we ought to be willing to love and stand with God's Chosen People against persecution. One of the most biblical things we can do is rejoice with them over the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Indeed, Israel's resurrection was the fruit of movements that began as a reaction to the pogroms in the Pale of Settlement.

But it also is a fulfillment of God's many promises to bring the Jewish people back into their own land. Despite the trials yet to come, God will deliver the bright future He has promised Israel: "I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it" (Ezek. 37:14). We look forward to the day when the Holy Spirit indwells all Israel (vv. 9–14).

As horrible as it was, ostracism prevented assimilation and preserved the Jews as a people who someday will glorify God in His Kingdom. When that day comes, they no longer will hear "the taunts of the nations anymore, nor bear the reproach of the peoples" (36:15). In fact, God said, "Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God" (v. 28). ★

ENDNOTES

- 1 Herman Rosenthal, "Pale of Settlement," Jewishencyclopedia.com <tinyurl.com/3rzjtzd>.
- 2 "Jewish Life in Poland before the Holocaust," facinghistory.org <tinyurl.com/2s4yw5v7>.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 "Pale of Settlement, Jewish," *Britannica Student Encyclopedia* <tinyurl.com/paleee1>.
- 5 Barry E. Horner, *Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2007), 28.
- 6 Solomon Grayzel, *A History of the Jews* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1968), 601.
- 7 Ibid., 603.
- 8 "Pale of Settlement, Jewish."
- 9 Grayzel, 603.
- 10 "Nicholas," jewishvirtuallibrary.org <tinyurl.com/2p9eahva>.
- 11 Shlomo Lambroza, "The Tsarist Government and the Pogroms of 1903-06," *Modern Judaism* 7, no. 3 (1987): 287–96 <jstor.org/stable/1396423>.
- 12 "Pale of Settlement, Jewish."
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Lambroza.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 "Pale of Settlement," *The Yivo Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* <tinyurl.com/bdzz5khp>.
- 18 "Jewish Losses During the Holocaust: By Country" United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, encyclopedia.ushmm.org <tinyurl.com/yvvn68nd>.
- 19 Edward Flannery, cited in Michael Brown, "When the Church Ruled by the Sword," christianpost.com <tinyurl.com/yk9cmn5p>.



Cameron Joyner

is assistant director of Program Ministries and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

One of the earliest non-Jewish references to Israel is the Merneptah Stele, an inscription by the pharaoh Merneptah who reigned from 1213 to 1203 BC in ancient Egypt. It is sometimes referred to as the Israel Stele due to a set of hieroglyphs in line 27 that reads, “Israel is no more.” Even today, that sentiment expresses the desire of God’s enemies to annihilate Israel.

According to this sinful world, Israel should be no more. All the advances in society over thousands of years have done nothing to stem antisemitism, demonstrating instead humanity’s innate capability for extraordinary hatred. Hatred of the Jewish people is unique from other forms of prejudice because it is universal, historically deep-rooted, and permanent.

MASS KILLING

The most recent tragic manifestation of this hatred occurred during World War II when Jewish people found themselves caught between the two totalitarian systems of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union (USSR). When Germany attacked the USSR, executions of Jews began with mass shootings carried out by a special German killing squad called *Einsatzgruppen*. This brutal force went behind the German military, hunting down Jewish people and murdering them in the conquered territories.

Before the death camps became operational in Poland, millions of Jewish people died in mass shootings. It is estimated that more than 1 million died by shots to the head.

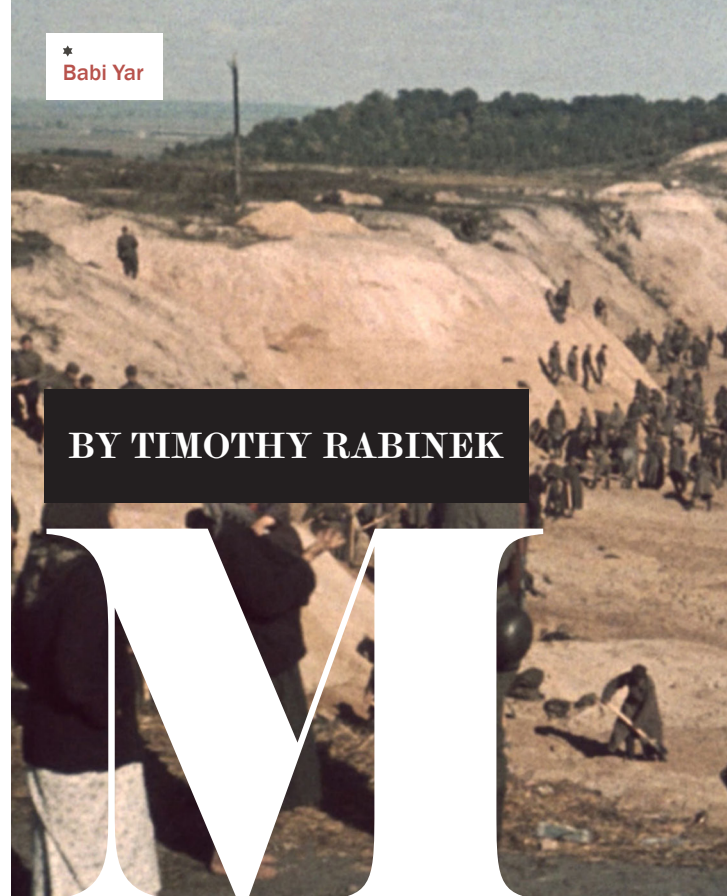
On September 29 and 30, 1941, during Yom Kippur, the Nazis and local Ukrainian collaborators shot dead more than 33,000 Jews and pitched their corpses into a ravine in what has become known as the Babi Yar massacre.

GASLIGHTING

In 2016, the “Tkuma” Ukrainian Institute for Holocaust Studies in Kyiv, Ukraine, invited me to the 75th anniversary of Babi Yar. During the seminar, I visited the location of the mass shooting. What I saw truly shocked me. The place where thousands of Jewish people were mercilessly executed is now a family park. Children played with their parents on the slope of the ravine where Jewish bodies fell in heaps on top of one another, and young people gathered branches to start a fire and barbecue.

The fact that this mass grave looked like a typical park was not a coincidence. After World War II, the USSR controlled almost all the territories where Jewish people were murdered. Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia all fell under the Soviet iron fist led by communist antisemite Joseph Stalin, who wanted the world to believe the Soviets suffered the most during the war. So the USSR converted sites of Jewish mass murders into parks, stadiums, or cultural centers.

There was no space for the Jewish people and their tragedy. So the memory of the Holocaust and its atrocities was replaced



BY TIMOTHY RABINEK

for Mu

THE PLIGHT OF EUROPE'S JEWS FROM HITLER THROUGH STALIN

by the misfortune of the Soviet people. The Babi Yar site is merely one example of how the Soviets transformed a place of great Jewish significance into a park that glorifies the Soviet soldier instead. The Star of David was replaced with the Red Star of the Soviet Union.

Much has changed since 2016, as Ukraine has begun transforming the park into a memorial museum.

PROPAGANDA

After the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, some Jewish people saw communism as a system that could protect them from hatred and persecution. After all, communism promised to remove the identities of all people groups and nationalities and guarantee equality. In the early years of Stalin’s rule (he ruled from 1922 until his death in 1953), many Jewish people received higher-ranking positions at the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs.

Of course, the utopia of communism quickly disappeared as Stalin’s hostility toward the Jewish people turned into



In this age of increased interest in conspiracy theories, antisemitism, in particular, is flourishing.

Order

national persecution. He promptly removed them from positions of power and blamed them for all the evil in the Soviet Union. In 1948 and 1949, the Russian newspapers began an anti-Jewish propaganda campaign that resembled the libels of Joseph Goebbels, Nazi Germany's chief anti-Jewish propagandist. People reading *Pravda*, the official Soviet newspaper in those days, were led to believe only Jewish people steal, take bribes, are indifferent to human suffering, and write evil books.

Many Jews hoped that after the Holocaust, the world would change. But that hope was dashed as antisemitism continued. Today it is growing by leaps and bounds around the world. The Merneptah Stele and the Babi Yar execution are separated by thousands of years, yet they expose the same determination of the fallen world to wipe God's chosen nation from the face of the earth.

SENSELESS HATRED

Throughout history, the Jewish people have been objects of hatred in pagan, religious, and secular societies. There is nothing a Jewish person can do to avoid antisemitism.

In Nazi Germany, Jews were accused of being communists; in the Soviet Union, they were called capitalists. When Jewish people are poor, they are bullied; and if they are rich, they

are blamed for injustice. In this age of increased interest in conspiracy theories, antisemitism, in particular, is flourishing. Jews who assimilate are called a "fifth column," while those who stay together spark hatred for remaining separate.

In Spain and Portugal in the 14th and 15th centuries, Jews who converted to Christianity were called *marranos*, meaning "pigs" in Spanish. Some of them continued to practice Judaism in secret; but when they were exposed, massive persecution of the converts began.

Many people have tried to understand the root of antisemitism, but only a biblical perspective can reveal the truth. What God loves and has a special plan for, Satan and his kingdom will hate. Asaph wrote of this ancient hatred in Psalm 83: "They have said, 'Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more'" (v. 4).

But Israel's enemies cannot undo God's promise: "To them [the Jewish people] I will give in My house and within My walls a place and a name [Hebrew, *Yad Vashem*] better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off" (Isa. 56:5). In symbolic opposition to the Holocaust, Israel chose *Yad Vashem* as the name for its official memorial to Holocaust victims.

During World War II, 6 million Jewish people perished. The Holocaust was an organized, zealous genocide designed to destroy God's Chosen People. Adolf Hitler was inspired by German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), who claimed the Jewish moral system made humanity weak and prevented people from becoming superhuman.

This humanistic approach, which removed God as central to life and replaced Him with human pride, eventually evolved into the atrocities committed against the Jewish people. Hitler believed the Jews were polluting the German people. He reversed the teaching of the Torah (Five Books of Moses) and set Germany as the chosen nation of the world. The people who claimed through their Torah that they were the chosen nation had to be eliminated.

Israel is hated because it is a physical reminder to this fallen world that God has a plan for humanity. Israel is an essential part of that plan and cannot be eliminated from the picture. Satan knows that as long as Israel exists, God's plan of renewing humanity and judging the wicked is on track. ★



Timothy Rabinek

is a field representative in Poland with The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry. To access his outstanding teaching about biblical and ancient sites through 3-D video models, go to Israel MyChannel on YouTube.

FACING REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY IS CHANGING THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH. PAUL SCHARF SPOKE WITH FOUR EVANGELICAL LEADERS ABOUT HOW TO HANDLE THIS GROWING INFLUENCE.

BY PAUL SCHARF

Have the blessings God promised to the Chosen People of Israel been redirected to all believers in the church? Will the church receive the prophetic future God promised the Jewish people repeatedly throughout the Old Testament?

People who answer yes to these questions hold to a position referred to as Replacement Theology, or Supersessionism.¹ This influence is growing today; and it's important to ask, "What should we who love Israel—and God's future plan for Israel—do about it?"

Many churches today appear less focused on the elements of Dispensational Theology, which is rooted in understanding "the distinction between Israel and the church,"² based on literal, biblical interpretation. In contrast, Supersessionism uses allegorical, rather than literal, interpretation when dealing with Israel's future.

Is it possible to get a pulse on what is actually happening in our Christian circles?

For answers, we turned to four experienced Christian leaders who are highly qualified to address these questions from the historical, theological, global, and practical perspectives.

FROM THE FRONT LINES

Dr. Jimmy DeYoung, Jr., president of Prophecy Today, is a prophecy teacher and Middle East expert. He provides content as a radio host through *Prophecy Today Weekend* and *Prophecy Today Daily*—"examining current events in the light of God's prophetic Word" and carrying on the work of his late father, Jimmy DeYoung.

He reaches people on more than 400 radio stations weekly, along with operating prophecytoday.com's Internet radio livestream. In those roles, including conducting prophecy conferences, he interacts with many types of people. "I think

the biggest indication is, over the years, churches are changing," DeYoung stated.

"There are a lot of inquiries that come to the program. There are people who listen who don't understand why we focus on the Jewish people so much. People need an explanation—why is this important to us? I think you are seeing that more and more.

"That may mean we need to alter some of our methods—and take a step back in order to better serve some listeners. It really gets back to teaching basic theology," DeYoung said.

But there are still great opportunities for solid Bible teaching. "We're picking up stations," he observed. "We stay consistent with what we teach."



Jimmy DeYoung, Jr.



Charles Dyer



James Fazio

A SEISMIC SHIFT IN THE SEMINARIES

"I think what we're seeing more of is, within our theological realm, that people are intimidated," said Dr. Charles Dyer, professor-at-large of Bible for Moody Bible Institute and host of *The Land and the Book* on Moody Radio.

"They want to be accepted as scholars; and the basic thing is, 'Well, you cannot take the Bible literally, or you're not scholarly.' Now you have the foundation for Replacement Theology," Dyer said.

Dr. James Fazio is dean of Bible and Theology and professor of Biblical Studies at Southern California Seminary. He is also finishing a doctorate in history at Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in which his focus is on John Nelson Darby, a 19th-century Plymouth Brethren leader who is considered the father of modern Dispensationalism.

Fazio sees Replacement Theology's growing popularity as much more of a seismic shift than a simple growth spurt. "Dispensationalists," he said, "have always claimed the majority position based on the grass-roots following—the church following. Dispensational Theology was very accessible. It was popular. That script has flipped. What was going on in the academy yesterday is what is bearing out in the church today."

Fazio noted that, for many years, the influence of Reformed Theology has been growing in seminaries and in Christian publishing and "has now trickled down, and it is sweeping across the churches." He sees this as a marked change from the middle of the past century. Many dispensational schools were still flourishing then—but the last of the preachers trained in that time are now concluding their ministries.

"I think [Replacement Theology] is growing because of what's



Woodrow Kroll

coming out of seminaries,” Dyer stated. “Those who are graduating know very little of the Bible. They grew up in churches that didn’t teach the Bible. Sadly, what I’m seeing in churches is the Bible is being taught less and less.”

Fazio also sees a parallel between the leftward movement in our culture and movement away from the literal interpretation of Scripture.

“Today, *Dispensationalism*—that dreaded word and the stigma attached to it—is very much like *capitalism*. That word is anathema to most people—even if we need it and rely upon it for how we function as a society. That shows the power of the cultural sway. The movement that is sweeping across the churches is absolutely Reformed, amillennial—and it has displaced premillennial Dispensationalism.

“If we think that we can just get in churches and have sort of a popularist movement, we don’t have the next generation. We have a fleeting moment,” Fazio said.

WHAT’S GOING ON AROUND THE GLOBE?

Fazio sees a cyclical aspect to this type of philosophical swing and believes that a commitment to literal interpretation might also move to another point on the globe, such as African nations or other developing countries.

“Hopefully,” he said, “we can really invest in developing and training pastors in such areas and shaping the minds of the next generation. But I don’t think those minds are going to be coming from North America.”

Dr. Woodrow Kroll, who served for 23 years as the president and Bible teacher for the *Back to the Bible* radio ministry, has placed his biblical teaching into 14 languages for pastors in those places through the HELIOS Projects (an outreach of Woodrow Kroll Ministries); and he believes these men can become dispensational Bible teachers.

“They don’t have things to unlearn,” he said. “The best way is to get them into the Word. In the process, they’re going to learn that the church is different from Israel.

“If we can get to the pastor, he can get to his people—and truth spreads through people,” he said. “If we can get to [pastors] and teach them dispensational truth, they’ll pass it on to their congregation and their family.”

FINDING A PATH FORWARD

Fazio sees Dispensationalism as resulting from “a hermeneutical method that leads to a literal understanding of past, present, and future.”

“I believe Dispensationalism has lost the majority, and it is not recovering it,” said Fazio. “That was a cultural phenomenon, and it was a fleeting phenomenon. To me, that is quite alright—seldom is the majority right. I don’t think we need to bemoan the fact that we’ve lost the popular consensus in the church.”

But what can we do if we notice these trends impacting our own local churches?

Rather than getting depressed about what’s happening, Dyer said believers need to “throw themselves into the Word of God to get to know it, and then communicate it and do so as effectively as they can.” He added, “That’s the only answer for the world right now. To the extent that [you] can have an impact—do what [you] can to try and encourage people to get into the Word of God.”

Fazio agreed. “It begins with biblical literacy—simply knowing the Bible.” He believes pastors need to evaluate whether they are “teaching the Scriptures or teaching your system” and said “expositional teaching” is absolutely the greatest means we have to turn this scenario around.

“The whole counsel of God’ [Acts 20:27] is given to us,” Fazio emphasized. “You have received it. It’s not your job to pick and choose what you think is relevant.”

Kroll concurred. “The more we are topical in our preaching, the less we are going to be preaching dispensational truth.”

“Frankly,” said Fazio, “I think Dispensationalism is the only really open-handed, clear way of dealing with all 66 books,” adding, “I believe if a pastor actually teaches from Genesis to Revelation, he is going to end up more dispensational than he started.”

Dyer stated likewise: “To the extent that we expound the Word of God—all the Word—the dispensational approach, understanding the future for Israel, is what helps the whole Bible make sense.”

“If we stick to Scripture, the argument is very strongly in our favor,” Fazio said. “It’s pretty clear—it’s very compelling.”

Dyer agreed: “If you take the Bible at face value, you end up with a future for Israel. That, to me, is the bottom line.”

DeYoung summed it all up: “Your eschatology determines your theology.”

“There is a future for Israel,” Dyer stated. “It’s grounded in the promises God made to the patriarchs. God doesn’t back out of the promises. He never replaces Israel with the church. There is still a future for Israel—connected with the Second Coming of Jesus.

“People want to know what the future holds,” he added. “We have the answer. People are interested. We don’t have to dumb down the message. We just need to make sure we’re clear in what we say.”

ENDNOTES

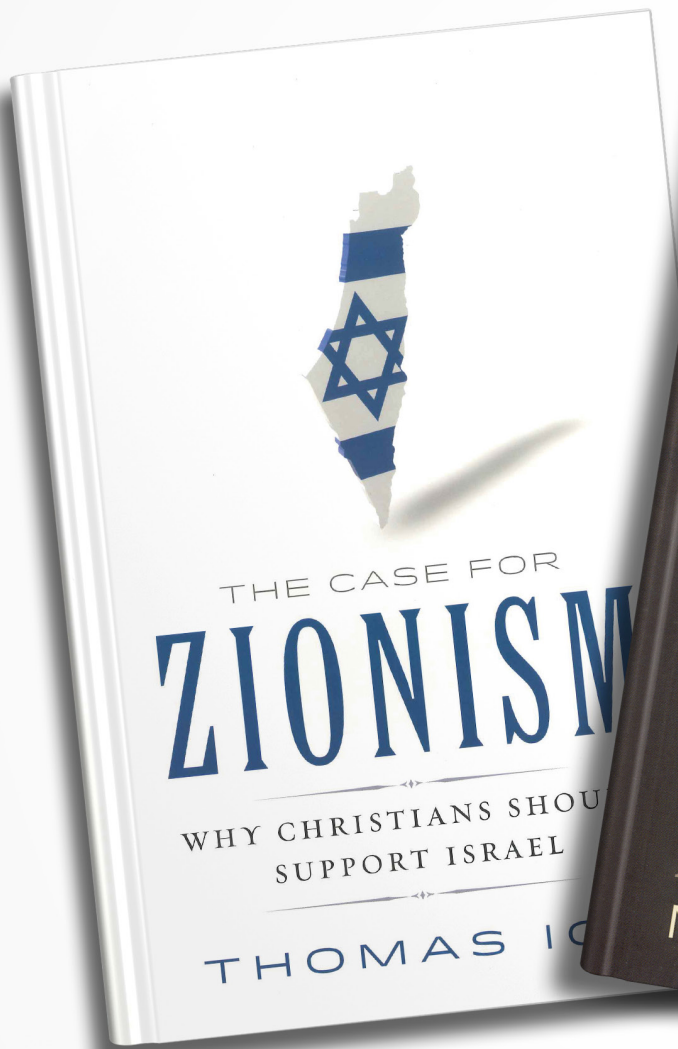
- 1 For a fuller treatment on Replacement Theology, see Paul Scharf, “The Danger of Replacing Israel” (three-part blog), foi.org/2021/09/24/the-danger-of-replacing-israel-part-1.
- 2 Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, rev. ed. (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007), 48.



Paul Scharf

is a Church Ministries representative and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

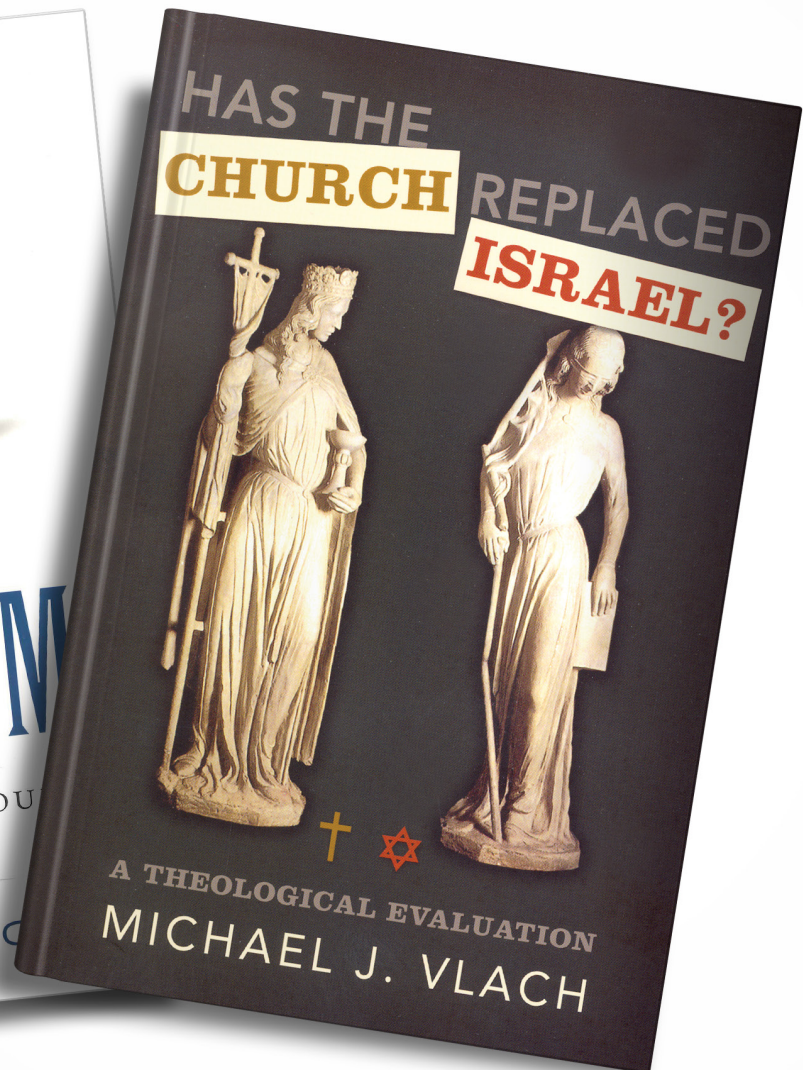
Learn the Why Behind Christian Support for Israel



The Case for Zionism

Israel's rebirth was a miracle, yet more and more evangelicals are neglecting its importance in biblical prophecy. Some even oppose the Jewish people's right to their homeland. Should we still support Israel? This book answers the contemporary arguments against God's providence in returning His Chosen People to the Holy Land, providing biblical, historical, and legal evidence for Israel's legitimacy. Learn why you can be sure God is at work in the nation of Israel today!

US \$14.99; Outside US \$18.00



Has the Church Replaced Israel?

Does the church take Israel's place in God's plan, or do God's promises to Israel still hold true today? As we see Replacement Theology grow in popularity among churches, we can't afford to miss the truth found in Scripture concerning the relationship between Israel and the church. Michael Vlach offers an excellent study of both sides of the issue, examining Scripture and history to explain why we can trust God will be faithful to His covenant with Israel.

US \$19.99; Outside US \$24.00

For ordering details see enclosed envelope.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND JERICOHO (PART 3)

*
Mound Jericho

➔ God commanded Joshua to destroy the Canaanites and conquer Jericho. This account has sparked ethical debates among modern readers, even provoking one to ask if God is a “moral monster.”¹ In response, many have offered alternative interpretations to exonerate the Almighty. However, the Israelites’ conquest was not a problem for the ancients:

There is no hint of criticism from the Old Testament, Jesus, or the apostles concerning the wholesale slaughter of the Canaanites. . . . The extrabiblical material from the Apocrypha, Philo, and Josephus align with the Old Testament as well. The Jewish traditions all point in the same direction, which means that any later interpretations that find fault with the Conquest or try to reinterpret the Conquest in order to soften the text will be out of step with both the Bible as a whole and the legacy of Jewish tradition.²

Four issues, two of which are the ban and morality, clarify God’s instructions and support the literal interpretation of the biblical account.

1. The Ban. The Israelites conquered Jericho because it was under a “ban” (Josh. 6:17–19). The Hebrew term *hērem* means “dedicated” or “devoted” and in the context of war means “devotion to complete destruction” or “annihilation.” The Canaanites employed this concept, and the Mesha Inscription (840 BC) records that the Moabite king used a ban against Israel (2 Ki. 3:4).

The Bible distinguishes between *qadosh* (holy) and *hērem*. Objects could be devoted to God for a holy purpose (Lev. 27:28) or for destruction.³ Those marked for destruction were considered ritually contaminating because they could render other people and things unholy and liable to death and destruction (vv. 28–29; Dt. 7:26; Josh. 7:1, 11–12).⁴ Such objects were like cancer cells that can infect healthy cells and must be killed to save the patient’s life.

Therefore, the Canaanite population, its animals, and everything associated with its unholy practices were devoted to destruction because God’s purpose for Israel as a holy nation—and His greater purpose for the world through Israel (Gen. 12:3)—could not be realized otherwise (Ex. 19:5–6; Lev. 10:10–11; 20:23–26).

2. Morality. The Israelite conquest was not a genocide. According to religion professor Gwilym H. Jones, in holy war, “troops would bear the emblems of their gods in battle, and the presence of the gods in battle was vital to success.” Afterward, “the gods got credit for the victory.”⁵ Although the Bible does not use the term *holy war*, God’s command and instructions involving the priests and Ark of the Covenant fit this definition (Josh. 6:2–5).

However, the modern concept of holy war as ethnic cleansing or genocide does not fit the conquest. Biblical statements about the Canaanites are devoid of racism, hatred, senseless brutality, and similar characteristics of genocide.

God’s command to exterminate seven Canaanite nations (Dt. 7:1–2) involved “moral cleansing,” not ethnic cleansing, and was designed to punish specific iniquity and remove an unholy contagion from Israel’s Holy Land (vv. 3–5).⁶

The conquest’s aim was not Israel’s domination of the Canaanite world because God explicitly told Israel He was not dispossessing the Canaanites because Israel was an inherently better people but because of the Canaanites’ “wickedness” (9:4–6). Even then, God saved righteous Canaanites, such as Rahab (Josh. 2:3–21) and Ruth (Ruth 1:16–17; 4:13–22), and incorporated them within Israel and even within the royal and Messianic line (Mt. 1:5).

(Continued in next issue)

ENDNOTES

- 1 Paul Copan, *Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011).
- 2 Jordan P. Ballard, “The Kindness and Severity of God: A Defense of the Conquest of Canaan,” PhD dissertation (Liberty University, 2022), 396.
- 3 Leon J. Wood, “*hērem*,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1980), 1:324.
- 4 Richard D. Nelson, “Herem and the Deuteronomic Social Conscience,” in *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomic Literature: Festschrift C. H. W. Brekelmans*, ed. M. Vervenne and J. Lust (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 1997), 46.
- 5 Gwilym H. Jones, “The Concept of Holy War,” in *The World of Ancient Israel: Sociological, Anthropological and Political Perspectives*, ed. R. E. Clements (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 300–302.
- 6 Paul Copan and Matthew Flannagan, *Did God Really Command Genocide? Coming to Terms with the Justice of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2014), 277.



Randall Price

is a well-known author and world-renowned archaeologist. He is also the founder and president of World of the Bible Ministries (worldofthebible.com).

PAUL'S JOY

PHILIPPIANS 1:3–11

Several years ago, we received a Thanksgiving Day card titled “Blessed and Grateful.” The sender wrote, “We hope your celebration of God’s blessings is a joyful one.” It was an excellent sentiment. Although Christians are extraordinarily blessed by the treasures we possess in Christ, we often don’t reflect joy, as we should. We walk around with long faces, advertising to everyone how miserable we think our lives are.

Not so with the apostle Paul. Writing from a Roman prison while chained to a guard, Paul was so filled with the Holy Spirit that he rejoiced, knowing the Lord’s love, will, and power were guiding him.

For Christians, joy should not depend on circumstances or world conditions. Instead, it should come from a personal relationship with Christ. In his epistle of merely 104 verses to the Philippians, Paul used the words *joy*, *rejoice*, *rejoiced*, or *rejoicing* 16 times. In fact, *joy* is the key word in the book. Bible scholar John MacArthur described spiritual joy this way:

Spiritual joy . . . is not an attitude dependent on chance or circumstances. It is the deep and abiding confidence that, regardless of one’s circumstances in life, all is well between the believer and the Lord. No matter what difficulty, pain, disappointment, failure, rejection, or other challenge one is facing, genuine joy remains because of that eternal well-being established by God’s grace in salvation. Thus, Scripture makes it clear that the fullest, most lasting and satisfying joy is derived from a true relationship with God. It is not based on circumstances or chance but is the gracious and permanent possession of every child of God. Therefore it is not surprising that joy is an important New Testament theme.¹

Paul expressed his joy for the Philippian believers by rejoicing over his fellowship with them in the gospel (1:3–5), their salvation (vv. 6–8), and their spiritual growth (vv. 9–11).

REJOICING OVER THE CHURCH

Paul told them, “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now” (vv. 3–5).

The Greek word for “I thank” (*eucharisteo*) is present tense and means Paul continually thanked God for the church he founded many years ago.

He had vivid memories of his Philippian ministry, where he saw the conversion of Lydia, who opened her house as a church meeting place; the deliverance of a demon-possessed girl; an earthquake that miraculously opened the prison doors for him and Silas after they had been severely beaten, illegally jailed, and put in stocks without a trial; and the salvation of the Philippian jailer and his family.

But above all, he treasured the Philippians’ ongoing friendship, prayers, and support. Though Paul had not seen the Philippians for 10 years, the word *always* means he never failed to petition God on their behalf, praying “with joy” (v. 4). He evidenced victory, without regrets.

The word *making* is in present tense, emphasizing that such prayer was Paul’s ongoing practice; and the phrase *you all* means he did not exclude anyone when he prayed.

By “fellowship in the gospel” (v. 5), the apostle meant the Philippian church stood solidly behind him in prayer from its inception and helped him evangelize, even while he was a Roman prisoner.

REFLECTING ON THE CHURCH

Convinced God would continue working in the Philippian church, Paul wrote, “Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (v. 6).

The word *confident* is in the Greek perfect tense, meaning the apostle came to a settled conclusion that the Philippians’ salvation would produce ongoing, eternal results. Salvation is by God’s grace from start to finish. Paul was teaching that the same faithful God who saved the Philippians would complete this good work of salvation all the way through to “the day of Jesus Christ” (v. 6), that is, to the Rapture, when Christ comes for His church. Thus, once we are born again, we definitely will be glorified and our salvation completed. This is a powerful statement concerning the believer’s eternal security.

Paul added, “Just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace” (v. 7). Because Paul and the Philippians were in Christ, it was natural for him to love them deeply. They had shown their deep love for Paul by treating

him well during his “chains” (imprisonment).

The Philippians were not merely onlookers: “You all are partakers with me of grace” (v. 7). They were involved. They shared the gospel, showed Paul love and kindness, prayed for his ministry, helped support him in the work, and kept in contact with him during his persecutions. Thus, they were fellow participants in God’s grace.

Paul called on God to confirm how deeply his affection ran for the Philippians: “For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection [“in the bowels,” KJV] of Jesus

the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ” (v. 10). The word *approve* connotes testing or examining things to distinguish between genuine and imitation. In Bible times, metals were tested to prove their quality and purity, and pottery was held up to the sunlight to see if dishonest dealers had filled cracks with wax.

By testing things in the spiritual realm, we can determine what is more excellent. Paul told the Philippians to study, probe, scrutinize, and evaluate the most appropriate ways to follow the Lord’s teachings as presented in God’s Word. That

FOR CHRISTIANS, JOY SHOULD NOT DEPEND ON CIRCUMSTANCES OR WORLD CONDITIONS. INSTEAD, IT SHOULD COME FROM A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST.

Christ” (v. 8). His love was not tainted by self-pity or superficial sentimentality but was the same ongoing love and affection Christ had for them. In fact, Paul went a step further when he used the word for “bowels,” a metaphor that expressed his longing in the very core of his being.

REQUEST TO THE CHURCH

Paul then explained how he prayed for the Philippians. He prayed that their love:

1. Would overflow. He asked that their “love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment” (v. 9). The Greek word translated “love” is *agape*, a self-sacrificing love that God freely bestowed on them. Paul expected their love would go beyond their own fellowship and “abound,” or overflow continually, as a river overflows its banks. Thus, the Philippian believers were to love one another as Christ loved them.

2. Would be grounded. Their love was to be rooted in “knowledge and all discernment” (v. 9). The word *knowledge* refers to spiritual knowledge gained by understanding Christ through the inerrant, infallible Word and putting that knowledge into practice. As these believers grew in the knowledge of God’s Word, they would learn how to love others in a purposeful, intelligent, wise, and benevolent way.

The word *discernment* refers to insight, moral perception, or wisdom in applying knowledge or expressing love to a fellow believer. Often Christians think they’re showing love but are unwise and tactless.

3. Would be tested. He prayed that they “may approve

way, they would show themselves “sincere” (v. 10), meaning pure and genuine, “without offense,” and blameless in their daily conduct toward both believers and unbelievers “till the day of Christ” (v. 10), meaning until the Rapture, when they would be glorified and rewarded according to their works.

He reminded them the fruit that righteousness produces comes not through their own works, but by Jesus Christ: “Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God” (v. 11). Only the Holy Spirit can produce the fruit of the Spirit as we abide in Christ (Jn. 15:4–5).

The apostle closed his prayer “to the glory and praise of God” (Phil. 1:11). Glorifying God was Paul’s prayer for every Christian. We glorify God through the Holy Spirit’s ministry in us, developing love, joy, holiness, and service. May we live each day letting the joy of Christ radiate through us for all to see.

ENDNOTE

1. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Philippians* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2001), 10, exported from Logos Bible Software.



by David M. Levy,
media resource specialist and a Bible teacher
for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry

AIDAN'S CRUCIBLE

BY CECELIA WEER

I barely recognized him. My grandson was no longer the 19-year-old kid I knew. He had lost weight and was lean, angular, and fit and carried himself with confidence, tall and straight. When he spoke, he was direct and respectful.

Although Aidan's face reflected the same warm expression as always, it was obvious he now was different. My grandson had just graduated from Marine boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina.

"Aidan, how could you change so much in only 13 weeks?" I asked.

"It's a new mentality," he told me. "There are many tiny things I used to care about and get upset over that just don't matter anymore. I have much better priorities, Grandmama."

Aidan had successfully endured what the Marines call The Crucible, the culmination of rigorous training that would validate his worthiness to receive the honored title of United States Marine.

Everything Aidan learned in boot camp was designed to help him survive this grueling test. Drilled into him were obedience, courage, leadership, specialized skills, endurance, thinking under pressure, assessment of danger, and teamwork.

I expected the Marines to change him. What I didn't expect was how God would use Aidan's experience to change me.

"Every day our drill instructor hammered into us instant willing obedience to all orders, respect for authority, teamwork, and self-reliance. You don't give up. You push past it. You deal with it," he told me.

The Crucible lasted 54 hours, with only eight hours of sleep, little food, and extreme physical stress, including a

"death hike" and night infiltration courses. Each recruit marched about 40 miles carrying about 40 pounds of gear; an M16 rifle; and sometimes designated wounded recruits, along with all their gear. They had to work together to solve problems and never leave anyone behind.

These Marines put duty first. They did what was expected of them instantly and willingly, and their ordeal helped me better understand God's instructions to us as believers in Jesus. The apostle Paul wrote, "You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier" (2 Tim. 2:3-4).

NOT AN OPTION

It's not an option for a Marine to sleep late because he doesn't feel like getting up. It's not an option to leave a wounded comrade behind because carrying him is too difficult. It's not an option to march out of cadence because he is tired. Teamwork is essential, and selfishness is not an option.

Self-discipline always impresses me because I see so little of it in society, and I struggle with it in my own life. The media mesmerizes us into believing our own agendas are the most important things and that whatever we feel like doing (or not doing) is perfectly acceptable.

But aren't self-discipline and selflessness hallmarks of the Christian life? Jesus Himself said He came to serve others; and Paul said, "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" (Phil. 2:3-4).

From the Marines website, I discovered that Judeo-Christian principles delineate the Marine Corps's three main values: honor, courage, and commitment.

Honor exemplifies the ultimate in ethical, moral behavior: Never lie, cheat, or steal. Abide by an uncompromising code of integrity: respect for human dignity and respect for others. (See Exodus 20; Philippians 2:15; Colossians 1:9.)

Courage requires the inner strength to do what's right, to adhere to a higher standard of personal conduct. (See Psalm 31:24; Philippians 4:13.)

Commitment inspires the unrelenting determination to achieve victory. (See Joshua 1:9; Nehemiah 4:9.)

HOW MUCH MORE?

Aidan's experience challenged my faith. These recruits willingly submitted to authority and discipline, enduring the Marine Crucible for reasons unrelated to serving God. How much more should we be willing to go through trials and

Imagine Daniel without the lions' den, David without Goliath, Moses without Pharaoh, Nehemiah without the struggles he had trying to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, Esther without Haman, or Joseph without the jealous brothers who sold him into slavery. Their crucibles proved the quality of their faith and encourage us today.

God charges us, "Endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. 2:3) and "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13).

Jesus suffered and died for us, enduring the penalty for our sin so that He could raise us to hope and eternal salvation if we place our faith in Him (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). So, too, we should endure our trials for His sake.

At Aidan's graduation, the new Marines were told to be Marines in their hearts. As I sat there, the Lord inspired me anew to be a Christian who is instantly willing to obey Him from my heart, not because of a drill instructor's orders, but because I love Him. And I love Him because Christ first loved

I expected the Marines to change him. What I didn't expect was how God would use Aidan's experience to change me.

discipline our lives in obedience to Christ our Savior?

I'm sure I'll never have to lug 40 pounds of gear on a sleep-deprived, long-distance march; but I know genuine adversity afflicts us all. Accidents, divorce, cancer, birth injuries, loss of loved ones, failure, disease, addictions, and life-altering decisions are often part of living. We need to expect hard things to come our way and let each cumulative suffering strengthen us, build our faith, and prepare us for our next personal crucibles.

We need to make demands of ourselves. We don't want it said to us, "If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small" (Prov. 24:10). Godly men and women can't cave in to lazy, sloppy, undisciplined living. We must submit to God in obedience, seize the crises He allows into our lives, and trust the Lord in humble submission.

Aidan's training transformed him into a Marine. Our crucibles should change us into men and women of valor and faith, who are transformed and conformed into the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29; 12:2). Our loving heavenly Father prepares every suffering and adversity to train us and build our endurance. Our wills must yield to God even when He uses suffering to mold us into the image of Christ. Sometimes suffering is His most effective tool.

me, gave His life for me (Gal. 2:20), and redeemed me—not with corruptible things like silver and gold but with His own dear, precious blood (1 Pet. 1:18–19).

I'm reminded of the hymn "Am I a Soldier of the Cross?" by the great 18th-century hymn writer, Isaac Watts:

*Am I a soldier of the cross, / a follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own His cause / or blush to speak His name?
Must I be carried to the skies / on flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize / and sailed through
bloody seas?
Sure I must fight if I would reign, / increase my courage, Lord.
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain, / supported by Thy Word.*

May the Lord help us as believers in Jesus to adopt the Marine motto when it comes to serving God: *Semper Fidelis*, Latin for "Always Faithful."



Cecelia Weer

speaks at women's retreats, teaches women's Bible studies, and is involved in developing teen leaders. She lives in New Jersey.

ISRAEL'S CAPITULATION TO HEZBOLLAH

BY CAROLINE GLICK

(JNS)—It is almost impossible to grasp the danger of Israel's present moment.

The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) agreement with Hezbollah-controlled Lebanon will fundamentally alter Israel's maritime borders; deny the Jewish state tens of billions of dollars, which will go instead to a government controlled by Iran's Lebanese foreign legion, Hezbollah; and transform Hezbollah and Iran into actors in the eastern Mediterranean.

In 2010, as Israel, Cyprus, Greece, and Egypt rapidly developed the natural gas deposits in the eastern Mediterranean, Israel signed agreements with its neighbors to delineate the boundaries of each state's EEZ. Since Israel and Lebanon are enemies, Israel did not negotiate with Lebanon.

Lebanon, however, did negotiate an agreement with Cyprus, delineating its maritime waters' southern boundary. Israel accepted the Lebanese line and submitted its maritime economic zone borders to the United Nations on the basis of the Lebanese/Cypriot agreement and the bilateral agreement it had concluded with Cyprus.

Given that Hezbollah rejects Israel's right to exist, Hezbollah-controlled Lebanon surprised no one when it immediately objected to Israel's map, even though it was based on Lebanon's own demarcation.

Lebanon demanded 854 square kilometers (329.7 square miles) of Mediterranean waters that belong to Israel, along with complete control over the massive Qana natural gas field, much of which extends into Israel's waters.

Meanwhile, Israel began developing the Karish gas field located in its EEZ. Karish was scheduled to go online in September 2022. But two months earlier, Hezbollah attacked Karish with four drones that were intercepted by the Israel Defense Forces. Rather than retaliate, Israel delayed the start of work; and Biden administration envoy Amos Hochstein swooped into action.

The Biden administration is dead set on giving as much money as possible to Lebanon—with full knowledge that it will go to Hezbollah. Its overarching goal is to realign the United States away from its traditional allies—Israel and the Sunni states—and toward Iran.

During his visit to Israel mere days after Hezbollah's drone



* Ship from the Karish project

attacks in July, President Joe Biden upped U.S. pressure on Israel to conclude a deal with Lebanon and enable the Hezbollah-controlled Lebanese government to begin raking in billions of dollars in gas revenues from the Qana field. U.S. pressure has only increased since then. The Israeli government caved. Then-Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid and his Defense Minister Benny Gantz agreed to give up 100 percent of the disputed waters.

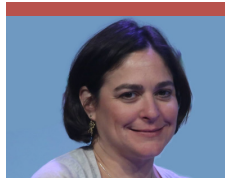
Perhaps the most extraordinary aspect of the deal is that it doesn't obligate Lebanon. Israel's deal is with the United States, not Lebanon. And Hezbollah views it as a starting point because Lebanese negotiators suddenly presented a new, even more expansive territorial demand.

Lebanon, they claim, rightfully owns more than the disputed 854 kilometers of Israeli waters, along with large swaths of the Karish gas field. It's obvious Lebanon will disavow the deal at a time of Hezbollah's choosing. But Lapid and Gantz brag that they signed a protection deal with Hezbollah in exchange for 854 square kilometers of sovereign Israeli waters.

Astonished, former U.S. Ambassador David Friedman tweeted, "We spent years trying to broker a deal between Israel and Lebanon on the disputed maritime gas fields. Got very close with proposed splits of 55–60% for Lebanon and 45–40% for Israel. No one then imagined 100% to Lebanon and 0% to Israel. Would love to understand how we got here."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the deal "illegal." He is right. Under Israeli law, the government must present all agreements involving the relinquishment of Israeli territory to the Knesset for approval. Lapid and Gantz refused to do so, insisting the agreement is about economic waters, not territory.

If this protection deal with Hezbollah is implemented, it sets not one but multiple precedents that place Israel's national security and wealth in jeopardy.



Caroline Glick

is an award-winning columnist and author of *The Israeli Solution: A One-State Plan for Peace in the Middle East*.

**Now
available
in Canada!**

The Gift That Gives Back

A charitable gift annuity is a wonderful way to support The Friends of Israel and, at the same time, create a stream of income for yourself and your spouse.

Here's how it works. If you are 65 or older, you may purchase a charitable gift annuity of \$10,000 or more. The Friends of Israel then provides you with quarterly, semiannual, or annual payments. You may purchase a single gift annuity for yourself or a joint gift annuity that typically includes your spouse. You may even purchase one for a friend or relative who could benefit from the income. The annuity rate is determined by the birth dates of the annuitants.

As additional benefits, you may claim a charitable tax deduction in the year you purchase the annuity, and part of your income is tax-free. The Friends of Israel has been providing charitable gift annuities since 1942 without ever missing a payment to our annuitants.

If a charitable gift annuity sounds right for you, or you would like more information, please contact The Friends of Israel's Ministry Advancement Department using the form below, or call us at 1-800-257-7843. We would be happy to give you all the details. Of course, there is no cost or obligation on your part to receive a quote on a charitable gift annuity.

- ☐ Please send me your free information on The Friends of Israel's gift-annuity program.
- ☐ Please contact me to discuss annuities further. The best time to call me is _____.
- ☐ Please send me free literature about remembering The Friends of Israel in my estate plan.
- ☐ Please contact me about a personal visit. The best time to call me is _____.
- ☐ I have provided for The Friends of Israel in my will or other estate-planning document.
- ☐ Please provide me with an annuity quotation.



Tom Geoghan
Vice President
for Ministry Advancement

Name _____ Date of Birth (month/day/year) _____

Address _____
Offered in the United States and Canada

Phone (_____) _____ Email _____

Name of Joint Annuitant _____ Date of Birth (month/day/year) _____

Possible Amount of Annuity \$ _____

Please call regarding detail of deferred-payment gift annuity.

In the US mail this form to The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, PO Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08099

In Canada mail this form to The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry—Canada, PO Box 428, Stn A, Brampton, ON L6V 2L4



“I knew if I showed fear, they would attack me. But I know in Whom I have believed.

by Zvi Kalisher

The ultra-Orthodox are always looking for 10 men to form a *minyan*, a quorum necessary for synagogue prayer. So I wait outside the synagogue, watching them call people to pray with them.

If I go to them before they call me over, they become suspicious. But when they come to me, they give me a chance to speak with their rabbis. I am always waiting for this chance to bring them the Good News about the living and everlasting God and Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Recently when I went to them, they happily told me, “There is a messiah in Israel!” They showed me his picture. I had seen it before. It was of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, a rabbi who had lived in New York City and died in 1994.

The men prayed and sang loud praises to him. One rabbi, noticing I was not participating, asked me, “Why are you not happy? Most of us are happy to sing that the messiah is in Israel!”

“You have made a big mistake,” I told him. “You are dancing around a golden calf.”

This comment angered him. “Why are you here?” he demanded.

“You called me to be part of your *minyan*,” I replied.

“But who gave you courage to attack us like this?”

“I do not attack you,” I told him. “I am only doing what the Lord told us to do. As a rabbi, you must know the Lord has chosen us as His people, Israel, to be His servant and to proclaim His name, not to worship idols. Now look at whom you worship.”

I read to them from Isaiah 1, where God tells our people, “The ox knows its owner and the donkey its master’s crib; but Israel does not know, My people do not consider. Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity. . . . They have provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel” (vv. 3–4).

I was surprised to see them listening

quietly. But when I finished, they began to shout, “Who brought you here? Why did you come?”

“This is the Lord’s will,” I answered. “Psalm 96 says, ‘For all the gods of the peoples are idols’ [v. 5], just like this man you worship. But the Lord has chosen Israel not to worship idols but to be His servant. We are meant to warn the people of Israel against serving idols, which people like you try to make us do.”

Because there were so many ultra-Orthodox men there, I was sure they would physically attack me; but they did not. They were interested in what I had to say.

“How is it that someone like you, from the street, with no beard and no Orthodox clothing, wants to teach us how to worship our God?” one asked.

“He is not your God only,” I said. “As it is written in Deuteronomy 6, ‘The LORD our God, the LORD is one’ [v. 4]. I believe in only one God, unlike you, who dance around this idol and try to deceive these people from believing in the Lord Jesus, our Savior.”

“Are you not afraid to come to us and try to destroy our faith?” another asked.

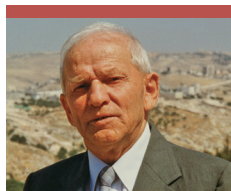
“What does the Lord say?” I asked. “Do not be afraid! I am here to do His will. That is why you see me full of confidence.”

I read Deuteronomy 6:13–14 for them: “You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him. . . . You shall not go after other gods.” Then I asked, “Take a look at yourselves and whom you worship. As the people of Israel, are we God’s servants or not?”

This time they wanted to hurt me. But I remembered what the Lord said: “Fear not, for I am with you” (Isa. 41:10). They asked me what organization I belonged to and who sent me to them. This was not the first time people like them asked me that question. I knew if I showed fear, they would attack me. But I know in Whom I have believed. As it is written in Isaiah 41:9, “I have chosen you and have not cast you away.”

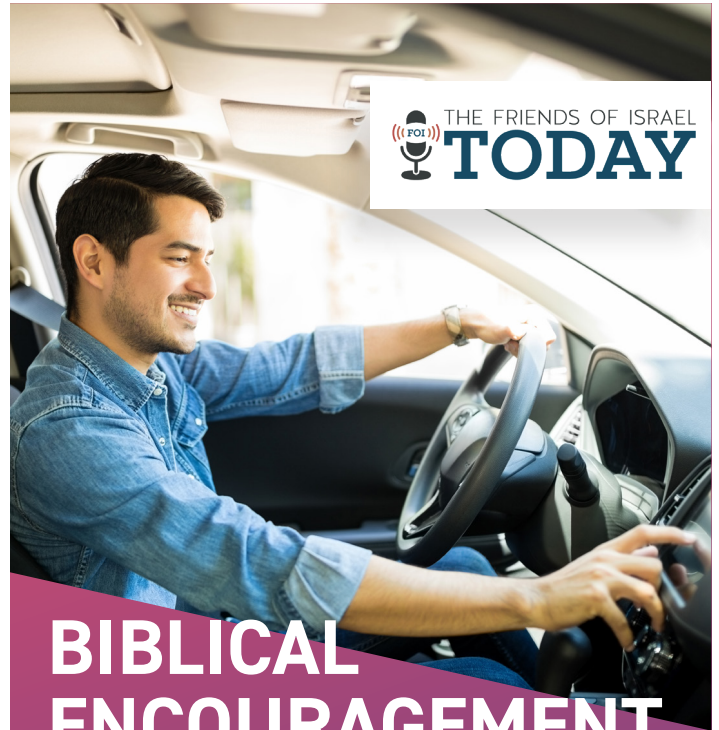
They continued questioning me, asking how I knew the Bible. I said, “I read it and do not spend my time reading fictitious stories, as you do.” Please pray these men will see the light of the Messiah, Jesus, while they still can.

From The Friends of Israel archives



Zvi Kalisher (1928–2014) was a Holocaust survivor who was known for his unwavering faithfulness to the Lord and his bold witness in Jerusalem. He was with The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry for more than 55 years.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS CHARACTER STUDIES FROM THE BOOK OF ESTHER



BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT ON THE GO!

Fill your head, heart, and drive time with the best in biblical teaching, captivating interviews, Israeli news updates, and in-depth analysis of *Israel My Glory* articles. **The Friends of Israel Today** radio show presents the biblical truth you value and the spiritual enrichment you need.

Check us out on one of nearly 500 radio stations nationwide or stream us online.

**TO LISTEN OR FIND A STATION NEAR YOU,
VISIT FOIRADIO.ORG**

THE FRIENDS OF ISRAEL
GOSPEL MINISTRY, INC.
P.O. BOX 908
BELLMAWR, NJ 08099

**GOT QUESTIONS?
YOU'RE NOT ALONE.**



LOOK UP VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

MARCH 10 & 11, 2023

REGISTER AT [LOOKUP.FOI.ORG](https://lookup.foi.org)

