EXCLUSIVE:
Signs of the end-times—Page 8
Craig Parshall on facing the liberal media—Page 18

Plus:
Jan Markell asks, ‘Will the emergent church submerge yours?’—Page 30
Adrian Rogers on the resurrection—Page 12
This Page
Is Intentionally
Left Blank
**Tuning In on the Last Days**
*by Elwood McQuaid*

Many people today want to know if we’re living in the last days. There’s an easy way to tell. You just need to know what you’re looking for.

**What If There Had Been No Easter?**
*by Adrian Rogers*

As Christians, we rejoice because Christ arose. But what if He had not? The world would be a different place indeed. And it’s not a pretty picture.

**Victory in Jesus**
*by William L. Krewson*

For a king to rule forever, He has to live forever. Faith in Messiah’s resurrection and future reign did not originate with Christianity.

**Facing the Goliath of the Liberal Media (Part 1)**
*by Craig L. Parshall*

Unhappy with the news media’s 2008 election coverage? Well, get ready to become unhappier after you read this!

**The Passover Lamb**
*by Steve Herzig*

Matzoh, matzoh, matzoh. There’s plenty of matzoh on Passover tables around the world. But something else is conspicuously absent.

---

**Spring comes as a blessed reminder of a fresh start—a new beginning. Have you thought about what our world would be like if there were no spring? Living in a perpetual state of February is a chilling prospect. Our good friend, the late Dr. Adrian Rogers, frames this thought in a spiritual dimension by asking, “What if there had been no Easter?” Believers know the answer to that one. We would be, of all people, most miserable. But Christ has risen, and the feature articles you will read regarding His resurrection will refresh and encourage you at a time when encouragement is a matter of supreme importance. And don’t miss Craig Parshall’s indispensable exposé of the news media giants’ agenda to close the door on truth. Gracing our cover is photographer John Theodor’s beautiful picture of the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem (PhotoZion).**

**Also Featuring**

- From Bill Sutter’s Desk
- Eye on the Middle East
- Editorial
- 10 Good Reasons to Keep Looking Up
- They Cry in Silence
- Actual or Absurd?
- Spring Festivals Chart
- The Resurrection Wrangle
- The Jewish Promise of Resurrection
- Operation Love Israel
- Will the Emergent Church Submerge Yours?
- Hamas Thwarts Aid to Its Own People
- My Seder Memories
- The Jerusalem Road
- The Book of Hebrews
- The Foundations of Faith
- Israel in the News: Behind Enemy Lines
- Democrats, Republicans, and Israel
- Zvi

---

*Note: No materials contained in this magazine may be reproduced in any form without the permission of The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc. For all permissions, please write to Mrs. Vera Bowker, The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc., P.O. Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08099. Or e-mail her at VBowker@foi.org. All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright ©1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.*
Readers of Israel My Glory understand from Scripture that Israel is the homeland of the Jewish people and the focal point of God’s plan for humanity. We also realize that the founding of the modern State of Israel on May 14, 1948, represents God acting on His promise to give a specific land to the Jewish people forever. Less understood, however, is how the institutions of the Jewish state actually work.

Israel is a democracy consisting of three branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial. The executive branch, known as the Government, is led by the prime minister and the Cabinet of Ministers and is responsible for Israel’s domestic and foreign affairs, including all-important matters related to security. Recent prime ministers who have expressed insightful understanding and appreciation of Israel’s Christian friends have included Benjamin Netanyahu (1996–1999) and Ariel Sharon (2001–2006).

Israel is a nation of many political parties. Elections are national, and Israelis vote for a political party, rather than for individuals. Since no party has ever received a majority, every government has been composed of a coalition of several parties.

Israel’s single-chamber legislative branch, the Knesset, has 120 members who are seated from the parties’ slates of candidates. Israel’s Arab minorities also have elected representatives.

Knesset members, known as MKs, are scheduled to serve four years; but either they or the prime minister may dissolve the legislative body at any time. This is a unique process by which the government is said to have “fallen,” leading to new national elections.

Knesset history was made on January 5, 2004, when the Christian Allies Caucus was established “to build a direct line of communication, cooperation, and coordination between the Knesset and Christian leaders around the world.” Today 13 Knesset members from seven Jewish political parties sit on the Caucus.

According to Caucus Director Josh Reinstein, a frequent speaker on our “Up to Jerusalem” tours, “Many Christians recognize that their belief in the Bible connects them to the land and the people of Israel. On this basis, we work together to achieve our goals.” At our tour’s most recent visit to the Knesset, Caucus Chairman Benjamin (Benny) Elon took a recess from his usual legislative duties to greet us and express his appreciation for the love Christians show toward the Jewish people.

Israel’s third branch of government, the Judiciary, is composed of various types of courts. Judges are appointed on the recommendations of a Nominations Committee comprised of Supreme Court justices, members of the Bar, and public figures. The Judiciary’s independence is guaranteed by law. The Supreme Court has nationwide jurisdiction as the final court of appeal.

Israel also has a president who symbolizes the nation’s unity above political party politics. Accordingly, presidential duties are largely ceremonial. Israel’s current president, statesman Shimon Peres, was elected in 2007 by a majority of the Knesset to a single term of seven years.

The Israeli government is well represented in the United States. The ambassadorship to the United States is considered so important that this ambassador alone, out of Israel’s numerous ambassadors worldwide, reports directly to the prime minister.

Headquartered at the Embassy of Israel in Washington, D.C., the ambassador and embassy staff represent the State of Israel to the people of the United States through a host of events, speaking engagements, academic initiatives, cultural opportunities, and business ventures. Under the leadership of its recent ambassadors, Daniel Ayalon (2002–2006) and Sallai Meridor (2006–present), the embassy has especially welcomed Christians into the life of Israel through monthly briefings and special events, such as the annual Christian Solidarity With Israel Day to which The Friends of Israel brings many Christians.

Israel also strengthens its ties with local communities through a series of nine consulates throughout the United States. Friends of Israel staff and constituents have warm relations with many of these consulates, particularly the Consulate of Israel in Philadelphia, which serves the mid-Atlantic region where our international headquarters is located.

Recent consuls general in Philadelphia—including Giora Becher (2000–2004), Uriel Palti (2004–2008), and Daniel Kutner (2008–present)—have engaged The Friends of Israel in consulate briefings, programs with Israelis, and other activities that strengthen ties between Christians and the Jewish state.

The organization and vitality of Israel today clearly demonstrate how God keeps His promises.

Then the Lord your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers (Dt. 30:5).

William E. Sutter is the executive director of The Friends of Israel.
As 2008 slipped off the stage into history, former American President James Earl “Jimmy” Carter was off on a mission to aid Arab countries and terrorist organizations by monitoring elections and helping initiate (so he thinks) an environment for peace.

On his visitation list were Syria and Lebanon. Carter met with Syrian President Bashar Assad and agreed with him that there should be no peace until Israel returns the Golan Heights to Syria. His offer to meet for chats with the terrorist Hezbollah in Lebanon was spurned, so he had to settle for meeting again with senior Hamas terrorists—including the organization’s main man, Khaled Mashaal.

Turning a deaf ear to complaints that America lists Hezbollah and Hamas as outlawed, terrorist organizations to be rejected until they change their ways and join civilized society, the former president proceeded on his one-man diplomatic foray anyway.

In addition to conferring an odious credibility on these merchants of terror, Carter has unfortunately stepped into a matter with more serious dimensions. Syria, Hezbollah, and Hamas are all surrogates of Iran where Mahmoud Ahmadinejad presides, preparing a sufficient stock of weapons of mass destruction to arm his crusade to wipe out Israel and then go after the West.

If this fact is a concern to Jimmy Carter, he doesn’t seem to register it. One might suppose that he swims with the growing school of philosopher-diplomats who believe that what the world needs now is more conversation—time-outs, perhaps—that will politely convince this band of killers to be reasonable and love their neighbors.

But while the path to palaver is being paved, take a moment to hear what Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has to say about the situation. In early December 2008, Mubarak stated what he construes to be Ahmadinejad’s intentions. In a report aired on Israel Radio and then picked up by The Jerusalem Post, Mubarak took the Iranians to task: “The Persians are trying to devour the Arab states,” he said.

His comments came after Egypt had recalled its diplomatic envoy from the Iranian capital following a rise in tensions between the two countries.

And why wouldn’t Mr. Mubarak have his hackles raised? More than once demonstrators in Iran have demanded that the Egyptian leader be hanged. That, of course, didn’t go down well in Cairo. But the people of Tehran were not finished. They marched to the Egyptian diplomatic mission in the city, chanting “Death to America” and “Death to Israel” and torched an Israeli flag.

Not surprisingly, when the state controls the news media with an iron fist, the press jumps on the bandwagon to join the fray. In this instance, it piled on Mubarak a mountain of insults and criticisms of his policies and leadership.

As if it weren’t enough to have the murderous Muslim Brotherhood on the prowl against him at home, President Mubarak is now being forced to watch his back for the Iranian Hitler who wants to devour him along with the Arab world, Israel, the United States, and Europe. The little Persian has put a lot on his plate, and he doesn’t need naïve politicians on our side of the table giving him help and encouragement.

Events engulfing the planet seem to be turning from the ridiculous to the bizarre. It is no longer a rare phenomenon to hear friends and acquaintances ask, “Where is common sense?” Now they’re also asking, “Where can leaders be found who will exercise it?”

by Elwood McQuaid
A Promise Kept

The passing of old friends often brings a mixture of sadness and relief to those of us left behind. Such was the case in the recent homegoing of a friend of more than half a century in the ministry. He became afflicted with terminal cancer and, after a long siege, lost the battle.

Ralph gave strict instructions that there be no eulogies or tributes at the memorial service, just a simple graveside ceremony planting the physical seed that will emerge in full flower when the Lord returns in the Rapture. Still, when friends (in the words of a dying Civil War general) have crossed over the river to find rest on the other side, a portion of personal history goes with them; and we are the poorer for it.

In a conversation days before his departure, we talked about many things that related to the future, both for us personally and for that of our beloved country. We speculated about what life holds for our children and our children’s children. As our talk drew to a close, my friend expressed the depth of what it meant at that juncture in his life to rediscover words that had suddenly become intensely relevant in the book of Habakkuk.

“Elwood,” Ralph said, “doesn’t this say it all about the reality of what the situation is today, not only for me, but for all of us?” The words he referenced were these:

Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls—yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer’s feet, and He will make me walk on my high hills (Hab. 3:17–19).

“Elwood,” he continued, “with all that’s happening today, you must use this passage in Israel My Glory and let people who believe know that they have something better than financial security, or good health that will one day fail.” I promised I would. By writing this, I am keeping my promise.

I’m writing, however, not simply as a tribute to a friend’s unqualified faith and dedication to God’s Word, but because we desperately need to claim these Scriptures. For decades we have been assured that, though others in the world may suffer, America will still see the good times roll. The hardships and deprivation that fell on society after the stock market crashed in 1929, plunging the nation into the Great Depression, could not possibly happen again, we’ve been told. New regulations reportedly insulate us from a recurrence.

Today, though technically we may not be in a depression, great stress weighs down individuals and families who have been stripped of their jobs and lack the means to meet their obligations. How far down we will go before things bottom out, no one really knows.

During the Christmas doldrums of 2008, there was great anxiety over the inability to spend without limit and let tomorrow take care of itself. But someone wisely commented that the lack of abundant means seemed to cause many to turn to the simpler aspects of the celebration. If by that he meant a return to the manger and God’s unparalleled entry into time, I applaud the slight gasp of deprivation we suffer.

Jesus had something to say on the subject: “And He said to them, ‘Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses’” (Lk. 12:15).

Excessive pride in possessions and ownership is often misplaced. In reality, we own nothing permanently. We are only temporary tenants, exercising stewardship over temporal property that we will, in the end, relinquish to others. There is a time-worn phrase that warns, You can’t take it with you. No, you can’t; but you can send infinitely superior treasure on ahead, to be available when you arrive in the City where nothing will ever tarnish or be taken from you or become unavailable because a recession has closed the shops.

The fact is, when everything seems lost in the here and now, we are—as His children—still rich beyond measure. Habakkuk reminds us that in times like these, we have “rest in the day of trouble” (3:16). Rest about us, rest before us. What do we have to complain about?
TIME TO RENEW?

Check the mailing label on the back cover of this magazine. The date in the upper right corner of the label indicates the end of your current subscription. Use the enclosed envelope to renew.

Subscription Rates

USA: $18.95 for 1 year, $28.95 for 2 years
Overseas: $21.95 for 1 year, $34.95 for 2 years
(U.S. dollars only) Single copies $4 each
Canada: $18.95 CAD for 1 year, $28.95 CAD for 2 years

Israel My Glory is also available in Spanish.
A dentist’s chair is not an ideal place for a Bible prophecy conference. A mouthful of dental paraphernalia reduces a patient’s response to grunts and a rolling of the eyes, severely limiting the ability to answer questions from the man in charge of repairs. And for someone like me, who spends a considerable portion of his life steeped in subjects related to end-times events and is stocked up on facts and opinions, it is an excruciating exercise.

But it does have its rewards. In this instance, compensation came in the form of an observation by my dentist, a practitioner who is competent in his profession and, at the same time, attuned to contemporary issues.

“With all that we’re seeing today,” he asked, “is it safe to say that we are living in the last days?”

The question itself was not unusual. What perked my attention is the frequency with which it is being asked these days. Without a doubt, more believers in North America and the West feel increasingly shortchanged by the lack of teaching on the subject coming from their churches and other theological sources of information.

Although we are certainly living in the last days, we cannot determine with any certainty how far into the last days we are. What we can see are markers or, if you will, trends that identify precursors of the end-times scenario laid down in the Scriptures. A serious look at where events are taking us is intensely practical and, in fact, an inescapable necessity if believers are to be prepared to respond biblically and spiritually to the challenges of our time. We can no longer afford the wishful thinking that replaces reality with the mood of the moment, which ignores facts and creates a false sense of security and affluent continuity.

Defining the Source

No one can successfully dispute the fact that biblical inerrancy and traditional Christian values are under attack. The level of unrestrained and relentless...
mockery, cynicism, and threatened or actual physical assaults on believers and their property has escalated remarkably. In some societies, it has become fashionable to persecute Christians and practice a refurbished paganism that glorifies unrestrained, secularized worship.

Unfortunately, the church has not been immune to fallout from this retreat into the void of uncertainty that blatantly repudiates the truth emanating from the only reliable source available to us: the Word of God. A case in point is prophetic teaching, fast becoming a rarity in many circles. In view of current national and international affairs, this failing can hardly be ignored. Biblical prophecy, given by divine revelation, is the one and only critically reliable link between the present and future. It enlightens us regarding applicable priorities for the here and now, while providing understanding of what lies ahead. We should have learned by now that there is no certain sound coming from the voices of “experts” in nearly any field one cares to mention.

For example, when petroleum prices soared and people still fortunate enough to have jobs wondered how they were going to be able to drive to work, experts said, “Get used to it. Gasoline prices will never come down. We’re finally approaching what people pay in other parts of the world, and that’s the way it will stay.” Well, prices did come down; no one, not even the experts, accurately predicted the future.

Of more profound significance were the failures of the foreign affairs prognosticators. On Christmas day in 1991, after 70 years of grinding oppression and 50 years of bitter Cold War with the West, the Hammer and Sickle flag of the Soviet Union was lowered over the Kremlin. Some experts enthusiastically proclaimed that the new Russia would be governed by leaders yearning for freedom and friendship with their Western benefactors. Democracy was the wave of the future, they said. Well, they were wrong. When the staggering colossus regained its balance under Vladimir Putin, imperialism returned; and a refashioned Cold War resumed.

A myriad of other examples could be cited, verifying the often costly inability of humans to chart the future. But we do have an accurate interpreter of what is to come—a fuser of prophecy and history that is certain to be correct. For that clarity of purpose and design, we must turn our attention to the Bible and the markers laid down for us there.

**Signs of the Times**

Several current trends provide insight into how far into the end-times we have progressed.

**Image Over Substance.** Among the great maladies of our day is aggressive, superficial decision-making based on appearance rather than proven substance. This condition has been largely fostered by television and its capacity to create the illusion of substance through attractive images. In many respects, we are, therefore, becoming image-oriented people with short, sound bite-length attention spans.

The culmination of this process relates to the description of the Antichrist in Revelation 13 and other passages. He is described as adored, eloquent, consumed by the lust for power, and obsessed with presenting himself as a new messiah:

> “Who is like the beast [Antichrist]?” … And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him … who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God (Rev. 13:4–5, 7–8; 2 Th. 2:4).

An image will be crafted of this final dictator, and the world will be commanded to bow before it in worship. This is the classic exhibition of the supreme satanic embodiment of absolute narcissism that millions shall willingly buy into.

**The Plunge Into Apostasy.** “Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day [the Lord’s Second Advent] will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition” (2 Th. 2:3).

Preparation for the entrance of the Antichrist is a “falling away” from the true faith. This is a form of apostasy, a condition in which people who have the right information about God and His truth turn from it in denial and repudiation.

Today the world is moving faster than ever away from orthodox Christianity into a merger with all forms of religions and cults under, as King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia expressed last year, the banner of belief in “one God.” This position is nothing more than retreaded, institutionalized polytheism. And at the core of this system of inclusion and denial are (1) vigorous rejection of the gospel and (2) militant suppression of all individuals and groups committed to proclaiming it, as mandated in Jesus’ Great Commission to His church. The evidence is mounting that we are moving toward a one-world religion—minus, of course, the true and living God. Therefore, one can only conclude that we are moving in the direction of prophesied apostasy.

**Materialistic Madness.** Shock waves over recently uncovered corruption, deception, and thievery in the world of high finance are still reverberating in the global markets. Greed, both corporate and individual, has become the name of the game; and few seem to understand why. It surprised me when a television commentator actually put his finger on the problem. Saying he was by no stretch a preacher, he nevertheless felt he had to admit that this culture’s precipitous bankruptcy of moral values is the prime underlying factor in the illicit cash grab of the greedy. An often-heard exclamation is the apostle Paul’s statement, “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil” (1 Tim. 6:10).

The knockout blow for the material end-times world is described in Revelation 18 when “Babylon the great,” the center and symbol of a godless global system, experiences the full cup of God’s wrath: “For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities” (v. 5).

Interestingly, those most affected by the collapse of their corrupt system are called the “merchants of the earth”...
who “will weep and mourn over her [Babylon]. The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you. . . . The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing” (vv. 11, 14–15).

Payday is coming for the wholesale sellout to materialism, and the world is systematically moving in that direction. **Suppression of Israel.** The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines suppression as “the conscious intentional exclusion from consciousness of a thought or feeling.”

The bad intentions of the enemies of Israel and the Jewish people couldn’t be more clearly stated outside of holy writ. The fondest desire of jihadist fanatics and their fellow travelers is to reduce Israel to a mere stain on the memory of Middle Eastern history. That is why they have eradicated Israel from all Arab and Palestinian maps. Revisionist fabricators of history delight in claiming there never was a Holocaust, Jews never existed in significant numbers in Israel, no Jewish Temples ever stood on Mount Moriah, and no modern Jewish state should exist.

In other words, Israel to them is a phantasm creation that is fit only to be destroyed and then forgotten.

Unfortunately, tiny Israel’s struggle for survival will continue and accelerate until the final chapter is written: “I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem” (Zech. 14:2).

But the sinister ambitions of the nations that rage against God, His city, and the Jewish people will not be realized: “Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle” (v. 3).

These snapshots of prophecy are markers in the progression toward the final days leading to the consummation of the age. But rather than becoming sources of depression and fear, they stand as implements of discernment and assurance that there is an end in sight to the sinful excesses befouling the global landscape. Furthermore, we are given this information by a God who pledges not to afflict us with ignorance about our times or our future.

Is the finish line in sight? Are we actually in the last days? In a broad sense, every day could be the last day of the last days before we hear the call that will take us into God’s presence. Consequently, we are “looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” (Ti. 2:13).

Do I personally believe we are living in the last days? Yes, and I am convinced that we are deep into them. That conviction comes from observing the rapidly developing trends that correspond to what the prophetic Word teaches us. No, we do not know the day or hour; but we do have His promises and the evidence at hand. “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20).

**10 Good Reasons to Keep Looking Up**

Discouraged? Feeling depressed because of personal or world events? Perhaps it’s time to take a little spiritual inventory. If you have truly been born again through faith in Jesus Christ, you have a lot of things to look forward to. Here are 10 of them. So as you persevere, remember who holds your hand and that He has promised, “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Cor. 2:9).

- You will receive a new body (1 Cor. 15:52).
- You will get a custom dwelling place. Every house on Earth requires fixing, but the home He prepares for you will be perfect (Jn. 14:2–3).
- You will be like Christ, so you will be unable to sin (1 Jn. 3:2).
- You will get to know Bible saints, such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Mt. 8:11).
- You will see and speak to loved ones who died in the faith (1 Th. 4:13–17).
- You will live in a perfect world. What lies ahead is so much better than what exists today (Rev. 21).
- You will never again suffer heartache, pain, death, broken relationships, or the like (1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 7:16–17).
- You will fall for the final time. But rather than falling short, you will fall on your knees in praise (Rom. 7:15–25; Phil. 2:10).
- You will participate in awesome worship (Rev. 5:11–14; 7:9–12).
- You will see God (Job 19:26; 1 Jn. 3:2).

*by Jim Calloway, assistant pastor of Bible Baptist Church, Hamilton Township, NJ*
What could you expect if you were among the 2,000 to 3,000 Christians living in the Gaza Strip now controlled by the Hamas terrorist organization? Nothing good. As we have reported repeatedly, radical Islamists have promised to drive all Christians from the region. And they are working diligently to keep that promise.

Jonathan Spyer of the Global Research in International Affairs Center in Herzliya, Israel, recently updated Jerusalem Post readers on the dire situation.

In an article titled “Analysis: Cruelty and Silence in Gaza,” he said there is a “systematic campaign of persecution,” unreported in the Western media, that is intensifying rapidly: “The perpetrators are a variety of Islamist groups, all of which are manifestations of a process of growing Islamic militancy and piety taking place across the region.” Although Hamas claims an official commitment to tolerate the Christian community, in reality it does no such thing. When radicals attack Christians and Christian institutions, authorities are indifferent and refuse to arrest the guilty or protect the Christians. Therefore, wrote Spyer, Christians are being targeted with impunity: “Intimidation, assault and the threat of kidnapping are now part of daily reality for Christians.”

Terrorist splinter groups that have sprung up across Gaza blame their existence on Christians whom they say expose Gaza residents to a pro-Western influence that threatens Islamic dominance. They unwittingly but clearly make the case that Islam has an internal sense of inferiority that makes it unable to stand up to Christianity’s freedom, individual initiative, liberation of women, and creativity.

Perhaps these inhibitions fueled the February 2006 and April 2007 bombings of the Palestinian Bible Society’s “Teacher’s Bookshop” in Gaza City and the October 2007 murder of the bookstore’s manager, 29-year-old Rami Ayyad. In 2008, both a school operated by nuns and the American International School in Beit Lahiya were also bombed. Two other schools have been attacked, as was the YMCA library.

Wrote Spyer: “The persecution of Christians is not emerging from a small Islamist fringe. Rather, it is part of a larger process of Islamization taking place in Palestinian society.” Sadly, this is the greater threat menacing not only the Middle East but the international community as well.

Since the expulsion of Jews and Christians from Gaza, the most vulnerable target has become the West Bank (Judea and Samaria), where the Christian population is much larger and better organized. With Israel’s current administration determined to turn 98 percent of that area over to the Palestinian Authority (PA), it is not surprising Christians are apprehensive. They know full well what has occurred in Bethlehem, where marauding Islamist zealots have provoked a Christian exodus from the town where Jesus was born.

And when Mahmoud Abbas is replaced as chairman of the PA, which could occur soon, Judea and Samaria may well fall under control of a government dominated by Hamas. If and when the Israelis are forced to vacate the West Bank, as they were the Gaza Strip, the same campaign of terror will be waged.

And though many uninformed and indifferent forces in America and the West will call it progress toward peace, it will be anything but that for longsuffering Palestinian Christians who deserve better than being forced to wander as homeless refugees.
Harry Houdini was a master escape artist. There wasn’t a box, bag, or barrel from which he couldn’t escape. That is, until death knocked at his door. Harry met his match when death clenched him in an ironclad grasp.

Death put Jesus in a rock-hewn tomb. And all the world thought there was no escape. But on the third day, He left the grave clothes that were wrapped around Him much like a butterfly would forsake its cocoon. And Jesus passed through the walls of that tomb. The stone wasn’t rolled away to let Him out. It was rolled away to let the disciples in to see that Jesus had come back from the dead. And Jesus Christ is alive today!

Suppose death still had its grip on Jesus. We would be faced with many tragic consequences. And those consequences come directly from 1 Corinthians 15:12–20.

Preaching Would Be Profitless

We would be wasting our time in this Christian life if there were no resurrection of our Lord. The heart of the gospel is that Jesus died for our sins. He was buried and raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures. I heard of a preacher who told his congregation that the body of Jesus Christ still lies in a nameless tomb, but His deathless spirit marches on. Do you know what that man ought to do? Get out of the pulpit and get another job! If I did not believe that
The late Adrian Rogers was known for his uncompromising commitment to God’s Word. He can be heard on radio and television through his ongoing broadcast ministry, “Love Worth Finding.” For more information, please visit www.lwf.org.

Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep (1 Cor. 15:12–20).

Faith Would Be Foolish

Who wants to put their faith in Jesus if He is dead? You would be trusting someone who doesn’t deserve your trust. Romans 10:9 says, “If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” The difference between Christianity and other religions is that their leaders lived and died. Jesus lived, died, and rose again. There is no need to follow a loser. Jesus conquered death!

Disciples Would Be Deceivers

Paul did not say that if Christ were still in the grave, we would be mistaken. He said if Christ has not been raised, we are “false witnesses.” In the courtroom, a false witness is someone who knowingly, willingly, and even deliberately perjures himself. He is a liar. “Well,” some say, “how do we know they didn’t just make it all up?” Because many of these men sealed their testimonies with their lives. Hypocrites and martyrs are made of different stuff. A man may live for a lie, but few will die for one.

Sin Would Be Sovereign

If Christ were still in the grave, God has not accepted the payment for our sin. When God raised Jesus, it was His stamp of approval that full payment had been made. Without the resurrection of Jesus Christ, I wouldn’t give you half of a hallelujah for your hope in heaven. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Death Would Have Dominion

Surely you don’t believe that our loving God, who created the universe, intends for it all to run down into the grave. That we are born crying, live complaining, and die disappointed? I can’t accept that. First Thessalonians 4:16 says, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.” Second Timothy 1:10 tells us that Jesus has “abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

Future Would Be Futile

If this is all there is, then we are to be pitied. Ernest Hemingway said, “It’s as though we are a colony of ants living on one end of a burning log.” What do people without Jesus look forward to when they die? A hole in the ground. Life as we know it is chaotic at best if Christ has not been raised.

Praise His wonderful name! Jesus has taken the sting out of death. He has taken the gloom out of the grave. He has given us a hope that is steadfast and sure. He is not behind us in a tomb. He is before us on a throne!
Cynical journalist H. L. Mencken (1880–1956) once said, “What I got in Sunday school... was simply a firm conviction that the Christian faith was full of palpable absurdities.” No doubt many today would say the resurrection of Christ is one of those absurdities. But even apart from faith, Jesus’ resurrection can stand up to any challenge. And over the years, there have been many.

One trendy theory in particular posits that Jesus did not die on the cross but “swooned” into unconsciousness. When His body was placed in the tomb, the cool air revived Him. He then apparently had enough strength after being beaten, whipped, and crucified, to roll an enormous boulder from the tomb’s entrance and walk out. Then He supposedly fled the country, got married, raised a family, and lived to a ripe old age. Meanwhile, His duped supporters started a rumor that He came back from the dead.

Nothing could be more ludicrous! The Romans were expert executioners. They severely beat and scourged Jesus even before nailing Him to the cross. Furthermore, it was military law that if a soldier failed in his duty, he paid with his life. So, to make certain Jesus was dead, a soldier rammed a spear into His side (Jn. 19:34).

Gracious men, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, carefully prepared Jesus’ body for burial (vv. 38–40). They knew He was dead.

The swoon theory is doubly preposterous when you consider that Jesus would have been in the tomb for three days with no food, water, or medical assistance. Yet He supposedly was able to roll away a heavy, sealed, stone door and overpower the Roman guards!

The truth is easier to believe: Jesus is God.

As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again (Jn. 10:15, 18).

Because this is so, Jesus arose from the dead. And He was indeed seen in Israel by His disciples (chaps. 20—21) and by more than 500 followers at one time (1 Cor. 15:6). He walked with His disciples as far as Bethany and was seen ascending into heaven from Mount Olivet (Lk. 24:50–51; Acts 1:1–9).

As God incarnate, Jesus died on the cross as the final sacrifice for sin, was buried, and rose again on the third day (1 Cor.15: 3–4). Because He lives, He gives life to all who believe in Him:

If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom. 10:9–10).

Nothing absurd about that!

by Peter Colón, Southeastern States director for The Friends of Israel.
When the first man and woman listened to the serpent’s voice and chose to disobey the God who had created them, the curtain fell on a perfect world. Adam and Eve then considered themselves like God by creating their own standards of good and evil—something society does with regularity today.

But before God expelled them from the Garden of Eden, He sentenced the serpent (Satan) to defeat: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Gen. 3:15). This first of God’s marvelous promises finds fulfillment in the risen Christ. Satan counted Jesus’ death as his own moment of victory; but in reality, it was the hour of his greatest defeat. The resurrection establishes Jesus as God’s powerful Son and guarantees ultimate victory over death and Satan (Heb. 2:15).

Tied to Jewish Prophecy

Although few people realize it, Christ’s resurrection is clearly tied to Jewish prophecy. The apostle Paul wrote, “He was buried, and . . . rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:4). The Scriptures Paul referred to were the Hebrew Scriptures. The Old Testament foretold the Messiah would rise from the dead. Paul, in fact, explained this concept to a synagogue audience, quoting from Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 55:3; and Psalm 16:10 respectively:

And we declare to you glad tidings—that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You.” And that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He has spoken thus: “I will give you the sure mercies of David.” Therefore He also says in another Psalm: “You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption” (Acts 13:32–35).

A resurrection prophecy in Isaiah describes the suffering Servant as “cut off from the land of the living” (53:8) and buried in “His grave with the wicked” (v. 9). The prophet then foretold the resurrection: “When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand” (v. 10). This Servant will not remain in the grave but will live to see His descendants. Only the resurrection of Jesus makes sense of this prophecy.

The Old Testament also foretold Jesus’ resurrection “on the third day.” The first passage to teach such a hope is in Hosea: Come, and let us return to the Lord, for He has torn, but He will heal us; He
Reversing the Curse

When Adam and Eve sinned, God promised humanity a world full of toil and trouble on a sin-cursed Earth. Yet, amid the curses, He also provided hope by promising a Redeemer (Gen. 3:15). Eve’s “Seed” would be a human male who would crush the serpent’s head, dealing Satan a deathblow. This Man’s heel would be injured in the struggle, but He is assured of complete victory. The curse will be reversed and Eden restored.

Jesus was “declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4). His resurrection validated what He achieved in His death. God’s supernatural power over death and the serpent guarantees the ultimate victory when Jesus Christ returns to Earth.

God, in fact, gave David a promise about one of his descendants: “Your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever” (2 Sam. 7:16). God promised that one of David’s sons would inherit his throne, and his rule would never end. How could such a promise be fulfilled when the Davidic kingship ended in 586 B.C. under Babylonian conquest?

The Davidic Covenant, God’s marvelous promise about His future King, finds fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Jesus was born from the line of David (Mt. 1:1). The angel Gabriel announced, “The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end” (Lk. 1:32–33). Yet Jesus died, as did all the other kings in David’s line. What qualifies Jesus to claim fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant?

Only Jesus, the Son of David, came back to life from the dead. Paul announced this precious truth to the Jewish people by declaring that David himself predicted Jesus’ resurrection, and he quoted David: “For You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption” (Acts 2:27, quoting Psalm 16:10). Paul continued:

Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he [David], foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses (Acts 2:30–32).

The only way for a king to rule forever is for that king to live forever. Jesus’ resurrection guarantees His right to claim Davidic kingship. He rules over His church now and will rule over Israel and the nations in the coming Kingdom.

His resurrection authorizes His kingly rights. Jesus Christ is “the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. . . . the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life” (Rev. 1:5; 2:8). Consequently, His resurrection gives all who believe in Him new life through their identification with Him: “Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4).

His reign will culminate in the Millennial Kingdom when “He shall rule them with a rod of iron” (Rev. 2:27). Jesus’ battle against the forces of the Devil and death will finally bring God’s eternal Kingdom:

Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For “He has put all things under His feet” (1 Cor. 15:24–27).

God’s original plan for the Garden of Eden will be realized with the new heavens, new earth, and New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:1–2). As the great 18th-century hymn writer Charles Wesley wrote in “Rejoice, the Lord Is King”:

Jesus, the Savior, reigns, the God of truth and love;
When He had purged our stains He took His seat above;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!
Rejoice in glorious hope! Jesus the Judge, shall come,
And take His servants up to their eternal home.
We soon shall hear th’archangel’s voice; The trump of God shall sound, rejoice!

Ruling Forever

In the Hebrew Scriptures, God demonstrated His intention to rule the world by giving the people of Israel a king after His own heart. David, unlike Saul before him, reflected a deep desire to please God and rule Israel with justice and compassion. Yet David was not that perfect King whom God had promised.

William L. Krewson is the director of The Friends of Israel Institute of Jewish Studies at Philadelphia Biblical University.
If you don’t read the newspaper, you are uninformed; if you do read the newspaper you are misinformed.

—Mark Twain

With every election, a debate usually rages about whether the major news organizations play fair, are neutral, and present the facts accurately. The last election was no exception. The importance of this issue far transcends partisan bickering. America’s Founding Founders knew full well that a free and honest press was essential for a fully informed electorate. Without it, our constitutional republic would have little chance of meaningful survival.

However, the media’s overt bias (with some exceptions) and manipulation have become so monolithic—so pervasive—that, in my opinion, the situation approaches a constitutional crisis.

What do I mean by liberal media bias? I mean the mainstream national news outlets consistently convey impressions or opinions contrary to the Judeo-Christian view on such ethical, religious, and social issues as the sanctity of human life; the definition of marriage; the right of people to be conservative, biblical Christians and to communicate those beliefs without discrimination; and the right to believe judges should adjudicate those basic questions under the Constitution in a way that secures our religious liberties and basic civil rights.

Furthermore, I define media bias as conveying impressions and opinions of support for those who oppose Judeo-Christian views.

My analysis assumes (correctly, I believe) that, in the last presidential election, U.S. Sen. John McCain—although far from a perfect candidate from the conservative standpoint—was nevertheless more closely aligned with conservative, Bible-believing Christians on certain issues than was U.S. Sen. Barack Obama. Thus the extent of the news media’s coverage in favor of now-President Obama is powerful proof of liberal media bias.

The Objective Data

One way to evaluate media bias is to examine whether it is simply an anomaly of one election cycle or one particular phenomenon, or whether it is an entrenched reality of life. A political scientist who analyzed the use of political polls by ABC, NBC, CBS, and FOX News from 1997 to 2008 found a definite “pro-Democrat bias” in the way those polls were used and reported.

Then there is the study by the Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism. It found that, for the six weeks following the party conventions through the final presidential debates, 36 percent of the news stories portrayed Obama favorably, with a similar percentage neutral. Only 29 percent were negative. The study also showed that a whopping 57 percent of the news about McCain was negative, with only 14 percent positive.
CBS) were found to have skewed their news in favor of Obama. From late August to late September 2008, 61 percent of the stories favored the Democrats and Obama, while only 39 percent favored McCain and the Republicans.4

The Subjective Data

This overt bias was not lost on the public. A staggering 68 percent of the American people in June 2008, the midpoint of the national election campaign, said they believed reporters try to help the candidate whom they want to see win. Further, 44 percent believed most reporters were out to help Obama, while only 13 percent believed reporters were trying to help McCain.5

During the campaign, I mentioned these statistics in a radio debate with Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. His counterpoint was that the statistics were basically meaningless because they were based on public perception of the news. But in today’s world of journalism, perception is everything. Image is king. The entire advertising industry is built on that philosophy; and, regrettably, it appears the mainstream media is as well.

There is a larger point here also. If voters have an entirely embittered and rightly cynical attitude about the “legitimate” news media, then upon what information will they base their future political, moral, and social opinions? On unsubstantiated rumors? On harebrained urban myths that fly unhindered through cyberspace? If so, then what does this say about the future of America?

Confessions of the Media Elite

Even members of the media elite are becoming embarrassed by this lack of objectivity. Howard Kurtz (CNN/Washington Post media analyst) and Mark Halperin (Time) both commented during the election campaign that the press had a “clear, unambiguous double standard” when it gave Barack Obama an easy pass by not covering his broken campaign promise not to take public campaign funding.6

The ombudsman for The Washington Post, Deborah Howell, was forced to admit in an August 17, 2008, article that Obama had been featured on the front page of her newspaper more than twice as many times as McCain. For Obama, who was a newcomer to the national political scene, such high visibility was essential.

Intentionally or not (I have my own theories), The Washington Post became a de facto member of Obama’s campaign staff. In a belated article on November 9, 2008 (five days after the election), Deborah Howell finally admitted the Post had slanted its coverage to favor Obama, whom the Post had endorsed in its editorial pages.7

Then there is CNN. In a telling interview on October 21 with Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin, Drew Griffin made a spontaneous confession. Mrs. Palin pointed to Democratic vice presidential candidate Joe Biden’s statement that if Obama was
elected, the international community would quickly mount a crisis against him merely to test his leadership skills. The press largely ignored Biden’s statement. Yet Palin noted that if she had said such a thing, the media would have “clobbered” her with it. Griffin could only laugh and agree. “You’re right. You’re right,” he said.7

However, in that same interview, Griffin made an atrocious misrepresentation when he put an astonishingly hostile question to Gov. Palin. To her face, he “quoted” the National Review as having suggested she was either “incompetent, stupid, unqualified, corrupt, or all of the above.”8 It turns out the National Review used those words all right, but to indict the media, not Sarah Palin. The National Review actually said this: “Watching press coverage of the Republican candidate for vice president, it’s sometimes hard to decide whether Sarah Palin is incompetent, stupid...” Palin, the Governor of Alaska, has faced more criticism than any vice-presidential candidate since 1988 (emphasis added).9 The CNN correspondent’s out-of-context use of quotations against Sarah Palin was perhaps one of the most outrageous examples of liberal media bias in the election coverage.

For some veteran journalists, like New York Times columnist Michael Malone, it was simply too much. Said Malone: “I’ve begun—for the first time in my adult life—to be embarrassed to admit what I do for a living.”10

A Single Word

Beyond the distortions of political elections, Christians in particular have a vitally important stake in this debate about the media. It is an interesting fact of history that “the single most influential plea known to the Framers [of the Constitution] for unlicensed access to the printing press” was, according to Archibald Cox (constitutional law professor and first Watergate special prosecutor), none other than John Milton’s Areopagitica (1644).11

Milton, in addition to being a literary genius and political activist in England, was a thoroughgoing Christian. His Christian theology permeated everything he wrote. There is a lesson here for Bible-believing Christians: We must always be vigilant to secure the freedom to tell the truth—including the freedom to decry the American press’s lack of truthfulness. In other words, we must do everything we can to ensure our access to both the print and electronic news media.

One of the best ways to do this is to support alternatives to major networks and the established, elite press. In the world of electronic broadcasting, support Christian radio and television networks and stations. If they are commercial in nature, try to buy products you hear advertised there; then let the station manager know you are doing so. If they are noncommercial/nonprofit, consider giving them a generous financial gift or providing ongoing monetary support.

If you are reading this article, there is a good chance you are already doing something important: you are supporting the alternative Christian press by subscribing to Israel My Glory. Pick one or more Christian print or Web-based sources of information and subscribe, if you aren’t already doing so.

The late Alexander Solzhenitsyn knew something about the skewing of information by a monolithic media organism. In his case, it was the tyranny of the Communist Soviet Union that controlled the media. As a political prisoner confined to an ice-shrouded gulag, Solzhenitsyn could not accept in person the 1970 Nobel Prize for Literature in Stockholm, Sweden. So he wrote his acceptance in an essay that he concluded by recounting a simple but profound Russian proverb about truth. It went like this: One word of truth outweighs the whole world.

Such a formula, he said, is a “seemingly fantastic violation of the law of the conservation of mass and energy.”12 He was speaking of the power of writers. But there is an even greater application for Christians. We have the “one word of truth” that truly outweighs the world, and that Word is Jesus. The gospel truth we have received, believed, and communicated to the world is more powerful than the might of all the media monopolies or transnational telecommunications companies combined.

Jesus, the logos, the Word, came as the Son of God and presented Himself as the embodiment of divine truth. Wherever He is, we are told, there “the light shines in the darkness” (Jn. 1:5). America’s news beemoths boast of being beacons of reliable information. But they have proven to be blind guides. It is time to recognize that Christian alternatives are the last, best hope for telling the truth in America.

continued next issue

ENDNOTES

3 “Winning the Media Campaign: How the Press Reported the 2008 General Election” <journalism.org/print/13307>.
8 Ibid.
9 Byron York, “How Palin Governed,” October 22, 2008 <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=MjE3MzAxN0VzNnExOGQyMjYwZjB0OTYmNmEyY2VjNzE2NQ>&=

Craig L. Parshall is a leading trial attorney who argues cases involving civil liberties, constitutional rights, and religious freedoms. He is senior vice president and general counsel for the National Religious Broadcasters, as well as an acclaimed novelist.

20
SPRING FESTIVALS CHART

Passover (Pesach)

14th of Nisan (March/April)

Exodus 12:1–14; Leviticus 23:4–5

Original Observance: Instituted around 1400 B.C. to deliver Israel from slavery in Egypt. God sent 10 plagues to force Pharaoh to let His people go and to show the impotence of Egypt’s false gods. For the 10th plague, God smote all firstborn Egyptian and Israelite males whose houses did not have the blood of a lamb smeared on the outside doorposts. Under Moses’ supervision, the lambs were killed and the blood applied. Pharaoh then released the Israelites so they could go to the Promised Land. Passover required all Jewish males to appear in Jerusalem, as did Shavuot and Sukkot (Tabernacles). Passover was a one-day celebration.

Modern Celebration: Joyous eight-day celebration when no leaven is eaten. A seder service is held at the dinner table, as families gather to hear the story of their ancestors’ deliverance from Egypt.

Prophetic Application: Redemption

For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us (1 Cor. 5:7). The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! (Jn. 1:29).

Unleavened Bread (Hag Hamatzot)

15th–21st of Nisan (March/April)

Exodus 12:15–17; Leviticus 23:6–8

Original Observance: Instituted at the same time as Passover, at the Exodus from Egypt. For seven days immediately following Passover, the Israelites were to avoid leaven (yeast, etc.) and all foods containing it, such as bread. They were to eat matzoh—a flat, unleavened cracker. The holiday signified the reality of the nation’s separation from Egypt and its sanctification to a unique, special relationship with Almighty God. The Bible often associates leaven with sin. In the New Testament, Passover and Unleavened Bread are often referred to as the Feast of Unleavened Bread (cf. Lk. 22:1–7).

Modern Celebration: Celebrated as part of Passover. Many Jewish people hold a second seder on the 15th of Nisan and abstain from leavened products until sundown on the 21st.

Prophetic Application: Sanctification

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21).
### SPRING FESTIVALS CHART

**First Fruits**  
(Bikurim)

- **First Sunday following Passover (March/April)**
- **Leviticus 23:9–14**
- **Original Observance:** Instituted when the Israelites entered the Promised Land. It marked the beginning of the grain (usually barley) harvest. God told His people to pluck up a sheaf (Hebrew, *omer*) or small handful, much like a bouquet of flowers, at the first sign of the crop—before the grain could be eaten, sold, or stored—and offer it to the Lord before it was fully mature. God wanted His people to give thanks beforehand for a crop they had not yet received. They were to bring the sheaf to the Temple and give it to the priest who would wave it before the Lord to thank God in advance for a bountiful harvest.

- **Modern Celebration:** Not celebrated today because there is no Temple or priesthood. Some celebrate Lag B’Omer as a link between Passover (the Exodus) and Shavuot (giving of the Law).

- **Prophetic Application:** Resurrection  
  *But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep* (1 Cor. 15:20).

---

**Feast of Weeks**  
(Shavuot/Pentecost)

- **Exactly 50 days after First Fruits, usually in Sivan (May/June)**
- **Exodus 34:22; Leviticus 23:15–22; Deuteronomy 16:10**
- **Original Observance:** Instituted when the Israelites entered the land. It is called the Feast of Weeks because it involved counting seven weeks (exactly 50 days) from First Fruits to this offering. The Greek name, Pentecost, means “50th day.” It involved presenting two loaves of bread, with leaven (Lev. 23:17), plus burnt offerings (v. 18). The priests also gave peace offerings. This, too, was a harvest festival, coming in mid season. The Lord required His people to give thanks at the beginning (First Fruits), middle (Feast of Weeks), and end (Tabernacles) of the harvest. All Jewish males were required to go to Jerusalem. The Law was given on Pentecost, and the church began on Pentecost.

- **Modern Observance:** Celebrated as the birthday of the Jewish nation, when God instituted the Mosaic Covenant (cf. Ex. 24). Today it focuses on Israel’s unique, covenantal relationship with God.

- **Prophetic Application:** Unification  
  *You, once Gentiles . . . aliens from the commonwealth of Israel . . . having no hope and without God in the world . . . have been brought near by the blood of Christ* (Eph. 2:11–13).

---

*Thomas C. Simcox is the Northeastern States director for The Friends of Israel.*
As Jesus taught in the Temple in Jerusalem, representatives from various religious sects came to hear Him. Their intent was to find fault with His responses to their questions. For one of these sects, the Sadducees, the only religious authority was the Five Books of Moses, known as Torah. The Sadducees accepted no other Hebrew Scriptures; viewed with contempt the oral traditions and interpretations of the rabbis; and placed no belief in a future life, final judgment, or resurrection.

On the other side of the spectrum were the Pharisees, mostly rabbis and learned individuals who believed in the Hebrew Scriptures plus the traditions of the elders and rabbinic commentaries. They also believed in a resurrection. In fact, the doctrine of the resurrection comes from the Hebrew Scriptures and is even expressed in some Jewish prayers today.

Most Pharisees viewed the resurrection as a fundamental teaching. Based on Isaiah 26:19, they taught, “By means of the ‘dew of resurrection’ the dead will be aroused from their sleep” (Jerusalem Talmud Ber. v. 9b).

It was through their influence that belief in a resurrection was expressed in Jewish liturgy, especially during funeral services.

Another example is the following section from an old morning prayer: “As long as it is within me I will give homage to Thee, O divine Master, Lord of all spirits, who givest back the soul to dead bodies” (Talmud Ber. 60b).

Yet the issue of the resurrection was contentious. While in Jerusalem, the apostle Paul stood before a hostile Sanhedrin council, noticing that half the people there were Sadducees and the other half, Pharisees (Acts 23:1–6). Suddenly he shouted, “I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!” (v. 6). The outburst caused an angry dispute between the groups, and the whole assembly became divided into two factions over the matter.

Today Bible-believing Christians hold fast to what traditionally was the Jewish doctrine of the resurrection. It was Paul, from the tribe of Benjamin, who wrote, “But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Cor. 15:20). He continued:

*Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised. . . . Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory”* (vv. 51–52, 54; cf. Isa. 25:8).

Some may wrangle about the resurrection; but we rejoice because Christ, indeed, has been raised from the dead!

by Peter Colón
In a Phoenician town called Zarephath, the prophet Elijah was in the home of a widow whose son fell sick and died. Elijah fervently prayed, “O LORD my God, I pray, let this child’s soul come back to him” (1 Ki. 17:21). God answered, and the boy returned from the dead.

His grateful mother declared, “Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth” (v. 24).

At this time of year when we celebrate Jesus’ resurrection from the dead, we sometimes tend to forget that the promise of bodily resurrection is Jewish and that the Jewish Bible records several instances of how God demonstrated His great power to raise the dead.

In a village called Shunem, the son of a prominent woman died. She sought the prophet Elisha’s help. He came and zealously prayed to the Lord, who brought the child back to life. The mother fell at Elisha’s feet and “bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out” (2 Ki. 4:37).

The Hebrew Scriptures even record a somewhat unintentional resurrection. When the bearers of a corpse saw a gang of Moabites, they hastily threw the body into Elisha’s tomb. When the corpse touched the prophet’s bones, “he revived and stood on his feet” (13:21). The event encouraged the king of Israel in his upcoming war against Syria.

The great prophet Isaiah declared, Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead (Isa. 26:19).

And an ancient Jewish prayer reads like this:

Thou, Lord, art mighty to all eternity, Thou raisest the dead, Thou art mighty to save. In kindness He satisfieth the living, in great pity He raiseth the dead; He upholdeth those that fall; He healeth the sick, and setteth free them that are bound; He will manifest his faithfulness to those who sleep in the dust. Who is like the Lord of might, and who is like Thee, Thou King, Who killest and makest alive, and causest salvation to spring forth? Faithful art Thou to restore life to the dead; blessed be the Lord Who restorest life to the dead.1

The Jewish Talmud views the “revival of the dead” as the prerogative of God alone (Talmud Taanith 2a, on Ezek. 37:13). Consequently, when Jesus raised a widow’s son (Lk. 7:11–15), the daughter of Jairus (8:41–42, 49–55), and Lazarus (Jn. 11:1–44), He demonstrated His deity.

He demonstrated it again when He arose from the dead, as He had promised: “But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee” (Mt. 26:32; Mk. 14:28).

Atheists may sneer and skeptics may doubt. But the Jewish promise of resurrection is one of the greatest that God has given to humanity because it guarantees eternal life to all who believe Jesus’ words: “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live” (Jn 11:25). And “because I live, you will live also” (14:19).

ENDNOTE


by Peter Colón
The Passover Lamb

Certain words come immediately to mind as the Feast of Passover approaches. Cleaning, matzoh, and family are three of them. Cleaning begins by ridding the home of all bread products and foods containing leaven and usually ends by scouring the place from top to bottom. Matzoh is the flat, brown-striped, unleavened cracker that starts to taste like cardboard soon into the eight days of the observance. And family—well, nothing beats gathering around the seder table to laugh and eat with those you love.

Then there is the word lamb, the centerpiece of the Passover story. The holiday, which this year begins at sundown April 8, commemorates the Israelites’ Exodus from Egypt more than 3,000 years ago. And though the lamb is the single most important element of the biblical observance, it is always conspicuously absent.

With no Temple and no Jewish priesthood, there are no longer any Passover sacrifices. Instead, a bare shank bone of a lamb lies among other items on the seder plate as a reminder of the paschal lamb.

Not all Jewish people today, however, are satisfied with a lambless Passover. Several religious groups regularly attempt to bring a lamb to the Temple Mount for sacrifice, only to be turned away by Israeli police. Several years ago these groups, one of which was the New Sanhedrin Council, petitioned the Israeli courts to let them practice the biblical command of sacrifice. In February 2007 the court ruled, “The rights of the petitioners to practice their faith are outweighed by other considerations such as public order and safety.” Thus the ability to sacrifice lambs, at least for now, is relegated to the ancient past.

Yet the Hebrew Scriptures record that God requires a lamb. He ordered each Jewish household to obtain one on that first and only Passover (Ex. 12:3). It was to be a young, spotless male that was to be killed, roasted, and eaten. Its blood was to be applied to the doorposts and lintels of Jewish homes to protect them from the 10th and final plague God sent to force Pharaoh to let His people go.

That night God passed through Egypt and killed the firstborn male of every household that did not have the blood of the lamb on its doorposts.
plagues, the 10th demonstrated clearly that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was superior to Egypt’s false deities. The “great cry” in Egypt that day trumpeted the futility of placing any hope in the Egyptian gods (v. 30). In fact, the effects of that last plague were so widespread “there was not a house where there was not one dead” (v. 30).

That Passover, God indeed rescued and redeemed the Israelites, just as He had promised (6:6). Every year since, Jewish people retell the story of their redemption and how God had used the lamb’s blood to save them.

The Christian Connection

Christianity is inextricably tied to the Passover lamb. The New Testament Gospels pay particular attention to the details of Jesus’ last Passover seder because it was important to Him. Jesus said, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer” (Lk. 22:15). He wanted to complete His mission so that He could go to His Father (Jn. 13:1). In fact, Jesus used the familiar elements of His final seder service to teach and establish something different for His followers.

In the midst of eating lamb, Judaism’s symbol of national redemption, Jesus gently yet clearly pointed to another Lamb who would spill His blood for the entire world.

Taking the unleavened bread (matzoh), He told them, “This is My body which is given for you” (Lk. 22:19). Leaven, the rabbis say, represents the evil inclination of the heart. Just as there was no leaven in the matzoh, neither was there leaven (sin) in Jesus. Like the Passover lamb, He was spotless.

Taking the cup after supper, He said, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you” (v. 20). That third cup of wine in the Passover seder corresponds to the promise of Exodus 6:6: “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.”
Finishing their meal prior to going to the Mount of Olives, Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn (Mt. 26:30). It was probably Psalm 118, from the Hallel hymns still sung on Passover, including verses 22–24: “The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

Jesus used His final Passover to bring His followers to an understanding that He was the Lamb slain, whose blood brings spiritual redemption (cf. Lev. 17:11). When Christians take communion, they regard Jesus as the ultimate Passover Lamb.

The Jewish view is different. Rabbi Tovia Singer of Outreach Judaism says, “The Torah never states or even implies that the Passover sheep or goat atones for sin. The notion that the Paschal lamb is a representation of a crucified savior or an atonement for sin is as foreign to the teachings of the Torah as is the notion of Santa Claus.”

Singer is fair and correct about the Torah (Five Books of Moses) and the Passover lamb. Exodus says nothing about the Passover lamb atoning for sin, nor does it mention the lamb as referring to the promised Messiah or “anointed one.” But other Jewish Scriptures do point to Him.

Isaiah 53 describes the Messiah as a “Man of sorrows, . . . smitten by God, and afflicted” (v. 3–4). Verse 5 says, “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities.” Verse 7 says, “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter.”

Other Jewish men confirmed Isaiah’s prophecy. John the baptizer, a Levite, recognized Jesus as “the Lamb of God” (Jn. 1:29). The apostle Paul, a Benjamite and originally a staunch rejecter of Jesus, later declared, “For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Cor. 5:7–8).

The apostle Peter, a Jewish fisherman, told the readers of his epistle, “You were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pet. 1:18–19).

Today, when Jewish people gather around the seder table, a fascinating drama unfolds. Three matzohs are placed in one bag. The middle matzoh is removed, broken, wrapped in white, and hidden. This piece is called the afikomen.

Later the children search for this piece. Whoever finds the afikomen receives a reward, then everyone at the table eats a bit of it. According to some Jewish teaching, the afikomen serves as a reminder of the offering of the Passover lamb. That broken piece of matzoh is called by the only Greek word in the entire seder. It means “He came.”

When the prophet Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on a throne, he stood apart from his own people in understanding what he saw. He volunteered to preach to them despite their dull hearts, heavy ears, and closed eyes (Isa. 6:10). The voice of the Lord Himself told Isaiah that his people would keep on hearing but not understand; they would keep on seeing, but would not perceive (6:9).

For most Jewish people today, Passover is a holiday without a lamb. Yet for those who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand, Jesus—our Passover lamb—was slain for us.

**ENDNOTES**

2 Rabbi Tovia Singer, “Did the Passover Lamb Foreshadow Jesus?” <outreachjudaism.org/passoverlamb.html>.

**Steve Herzig** is the director of North American Ministries for The Friends of Israel.
Thousands of Philadelphians braved the traffic and cold recently to tell the world they love Israel and would stand by it through its war with Hamas terrorists. The noon rally at Love Park brought out such notables as long-time U.S. Sen. Arlen Spector (R-Pa.) and Daniel Kutner, consul general of Israel for the mid-Atlantic region. These pro-Israel voices were a pleasant change from the anti-Israel sentiment that seems to be overtaking the globe.

Within days of Israel’s December 27, 2008, incursion into Gaza, called Operation Cast Lead, nations and news services around the world demanded the Jewish state use “restraint” and “proportionality” and initiate an immediate cease fire. They accused Israel of genocide and published gory pictures of injured civilians. In Belgium, Austria, Italy, France, and Spain, children paraded around in anti-Israel demonstrations.

Those voices, however, were noticeably silent for the past eight years as Hamas fired 8,600 rockets and mortar shells into the Israeli town of Sderot and the western Negev. They spoke not a word while 950,000 Israelis—one-seventh of the country’s entire population—lived with the constant threat of rockets landing on their schools, homes, and hospitals.

Nor did they speak when Israelis each day heard the scream of sirens telling them they had 15 seconds to run to a bomb shelter. They remained silent when Hamas declared, “Our strikes against the enemy are continuing and we will chase the occupation’s soldiers and settlers from every inch of Palestine.”1 For them, Palestine is not merely Gaza, but Judea-Samaria (the “West Bank”) and all of Israel.

Israel issued calls of dayenu (“enough”), but no one listened. Operation Cast Lead began with helicopters dropping leaflets to warn Gaza residents to evacuate certain areas before the surgical air strikes began. Few commended Israel’s restraint.

If Israel were truly as heartless as it is often depicted, why didn’t it merely level all of Gaza and spare injury to its own forces? The reason is simple: Israel looks to remove Hamas, not take land. Disengagement from Gaza in 2005 rendered more than 8,000 Jewish people homeless in order to give Palestinians an opportunity for self-government. But rather than improving life in Gaza, Hamas turned the area into a terrorist camp at the expense of its own people.

About two weeks after Operation Cast Lead began, people who know the truth began to take a public stand in solidarity with Israel. They came with signs that read, “Free Gaza from Hamas!” “Stop using Gaza as a launching pad!” “Israel, we stand with you!” and “Palestinian terrorism hurts Israelis and Palestinians!”

At Love Park, the loudest cheer came as J. Whyatt Mondesire, president of the local chapter of the NAACP, looked around at the many Israeli banners waving in the crowd and proclaimed, “This flag is my flag!”

“The black community,” he said, “and the Jewish community have been joined together for almost 200 years. . . . Israel is not alone. It will never be alone.”2

Standing in the crowd that day, I rejoiced knowing that, by their presence, some people do get it after all.

ENDNOTES


2 Gail Shister, “Rally offers support for Israel,” January 9, 2009 <philly.com/inquirer/world_us/20090109_Rally_offers_support_for_Israel.html>.

by Steve Herzig
A not-so-funny thing happened on the way to the 21st century. In the late 20th century, certain leaders came out stating that we needed a “new way of doing church.” That old-time religion wasn’t good enough. So in came new gimmicks, replacing the solid gospel. We have seen the rise of the “seeker-sensitive” church movement that offends no one. The “religious left” has become more prominent, promoting its social gospel. And now there is the Emergent Church.

If you ask nine out of 10 Christians just what is this Emergent or Emerging Church, they will likely be clueless. Nonetheless, it is devouring entire denominations and churches that were once solid.

So what is this phenomenon all about? First, it is mystical. It draws
on things that the “ancient desert fathers” embraced, such as contemplative prayer, breath prayers, walking the maze known as the labyrinth, and yoga—all to get closer to God. Some of their practices send one into an altered state of consciousness. Emergents really are not interested in doctrine; rather, they want things you can feel, touch, and smell, such as incense and icons.

This movement reinvents Christianity. It takes your eyes off the cross and has you focus on experience. Scripture is no longer the authority. There are no absolutes, even in the Bible. Emergents will state that, in order to take the world and church forward, we must go backward in church history and embrace even Catholic beliefs. Their doctrine is actually closer to Buddhism, Hinduism, and New Age than it is to traditional Christianity.

Hell, sin, and repentance are downplayed so that no one is offended. Besides, they will tell you there aren’t enough absolutes even to talk about hell, sin, and heaven.

Emergents say they are trying to provide “meaning for this generation.” What does that mean? In the late 20th century a burden arose to reach the postmodern generation. Get to know the term postmodern! It is used to describe the under-age-30 generation. And in order to reach these people, emergents say, old traditions had to be tossed.

To the postmoderns, a solid gospel message is too dogmatic and arrogant. Emergents would say that a more moderate gospel had to be invented to be accepted by the masses within this younger generation.

Unfortunately, the gimmicks they chose to do this are more in line with divination than anything else.

And what about their eschatology? What about Israel? In that the social gospel is their focus, they would be more in line with “Kingdom now” theology of “making the world perfect.” They don’t take any eschatology (doctrine of future things, prophecy) in the Bible literally but, rather, allegorically. Israel would rate with your average banana republic.

The emphasis is on the Kingdom of God now and not on Scripture’s warnings about the imminent return of Christ and a coming judgment in the future.

Now we get to a major problem. These people are called evangelicals. As a matter of fact, Time called emergent leader Brian McLaren one of the top 25 evangelicals influencing the world. One of McLaren’s most recent books is titled Everything Must Change. So there you have it from a leader himself: The church must change to the modern-day culture. Old ways must be discarded, and new ways are in; but they are unsound.

Another prominent leader is Rob Bell. He is turning up in all sorts of evangelical churches with his DVDs. He has become a hot topic, one that church Bible studies gather around to examine and embrace as a cool 21st-century Christian with new ideas. The problem is, one of his many outrageous statements is, “This is not just the same old message with new methods. We’re rediscovering Christianity as an Eastern religion.”

Other prominent Emergent Church leaders include Doug Pagitt, Dan Kimball, Tony Jones, Dallas Willard, and Robert Webber. There are more, but the list is long.

In a nutshell, social action trumps eternal issues; and subjective feelings are preferred over absolute truth. Experience trumps reason.

Now you have some of the basics before you. Spread the word that a relatively new movement is seducing millions and that it is unsound, unbiblical, and alarming. This Emergent Church just might submerge yours!

You can’t say you weren’t warned.

Jan Markell is founder/president of Olive Tree Ministries in Minneapolis, MN. To access her radio program, “Understanding the Times,” visit her Web site: www.olivetreeviews.org.
My Seder Memories

(Richard Nowitz/Israelimages)
One of my mother’s favorite singers is Barbra Streisand. A recording of her singing “The Way We Were” played in the background when we celebrated my parents’ 50th wedding anniversary many years ago. It was the perfect song to play while viewing a lifetime of family photos. Both my parents wiped away tears as the memories rolled by.

The way we were is also a perfect way to describe the sentiments many Jewish people feel as they gather to celebrate another Passover seder. Because seders are often held in the same home year after year, they become a type of timeline that links the past to the present. It takes but a few moments seated around the dinner table to see the effects of time. New people are born, young people marry, old people die, and the cycle goes on.

My earliest memories of our family Passover date back to my grandmother. She ran the show. A Polish immigrant and observant Jewess, she singlehandedly determined what each seder would be like. Her goal was consistency. Taking pride in a well-executed plan, she paid attention to every detail weeks before the holiday arrived. Her top priority was preparing her home, which involved several strenuous but time-honored activities.

First, she cleaned. Because Jewish people must eat nothing with leaven for eight days, all leaven must be removed from the house. I like to think that Jewish people invented spring cleaning, since Passover arrives in the spring!

Then my grandmother would bring out her special dishes, utensils, goblets, and pots and pans. All had been meticulously stored in an environment that guaranteed no leaven ever touched them during the year.

My grandmother had other special things for the seder, too: a beautiful goblet for Elijah, a special seder plate, and beautiful candelabra for the candles she would light. She laid pristine white yarmulkes (skull caps) at each of the chairs where the men (including boys) would be seated.

Her menu, although predictable, was highly anticipated. It was common for us to steal a taste while she was in the midst of preparation. Her gefilte (Yiddish for “boiled”) fish never came from one of those jelly-packed, supermarket jars. She bought fresh fish. She purchased freshly slaughtered chicken and used every bit of it in a special dish or to flavor other foods. (Chicken feet are a must for flavoring matzoh ball soup.) She harvested her own horseradish and ground it by hand to ensure the herbs were indeed bitter. Her chopped chicken liver was a delicacy. And she always had the staples of carrot tzimmes, stuffed kishke, and the list goes on. It was a feast fit for a king.

Passover desserts included sponge cake, candy, and macaroons, all laboriously prepared without yeast or leaven in her own kosher kitchen.

As we sat around the table, we read, sang, and prayed all that was in our Haggadah. Our seders were long—very long. The children (my sisters, cousins, and I) sat far enough away from the adults to provide ample opportunity for whispering without intervention. My older cousins provided the entertainment that always produced side-splitting laughter. We needed it, too, because sitting around a table for hours waiting to eat could be a difficult experience.

As I look back, I remember three distinct highlights of my past seders: asking the four questions, opening the door for Elijah, and finding the afikomen.

The youngest child always chants the four questions in Hebrew. They address all the things we do that are different from a normal night’s activities.

Opening the door for Elijah was a thrill because I believed he was really coming, and I wanted to see the Messiah. Every proper seder sets a place for this ancient Jewish prophet whom Scripture teaches will be the forerunner of the Messiah. Traditionally, Judaism looks forward to Elijah’s coming because it means the Messiah won’t be far behind.

The afikomen is a special piece of matzoh that is hidden away and must be found before the seder can end. So all the children eagerly look for it, and the one who finds it receives a reward. Finding the afikomen meant I could ask for whatever I wanted as my reward. Once I requested a bicycle, only to have my father tell me I had two choices: a dollar or nothing.

The last Passover I spent with my extended family brought many memories of the smiles of bygone years. We gathered in my younger sister’s home. My mother, who long ago had taken my grandmother’s place, was now replaced by my sister. The faces around the table had all changed: no grandparents, no cousins, no aunts, no uncles. It was a sad reminder that the people we love die, and nothing stays the same.

When the time came to open the door for Elijah and to hunt for the afikomen, I reflected on how different my life is today.

I am no longer a child, wondering if the Messiah will ever come. I could participate in the seder knowing that a Levite named John the Baptist announced His coming and that the afikomen—the middle of three pieces of matzoh—affirmed that the middle Person of the Godhead, the Lamb of God, had taken away my sin. Afikomen is the only Greek word used in a seder. And it means “He came.”

Not everyone around the table that day saw what I could see. As I prayed silently for my family, I thought, The way I used to be is not the way I am now. I was made new by the Passover Lamb. And though I have fond memories of the way we were, I can look forward with joy to the way things someday will be when He returns.

Steve Herzig is the director of North American Ministries for The Friends of Israel.
The Romans Road is a familiar term to evangelicals. It refers to a series of verses in the New Testament book of Romans that many use to teach the gospel. Although it is efficient and effective, it is not the only way to communicate God’s plan of salvation.

Years before there was a Romans Road, Jesus presented the gospel message to two Jewish men as they walked to Emmaus from Jerusalem (Lk. 24:25–27). One was Cleopas. The other man’s name is not revealed.

The two were distraught due to the recent death of Jesus of Nazareth, the person whom they hoped would redeem Israel (vv. 17, 20–21). They had heard Jesus’ body was missing from the tomb and that a vision of angels said He was alive, but they had not seen Him for themselves (vv. 23–24).

As they walked to Emmaus, the resurrected Messiah joined them and preached a message they would never forget:

*O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?* And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself (vv. 25–27).

That “Jerusalem Road” message was presented by a Jewish man to two other Jewish men about the Jewish Redeemer, using the Jewish Scriptures.
He probably traced the Seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15 and continued through the raised-up Prophet of Deuteronomy 18:15, the virgin birth of Isaiah 7:14, the suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, and the reign of Jesse’s offspring in Isaiah 11. He also may have used Psalm 16:9–10: “My heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”

Perhaps He referred to the prophets Jeremiah and Daniel, describing the righteous Branch that would come from King David (Jer. 23:5–6) that would be “cut off, but not for Himself” before the destruction of the second Temple in A.D.70 (Dan. 9:26). I’d like to think that, just before Jesus “vanished from their sight” (Lk. 24:31), He quoted Zechariah 12:10, explaining that one day “the inhabitants of Jerusalem” will be given “the Spirit of grace and supplication,” when “they will look on Me whom they pierced.”

Whatever Hebrew Scriptures He used (there are many to choose from), the men on the road that day had quite a reaction: “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?” (Lk. 24:32).

The psalmist wrote, “Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him” (Ps. 2:12). No doubt, these two did just that.

by Steve Herzig
Christ Is Superior to Aaron

The tribes of Israel revered the Aaronic high priest. With the exception of Moses, he enjoyed greater access to and fellowship with God than any other Israelite. Although God bestowed him with privilege, position, and prominence, he nevertheless was imperfect and subject to infirmities and death—like any other man.

By contrast, Christ’s priesthood is superior. He is the perfect and eternal High Priest whose sacrifice and ministry remain, to this day, more excellent than Aaron’s. Hebrews 5:1—10:25 describes His ministry.

The Earthly High Priest

The author of Hebrews began by reviewing the qualifications and essential ministry of the Aaronic high priest. First, he was in solidarity with man: “For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God” (5:1). To qualify for the position, the high priest had to be mortal, from the seed of Abraham and the tribe of Levi. His sole function was to represent men to God and God to men.

Second, he was neither self-appointed nor elected but, rather, divinely selected: “No man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was” (v. 4).

Some, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, arrogantly challenged Aaron’s divine appointment as high priest, claiming he assumed too much authority as Israel’s sole representative before God (Num. 16:1–3). So Moses brought Korah and his followers before the Lord with censers of incense and fire to determine whom the Lord had ordained. God overwhelmingly confirmed Aaron’s high-priestly call when He made the ground open and swallow Korah and all who had rebelled with him (vv. 1–32). Aaron’s rod then miraculously budded, proving further that he was God’s choice (chap. 17).

Third, the high priest also was to sympathize with men so that he could “have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness” (Heb. 5:2). Like his brethren, he possessed physical weaknesses, experienced temptation, sinned, and would one day die and give an account for his works before God. Being conscious of his limitations made him compassionate for (literally, “deal gently with”) the people he served.

His ministry involved offering sacrifices for his sins and those of the people (vv. 1, 3). There were five specific sacrificial offerings and five animals, along with incense, that the priest was to offer daily and on various feast days, in accordance with the Hebrew calendar. (See Leviticus 1—7.) On the Day of Atonement, the high priest alone was allowed to offer incense and blood sacrifices in the Holy of Holies for the sins of Israel (Lev. 16).

The Eternal High Priest

For Christ to qualify as a high priest, He needed to be human, divinely appointed, compassionate, and able to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin. Jesus met all these qualifications. But, unlike Aaron, He is an eternal High Priest.

The author confirmed Christ’s qualifications by quoting from two Messianic psalms: Psalms 2 and 110. Using Psalm 2:7 he showed that, as the eternal Son of God, Christ was appointed High Priest by God the Father. “So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He [God the Father] who said to Him: ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You!’” (Heb. 5:5). The phrase I have begotten You does not refer to the Son’s origin, eternal generation, or Incarnation because there never was a time when He did not exist. Rather, the author verified that, at Christ’s resurrection, Jesus was uniquely appointed as High Priest and declared to be so by God the Father. The same was never said of Aaron.

Christ’s priesthood is from a different order than was Aaron’s. Quoting Psalm 110, he called Christ “a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek” (v. 6, cf. Ps. 110:4). Melchizedek was a king-priest; Aaron was only a priest. No Israelite king dared enter the Temple to function as a priest without experiencing God’s severe judgment (cf. 2 Chr. 26:16–21). Like Melchizedek, Christ is both a King and Priest.

The Aaronic high priesthood was inherited and transmitted to many sons throughout the centuries. Melchizedek, however, stood alone. Like Jesus, he neither inherited his kingly priesthood nor transmitted it to successors.
Typifying the eternality of Christ, Melchizedek had no recorded ending, though Aaron had to be replaced upon his own death. Furthermore, the Aaronic priesthood ceased with the destruction of Herod’s Temple in A.D. 70.

To be a high priest, Christ needed to be human. So He took on flesh and became a man. The phrase in the days of His flesh (Heb. 5:7) refers to Christ’s entire earthly pilgrimage as a mortal until He was resurrected and glorified (cf. 2:14, 17).

As a man, the Lord “offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear” (5:7). This reference must be to the Lord’s agony in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before He was crucified. It was there His soul was overcome with sorrow as He grieved in prayer over what He soon would face.

From which death was Christ praying to be delivered? He could not have longed for escape from death in general because He was born into the world for that purpose. He could not have feared death by crucifixion because He predicted He would die in this manner (Mt. 20:19). Nor could He have feared a premature death in Gethsemane where Satan tried to destroy Him to prevent Him from becoming a sacrifice for sin. Christ had absolute control over His own death (Jn. 10:18). He was not praying to be resurrected from the grave because He predicted His resurrection while ministering on Earth (Mt. 16:21; 20:19).

Christ knew He must become a sin offering for humankind. Through His death, He satisfied the righteous demands of a holy God, making it possible for Him to provide salvation and forgiveness of sin to all who believe.

Christ prayed in the garden, “If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will” (Mt. 26:39). What Christ feared was the excruciating agony of eternal separation from God the Father whose presence He had enjoyed since eternity past. The Father heard the Son’s “godly fear [reverence]” and granted His petition (Heb. 5:7). Although Jesus experienced spiritual separation from the Father during His death on the cross, He was eternally reunited with God the Father after His resurrection.

Christ is a sympathetic High Priest because He suffered in His humanity: “Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (v. 8). To feel as others do, Christ had to experience life on a human level (Lk. 2:52). He faced all the trials and temptations that other men do; but unlike other men, He was completely obedient to God the Father (cf. Mt. 4:1–11). In fact, He said, “I always do those things that please Him [the Father]” (Jn. 8:29).

Christ also provided salvation through the sacrifice of Himself: “And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Heb. 5:9). Of course, He was not morally incomplete. But through His sacrificial death on the cross, He completed, or brought to fulfillment, the work of salvation designed in eternity past. He is the “author” (literally, “principal cause”) of our “eternal salvation.” Salvation is not bestowed universally on everyone; it is given only to those who put their faith in Him.

Through His suffering, obedience, and sacrifice, Christ is fit to be “called [designated or greeted] by God as High Priest ‘according to the order of Melchizedek’” (v. 10). Like Melchizedek, Christ is a “priest forever” (v. 6). Unlike the Aaronic priesthood, His ministry is permanent because He continually intervenes on behalf of believers.

The Exhortation to Hearers

We eagerly hang on every word, wanting the author to go deeper into Christ’s holy and heavenly ministry. He had much more to say about Christ’s high priesthood (v. 11) but was reluctant to do so for three reasons: his readers’ spiritual condition, spiritual capacity, and spiritual callousness.

First, they were “dull [slothful] of hearing” (v. 11). They had drifted from and become insensitive to the deeper teaching regarding Christ’s priesthood.

Second, they were infantile in their faith:

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food (v. 12).

Although they had been believers for some time, they had not grown because they were lazy in their spiritual lives.

Unable to digest the solid meat of God’s Word, they needed to be taught the elementary truths of the faith. Such people are “unskilled in the word of righteousness,” for they are babes (v. 13). Babes in Christ lack the cognitive skills to perceive or rationally receive and understand God’s Word. Though beautiful to behold at first, they become spiritually grotesque if they remain babes for years.

Third, lazy believers are callous when it comes to discerning “good and evil” (v. 14). Mature Christians who study and apply both the elementary and profound truths of God’s Word possess the spiritual insight needed to “discern both good and evil” (v. 14). However, those who fail to apply what they have learned remain spiritual babes forever. To glorify Jesus Christ our High Priest, we must grow in the knowledge of God’s Word and strive toward spiritual maturity.

David M. Levy is the director of International Ministries for The Friends of Israel.
God Is Jealous (Part 1)

At least 29 biblical passages indicate that the God of the Bible is a jealous God. Of those passages, 28 are in the Old Testament. Only one is in the New Testament (1 Cor. 10:22).

This contrast signifies that God’s jealousy is primarily the concern of the Old Testament division of the Bible, not the New Testament. The reason is because the Old Testament relates God’s jealousy overwhelmingly to His relationship with Israel.

According to New Testament scholar Albrecht Stumpff, “Linguistic analysis has yielded the following results in relation to the OT” expression “Yahweh is jealous: “When the reference is to Yahweh, it is almost always a question of His relations to His people Israel.”

Meanings Related to Jealousy

The major Hebrew word for “jealousy” in the Old Testament is the verb qana. Depending on its context, it can mean to be jealous, envious, or zealous.2 Old Testament scholar Leonard J. Coppes said:

“...This verb expresses a very strong emotion whereby some quality or possession of the object is desired by the subject. This root occurs eighty-seven times... The term may be used in a purely descriptive sense to denote one of the characteristics of living men (Eccl. 9:6), or in a derogatory sense to denote hostile and disruptive passion (Prov. 27:4) or in a favorable sense to denote consuming zeal focused on one that is loved (Ps. 69:9).”

Thus, zeal to protect or benefit another person or thing that is loved is a favorable sense. An example was Jehu’s “zeal for the Lord” (2 Ki. 10:16). But zeal to take what belongs to another has the sense of envy. (See Genesis 30:1; 37:11; Ezekiel 35:11.) And zeal for one’s own property, such as a spouse who was taken away, has the sense of jealousy (Num. 5:12–14).4

Although qana has different meanings, Coppes pointed out that “the central meaning of our word, however, relates to ‘jealousy’ in the marriage relationship.”

The Bible indicates that a man and woman become husband and wife through the establishment of a marriage covenant (Prov. 2:16–17; Mal. 2:14–16). The covenant is both parties’ binding commitment to give themselves exclusively to each other. The wife becomes the property of her husband, and the husband becomes the property of his wife.

If the wife becomes unfaithful by giving herself to another man, she thereby violates her binding commitment of the marriage covenant, commits adultery, and robs her husband of his property. If the husband becomes unfaithful by giving himself to another woman, he violates his binding commitment, commits adultery, and robs his wife of her property.

Such unfaithfulness can stir up strong jealousy within the offended spouse (Num. 5:11–31). Proverbs 6:32–35 describes the jealousy of a husband toward a man who has committed adultery with the husband’s wife:

Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding: He who does so destroys his own soul. Wounds and dishonor he will get, and his reproach will not be wiped away. For jealousy is a husband’s fury; therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will accept no recompense, nor will he be appeased though you give many gifts.

God’s Marriage With Israel

The Bible draws an analogy between the husband-wife relationship and God’s relationship with Israel. Just as a man and woman become husband and wife through the marriage covenant, so there is a sense in which God and Israel became husband and wife through the establishment of a covenant.

The “marriage” took place at Mount Sinai when God and Israel entered into a binding commitment to each other through the Mosaic Covenant. Moses performed the “wedding” ceremony by functioning as the intermediary between God and Israel (Ex. 19:1—20:17; Dt. 5:2–5). In a marriage covenant, a man vows to enter into a unique, exclusive relationship with one specific woman. He will not grant this relationship to any other woman. So, too, in the Mosaic Covenant, God vowed to enter into a unique, exclusive relationship with one specific woman. He will not grant this relationship to any other woman.

Later Moses told the people of Israel, “You are a holy people to the...
Israel’s Adultery

However, just as a wife violates her marriage covenant by giving herself to another man—thereby committing adultery and robbing her husband of his property—so, too, the people of Israel violated their binding commitment of the Mosaic Covenant by unfaithfully giving themselves to the worship of false gods. They committed spiritual adultery and robbed God of His property.

God foretold this event: “This people will rise and play the harlot with the gods of the foreigners of the land, where they go to be among them, and they will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them” (Dt. 31:16).

Judges 2 records the fact that, after Israel invaded Canaan and settled there, “the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel” (v. 7). However, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel. Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. They forsook the LORD and served Baal and the Ashoreths (vv. 10–13).

God responded to this unfaithfulness by delivering Israel into the hands of its nearby enemies (vv. 14–15). We must remember, however, that God always has a faithful remnant; and in every generation there have been Jewish people who have been faithful to Him.

In Ezekiel 16 God spoke to Jerusalem, describing how the capital city later became unfaithful to Him: “Your time was the time of love; so . . . I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine” (v. 8). As a loving husband, God cared and provided for her magnificently (vv. 9–14). But she became unfaithful by giving herself to spiritual harlotry through pagan worship (vv. 15–19).

She resorted to burning children alive as sacrifices to false gods (vv. 20–21). She had high places of false worship in every one of her streets (vv. 22–25, 31). She committed spiritual harlotry by entering into forbidden alliances with foreign, idolatrous nations (vv. 26–29). Whereas an adulterous wife is paid for her services, Jerusalem paid foreign nations to enter into alliances with her (vv. 32–34). God said to Jerusalem, “How degenerate is your heart! . . . seeing you do all these things, the deeds of a brazen harlot” (v. 30).

God also declared, “Because your filthiness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your harlotry with your lovers, and with all your abominable idols, and because of the blood of your children which you gave to them, . . . I will judge you as women who break wedlock or shed blood are judged; I will bring blood upon you in fury and jealousy” (vv. 36, 38).

He would do so by bringing against the city the very nations with which she committed spiritual harlotry (vv. 37–41). This judgment would cause His fury toward Jerusalem to rest and His jealousy to depart (v. 42). This was the price Jerusalem would pay for “despis[ing] the oath by breaking the covenant” (v. 59).

The next article will continue the biblical account of Israel’s unfaithfulness and God’s jealous response.

ENDNOTES

3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Otto Procksch, “hagios,” TDNT, 1:89.
**Israel in the News:**

**Behind Enemy Lines**

![Image: Israeli soldiers return from fighting Hamas terrorists in the Gaza Strip near Sderot, Israel. When Israel said it would leave Gaza when Hamas stopped firing rockets into Israel, Hamas responded by firing rockets into Sderot.](image-url)

The army was very tight with us about security. They took away our cell phones, etc. The army was very tight with us about security. They took away our cell phones, etc.

**Kidnappings**

But even scarier is the fact that there are tunnels everywhere in Gaza, not just the ones that people know about in southern Gaza. I don’t know how many there are, but there are tunnels between houses and headquarters and the like, not only for reinforcements but also because one of their main goals is to kidnap soldiers. That is really terrifying. You see a bus, and suddenly the bus moves and a hand sticks out, trying to grab a soldier’s leg and pull him inside. It happened a lot. Or we’re in a house trying to get some sleep, and you don’t know if a floor tile will suddenly move and someone will try to grab you. So on the one hand, you try to sleep very little; but we also work very closely together, looking after each other, helping each other, and certainly not doing anything by oneself.

**Letters mean a lot**

[Regarding packages of sweets that the soldiers receive from the home front:] Even though we’re often hungry, the first thing a lot of soldiers go for in the packages is not the food, but rather the letters and words of support. You can’t imagine what it does for us to read them. I have about nine of the really special ones; and when I had a little time, I would go over to some corner and pull them out and read them. They give so much strength.

I just want to tell this really special story that happened to me. Some of the letters have phone numbers on them. So I called one of them to thank her for her letter—an 8-year-old girl named Eden. Eden told me that she was so happy I called and that she had just been in the hospital for an ear operation. But then her mother got on and she was all emotional and told me, “It’s so amazing that you called because Eden’s two older sisters received calls of thanks from soldiers, and she was feeling sad that no one called her. And now you called!”

**Finish the job**

The soldiers’ morale is very high, and all of them definitely believe that the war is just and important. No one likes fighting; people want to be with their families. I’ve seen some 35-year-old guys almost crying about how much they miss their families. But at the same time, no one wants to leave now. Of all sectors, it’s the soldiers who do not want a ceasefire, not because we want to fight but because we know the job is not finished yet. We don’t want to have to go back again in a year or two or three. . . . I think there has to be a hard push against Hamas, and the rockets will still fall, what did we do? . . . True, Gaza is now largely in ruins. But they’ll get lots of money to rebuild, and they’ll use a lot of the money to get more weapons as well.

We have to go in deeper and stronger, and make them understand that it’s just not worth it.

**No atheists in foxholes**

I’ve been in Gaza for a week. We’re in an armored reconnaissance unit, which means we are infantry that goes in front of the tanks. . . . The army was very tight with us about security. They took away our cell phones, made sure we don’t have cameras, etc.

[Asked what it is like when they actually entered Gaza:] Right before we went in, . . . rabbis were giving out Tehillim [little books of Psalms], and every soldier took one or two or three or four—even the guys who just two days ago were arguing with me against religion. They act as if just two days ago were arguing with me against religion. They act as if they put them all over their bodies, and everyone says, “I don’t want to get hit here or here or here.” . . . Anyway, before we went in, there were jokes. But then, when we actually start going in, it gets very, very quiet, people thinking of their own thoughts, like who it gets very, very quiet, people thinking of their own thoughts, like who . . .

**Editor’s Note:** An Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldier named Aryeh, who spent a week deep inside northern Gaza fighting Hamas terrorists, spoke with Israel National Radio about his experiences. His reflections explain what the war was like for these young men, and they highlight the clear difference between the Israeli and Arab mindsets. Here are excerpts, as reported by Israel National News.
Each day, we as Christians are given the opportunity to glorify God. Using our time well, exercising the gifts the Holy Spirit has given us, and making wise use of the finances God has entrusted to us are only a few of the many ways in which we can honor Him.

One way we can glorify God beyond our time here on Earth is through a will. A will allows us to make sure that what the Lord has entrusted to us remains His when we no longer need it.

Sadly, it is reported that more than 50 percent of Americans (Christians included) have no legal will in force. This requires the laws of your state to intercede and make a will for you. Does your state know how you want your estate handled? Distributions are often made in ways that may be contrary to your wishes. In addition, your desire to see the Lord’s work benefited is likely to go unfulfilled.

If you would like to have a will written but don’t know where to start, let us help. We would like to send you our informative brochure Making a Will That Works at no cost and without obligation. It is our way of helping you become a wise steward over all the Lord has entrusted to you.

To receive Making a Will That Works, simply check the appropriate box on the envelope in this magazine; or write to Tom Geoghan at The Friends of Israel, P.O. Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08099.
Not long ago I met a group of ultra-Orthodox men in our neighborhood in Jerusalem. They have not caused any trouble lately. It has been quiet for two years. But now, as we say, the bear has awakened from his sleep. Some of the ultra-Orthodox want to show their rabbis how well they can argue with those who do not believe as they do. So they were looking for someone to challenge. And who did they find? Me!

As I walked down the street, the men were handing out flyers telling people that, if they served the rabbis well, they, too, would become holy and go to heaven. As I passed, they handed me one. The headline—in big letters—read, “Warning! Beware of those who sow poison! They are very dangerous!” The men looked at me intently as I read their leaflet. Then one asked, “What have you to say about what is written here?”

“It is a great pity,” I replied. “It is as King Solomon wrote: ‘Vanity of vanities, all is vanity’” (Eccl. 1:2). Their faces showed their displeasure, and they wanted to know why I said such a thing. “Because I believe in Almighty God,” I said. “You worship your rabbis. You accept what they say over what God Himself says in His Holy Bible. I believe in one mighty God. You believe in your teachers.”

“We teach about the true faith!” one replied. They were surprised to see someone like me speak of faith. They dress in special clothes and keep their heads covered, thinking these outward things make them holy and closer to God. I do not do these things, so they do not consider me a person of faith.

“How can you speak against the faith?” one asked. “In which God do you believe?”

“How can you ask such a question?” I replied. “It is clearly written in Deuteronomy 6:4, ‘Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!’ There is only one God. In which God have you believed? You follow your teachers and bow down before them.”

Now they began to “suspect” me, as they say here. “Are you not from those who speak about This Man?” one asked. By “This Man” they meant Jesus.

“I am not like you,” I said. “I do not read big stacks of fictional stories. You spend your life studying rabbinic commentaries. I read the Bible. In there, we learn about the one mighty God in whom I have believed. He is the strong and living God.”

We spoke for more than an hour. They were surprised that I told them they were not following the right path. “How can you say that we are not following God?” one asked. “You can see for yourself that we are very active for Him. How can you say that we worship other gods? We want to know in whom you have believed. Who is your God?”

“There is only one God,” I declared. “About Him it is clearly written in the Bible.” They asked which chapters spoke of God. I replied, “Every chapter! The Bible was written by the Holy Spirit of God.”

I told them that they have been taught wrong because they do not concentrate on learning God’s Word but on studying what the rabbis say. Rather than focusing on the Bible, they focus on rabbinic commentaries. And what is worse, they want to teach others to do the same. “You are like wolves in sheep’s clothing,” I said, “because you lead people into darkness rather than light.”

“How can you say such a thing?” one asked. “Are you not ashamed? Shame on you!”

(Yasha Mazur/Israelimages)
“Okay,” I replied. “We will approach this another way. Please show me what you read—what you spend your time with.” So they showed me a mighty stack of books written by rabbis. Sadly, they believe that all the words the rabbis write are holy. “Is this not enough for you?” one asked.

I answered, “As it is written in Ecclesiastes 1:2: ‘Vanity!’”

Again they asked, “How can you say such things about our holy ones?”

“I believe according to the Bible,” I explained. Then I showed them Isaiah 53, where it is written,

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. . . . When You make His soul an offering for sin, . . . Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors (vv. 5–6, 8, 10, 12).

“What?” they all asked. “We have never read this!”

“This is part of the Holy Bible,” I said. “All those many chapters in the Bible were written by the Holy Spirit, as was this chapter. But for you it has been forbidden to know the full truth about the Lord.”

“Show us,” one said. They read and read and looked at each other with such surprise. “We have learned much from you,” they said.

And so we finished our long and friendly conversation. They need our prayers. Through prayer we can see God’s mighty power. And through prayer, perhaps someday they will see it, too.