**Friends of Israel**

**Annual Prophecy Conference**

*Friday, September 5 — Tuesday, September 9, 2003*

*Willow Valley Family Resort — Lancaster, Pennsylvania*

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**Speakers**

- Bill Sutter
- David Levy
- Steve Herzig
- Doug Bookman
- Rennie Showers
- Bill Krewson

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**Foreign Field Representative**

- Rob Congdon
  - United Kingdom

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**Featured Concert**

- Robert and Joyce Hayes
  - from America’s Keswick

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**Registration Information**

**Host/Hostess:**

Steve & Alice Herzig

**Cost:**

- $459 per person, double/triple occupancy
- $569 single occupancy

**Registration Deadline:** July 25

**Final Balance Due:** August 1

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**Travel Information**

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*(50 minutes from Willow Valley Resort — rental car needed)*
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ABOUT THE COVER

“Masada, Never Again!” In A.D. 73 the Romans captured Masada, the seemingly impenetrable fortress sculpted into the cliffs high above the Dead Sea. But their victory gained them only Jewish corpses. Almost all had committed suicide rather than be captured. The picture of Masada on our cover somberly reminds us that some things must never be forgotten; and some are worth fighting for.

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If you were to shop in Norway today, you would see all Israeli products clearly identified as being from Israel. They are being singled out, not to make them easier to purchase, but to make them easier to boycott.

One of the strategies of Israel’s enemies involves organized boycotts of Israeli products. And unfortunately, these efforts are weakening the already strained economy of the Jewish state. Traditionally, Europe has been Israel’s largest market for export goods. But as boycotts spread throughout the continent, the picture is changing.

Germany is canceling orders with Israeli firms. And France, Belgium, and other European countries are increasingly hostile not only to the State of Israel but also to their own Jewish citizens.

As Christians, we know that the Lord is Israel’s protector. Psalm 121:4 says, “Behold, he who keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.” Yet James tells us, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works?” (Jas. 2:14). We are in the unique position today of being able to add specific works to our faith to counter these destructive boycotts, help boost Israel’s slumping economy, and tangibly demonstrate our support for Israel in its time of need.

Israel’s enemies say, “Boycott Israel.” We say, “Shop Israel!”

Paula Joffe, executive director of the America-Israel Chamber of Commerce in Philadelphia, visited The Friends of Israel recently and explained her organization’s mission in serving as a catalyst for business between the United States and Israel.

One of the Chamber’s projects has been to sponsor Mitzvah Malls, also known as Shop Israel programs. The tourism industry has virtually collapsed in Israel. Shopkeepers and craftspeople are among those struggling to survive. So the Chamber arranges for groups of Israeli merchants to come to strategic locations throughout the United States to set up one- and two-day “malls” to sell their goods.

The Friends of Israel supported a Shop Israel program at the Jewish Community Center in nearby Cherry Hill, New Jersey. There we met dozens of grateful Israeli merchants who brought a fabulous array of products, all made in Israel. Several local churches announced the event, and scores of Christians joined local Jewish residents in purchasing Israeli products.

If you do not live near a Shop Israel event, you can buy Israeli consumer goods online by visiting www.israelexport.org, www.shopinisrael.com, or www.usaisrael.org. If you want to send flowers, try www.aleidafna.co.il. Also, as you patronize the stores where you usually shop, don’t hesitate to ask specifically for items made in Israel. Make it known that you want to buy Israeli-made goods.

Christian businesspeople, too, can become vitally involved. Israel is an industrialized nation, much like the United States. It is characterized by advanced technology. “Every time we turn on our computers, we are using technology developed in Israel. Pentium® 3 and Pentium® 4 computer chips were developed by Intel Israel,” said Mrs. Joffe.

Israel is a world leader in software development, and its Web design firms are among the finest. Israel’s medical and biotechnological sectors are among the most advanced in the world. And Israel benefits from some of the most talented people in the world, including Jewish scientists from Russia and other areas of the former Soviet Union who were denied positions in their former countries because of their religion. Doing business with Israeli companies is good business.

Businesspeople can review their inventories to determine what is being stocked now and see if it can be purchased from Israel. Distributors can add Israeli products to their lines. Whether you’re looking for medical apparatus, automotive equipment, jewelry, clothing, skin-care products, or toys and games, there is likely an Israeli manufacturer with products to complement your existing inventory.

The possibilities abound. There is even a kibbutz in Israel that specializes in manufacturing church pews.

If you would like to explore the opportunities, contact the America-Israel Chamber of Commerce, 200 South Broad Street, Suite 700, Philadelphia, PA, 19102. Or call 215-790-3722. The Chamber facilitates investment and trade with Israel. Be sure to identify yourself as a Christian who supports Israel. And mention The Friends of Israel too!

William E. Sutter is the executive director of The Friends of Israel.
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Just how difficult it will be to negotiate the much-ballyhooed “road map” to peace in the Middle East was summed up by Israel’s prime minister, Ariel Sharon, after the Israeli cabinet recently approved the plan with reservations. Sharon referred to the disputed territories using the word occupation.

An immediate firestorm of protests broke out, including a scolding by Israel’s attorney general because Sharon failed to use the accepted term disputed. The prime minister quickly backpedaled by saying he had been misunderstood.

In accepting the road map designed by the United States, UN, European Union, and Russia, Israel added fourteen “Road Map Remarks,” which it considers imperative to implementing the plan.

The road map, as drawn up by the Quartet, includes three phases. Here are summary observations of the central points.

Phase I: Ending Terror and Violence, Normalizing Palestinian Life, and Building Palestinian Institutions

Phase I calls on the Palestinians to affirm Israel’s right to exist, cease all violence against Israelis, end incitement, institute political reform and free elections, introduce a credible draft constitution, and create unified Palestinian security services.

Israel is called on to withdraw from Palestinian areas occupied since September 28, 2000; freeze all settlement activity; end deportations of terrorists; cease demolishing the property of terrorists; resume security cooperation with Palestinian counterparts; and facilitate freedom of movement for Palestinian officials and citizens.

Arab states are to cut off public and private funding and all other forms of support for groups supporting and engaging in violence and terror.

Phase II: Transition June 2003–December 2003

The focus is on the creation of an independent Palestinian state with provisional borders and attributes of sovereignty in preparation for a permanent-status settlement. This action is to be taken when the Palestinian people decisively confront terror and build a practicing democracy with tolerance and liberty as fundamental elements in their society.

Phase II is to begin after Palestinian elections and end with the creation of a provisional state in 2003, if Quartet monitors are satisfied that all conditions have been met.

An international conference is to be initiated by the Quartet to undertake issues regarding an inclusive, comprehensive Middle East peace, including settlement of issues between Syria, Israel, and Lebanon.

The creation of the Palestinian state is to be launched at this conference and enhance prior agreements, including Palestinian area contiguity and further action of settlements.

An important issue in Phase II is enhanced international involvement in monitoring the transition, with the active, sustained, and operational support of the Quartet. Quartet members will, at this stage, promote international recognition of the Palestinian state, including possible UN membership.

Phase III: Permanent-Status Agreement and End of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict—2004–2005

Featured in this conclusive stage of the process will be a second international conference convened by the Quartet at the beginning of 2004. In 2005 the envisioned permanent-status resolution, based on UN resolutions 242, 338, and 1397, will be presented. Included in the resolution will be the status of permanent borders, Jerusalem, refugees, and settlements. It also will support progress toward comprehensive agreements with Syria and Lebanon.

Finally, the road map becomes reality in ending the “occupation” that began in 1967 and includes an “agreed, just, fair, and realistic” solution to the refugee issue. It also is supposed to incorporate a negotiated resolution on the status of Jerusalem that takes into account the religious concerns of both sides; protects the religious interests of Jews, Christians, and Muslims worldwide; and fulfills the vision of two states: Israel and sovereign, independent, democratic, and viable Palestine living side by side in peace and security.

Reactions and Reservations

Reaction to the road map is divided between the near-euphoric, the bitterly opposed, and those
somewhere in between who hope for the best but simply don’t think the plan can ever be implemented.

Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz went on record early to say it is bad for Israel. He later told Israel Radio that the Cabinet vote to sign on to the plan was not an endorsement of the Quartet’s actual road map but rather of the concept, taking into account the government’s fourteen objections. These fourteen points relate to issues considered essential to Israel’s participation in the road map process.

Israel insists that future settlement must by reached between the two parties in accordance with President George W. Bush’s vision articulated in his June 24, 2002, address.

The focal point is the national security of the Jewish state, based on the performance of a new and radically different Palestinian leadership. In other words, the Palestinians must clearly demonstrate they intend to keep their promises and not drag Israel into another morass of “paper for performance” disasters, as they have in the past—Palestinians promise; Israelis perform.

The terrorist infrastructure must be destroyed. Rather than being ignored or somehow brought into the process, Islamist radical elements, such as Hamas, which maintain their determination to destroy Israel, must be eliminated.

Israel also insists that the Saudi plan (UN resolution 1397 calling for a return to the pre-1967 borders) not be included in the settlement. If Israel is to have secure borders, those borders must be negotiated, not subjected to arbitrary decisions made by the Saudis, Palestinians, or any outside entity.

Israel must continue to exist as a Jewish state; thus Palestinians must relinquish their claim of the “right of return.” Although Israel’s freeze on settlements and evacuation of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip remain up-front matters in the road map, the Palestinian refugee issue is allowed to be dealt with later. For Israel to be evicted from the territories while Palestinians can still negotiate for an invasion of Arab “refugees” into Israel proper is totally unacceptable.

Finally, Arab states are asked to assist rather than hinder the process through the condemnation of terrorist activity.

Overcoming the obstacles inherent in the Quartet’s plan seems, in many respects, all but insurmountable. In the final analysis, only the Israelis and Palestinians will have the final word.

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### the Double Standard

by Elwood McQuaid

An issue is festering in the road map process that cannot be overlooked and certainly should not be honored. It is the insistence of the Palestinians and their Arab mentors that millions of “refugees” be allowed into Israel proper to claim property deserted during and after the 1948 War of Independence.

Palestinians were encouraged by their leaders to flee their homes until after invading Arab armies destroyed Israel. So roughly 500,000 went into self-imposed exile in Jordan, Lebanon, and points West. However, Arab forces did not destroy Israel, and the hapless Palestinians were forced to look to their Arab brothers for a solution to their homelessness.

At the same time, approximately 650,000 Jewish people were compelled to leave Arab countries where some had lived for two thousand years. They left with little more than the clothes on their backs, having been forced to forfeit citizenship, relinquish land holdings, and leave bank accounts behind.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of uprooted Palestinians were never assimilated into their new countries. They were stuffed into squalid refugee camps where they would live for decades. Their Arab “hosts,” of course, had a reason for this. It was to keep the cause against Israel alive until the opportunity came to exploit the issue for their benefit. That day has now come.

Tiny, oil-poor Israel, on the other hand, assimilated every Jewish refugee who arrived from any nation. These refugees became full citizens, were taught Hebrew, and received assistance that gave them a start in their new land.

The difference between Israel and its adversaries is that Israel did the right thing. Yet few, if any, in the international community consider the gigantic proportions of this massive absorption of Jewish refugees.

Meanwhile the Arabs, who callously and deliberately segregated and deprived their own kinsmen, now cry for redress and have their “refugee” issue on the table. And, incomprehensibly, Israel is being pressured by her allies to succumb to this Arab tactic of war by sacrificing its national integrity and, potentially, its very identity as a Jewish state.
Standing on the summit of Masada where the Romans crushed the last remnant of the Jewish rebellion in A.D. 73, one is gripped by multiple impressions. There is the seemingly futile determination of the few Jewish survivors who chose death over capitulation. Yet, by contrast, the still visible Roman siege encampments, wall, and access ramp to Masada’s summit shout of an empire’s commitment to exterminate a people it loathed.

A sense of solemnity exists here, unlike that at any other site in all of the Holy Land. The setting is appropriate. The sunscorched barrenness of the Judean wilderness falls away toward a lifeless sea shrouded perpetually by haze and heat.

Masada is actually more a cryptic memorial than a site for tourists. It’s almost as though the words associated with the place ride the desert winds: Masada, Never Again. We used to hear that phrase often when people spoke of Israel’s struggle for survival. Now, however, less so.

It is much the same when one walks the paths at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, the Jewish memorial to the Holocaust. It’s a place where levity and laughter quickly turn to silence and tears. Once you visit, you are marked with the indelible memory of it. Then there is the unimpeachable evidence not on display. The shrunk-en bodies; hollow, fear-infested eyes; crematories; and manic sneers of the tormentors imprint images as vivid as the blue numbers the Nazis tattooed on the victims of their atrocities.

Masada, Yad Vashem, and scores of other places in the world solemnly speak their message to us: “Never forget.” A corollary admonition is, “It can happen again.” And if we ignore the admonition to remember, it will most certainly happen again.

Twenty Centuries Haven’t Made a Difference

From Masada to Yad Vashem and beyond is a long road. For Jewish people, it has been a road littered with the wreckage of lives, families, villages, and sacred institutions. Hebrews 11: 36–38 tells the grim story:

And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tested, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented (Of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

When we made the turn into the new millennium, many held high hopes for a more tolerant, just, and equitable global community. But when our eyes turn from the ancient horrors of the past toward the future, we see that nothing has changed. Nothing has changed, that is, except the technological ability to disseminate hatred and bigotry.
more quickly, widely, and efficiently. And, oh yes, the art of killing is being perfected in ways that outstrip the gas chambers and firing squads by light-years. Now we can snuff out lives by the millions in the blink of an eye. And with violent anti-Semitism rising swiftly in the Middle East, Europe, and North America, there is justifiable foreboding over what the next few decades will bring.

For true Christians, the story is much the same. The New Testament tells us of the severe suffering first-century believers endured. The emissaries of pagan religions and oppressive tyrannical governments were intent on squeezing the life out of the early church:

And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. . . . As for Saul [later he became Paul the apostle], he made havoc of the church, entering into every house and, haling men and women, committed them to prison (Acts 8:1, 3).

Later the streets of Rome will be lighted by the oil-soaked bodies of crucified Christians considered a threat to the empire.

During the aptly named Dark Ages, godly men and women were tied to stakes and publicly committed to the fires by religionists who knew nothing of true and compassionate Christianity.

But, many might argue, that was then; and this is now. Times have changed. But have they?

On January 23, 1999, missionary Graham Staines and his two young sons, Timothy and Philip, bedded down for a quiet night of sleep in their Jeep outside a village in India where Graham was planning to minister to lepers the next day. Sometime after midnight an enraged crowd of Hindus stormed the Jeep, trapped the father and boys inside, and set it on fire. All three were incinerated.

Whether hung on a cross outside a capital city of the ancient world, tied to a stake in an unenlightened time of ignorance and religious aggression, or trapped in a Jeep outside a village in India, the flesh burns just as intensely; and the hearts of those who nail the nails and light the torches are equally degenerate and evil.

The Mandate to Remember

Being, of course, fully aware of mankind’s propensity to forget what should be remembered, particularly the unpleasant, the Lord commanded that memorials be observed annually. For Israel, Passover is an enduring example:

And this day shall be unto you a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever (Ex. 12:14).

The Israelites were told to remember Egypt, to remember the bitterness of servitude and slavery, to remember the deaths of the firstborn. And above all, they were told to remember their deliverance through the blood of the Passover lamb. Like Joseph, who never forgot God’s promises and ordered the children of Israel not to leave Egypt without bringing his bones with them to the Promised Land, the Jewish people, too, were to remember and intone annually, over countless millions of Passover tables across the centuries, “Next year in Jerusalem.” But in a very real way, they were also saying, “Egypt, Never Again!”

Few modern commemorations in the world equal Remembrance Day in Israel, held this year on May 6. Remembrance Day reveres the memory of the nearly twenty thousand soldiers and security personnel who have lost their lives since the 1948 War of Independence. Stan Goodenough, a South African Christian living in
Again as history unfolds, the price will be exacted again and again as freedom. And without a doubt, that terrible price paid to gain and keep our home, I thought of the white crosses of our fallen heroes. On the drive to gaze across the fields at the neat rows of crosses marking the graves to hear the sirens as the National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. I stopped the car for a moment, and it would be fitting, for all of us to remember those who are martyrred for their faith today. From cars. Sirens howl and playing fields, people stop dead in their tracks.

Life arrested. The world turned to stone. Sirens howl their pain to the skies. And in the howling are a myriad sounds, hard to listen to, impossible to ignore.1

On July fourth, America came to attention to observe its own Remembrance Day of sorts. No sirens sounded, and no one stood beside his car with head bowed in remembrance of the fallen. Instead, fireworks crackled; and triumphal, musical celebrations commemorated the founding of this Republic. But this year should sound another note in the ear of the nation because 130 of our young men and women who crossed oceans to liberate the people of Iraq gave the last full measure of their devotion. And it would be fitting, for all of our celebrating, to hear the sirens wail for them.

I recently drove past Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. I stopped the car for a moment to gaze across the fields at the neat rows of crosses marking the graves of our fallen heroes. On the drive home, I thought of the white crosses dotting the fields of France and Europe and remembered the terrible price paid to gain and keep our freedom. And without a doubt, that price will be exacted again and again as history unfolds.

What’s the lesson? It’s a simple one that we’ve already heard: Remember! On September 11, 2001, sirens screamed down the avenues of New York City, Washington, and rural Pennsylvania. We must never forget their sounds. Never.

A Word to Christians

Over the past weeks I have visited seven major cities in the United States and Canada doing television appearances. I have been interviewed on more than twenty Christian radio stations and networks on the subject of Christian persecution. The discussion focused on two facts: (1) Ninety-five percent of all Christians worldwide suffer some form of persecution and (2) more Christians are reportedly being martyred for their faith today than at any time in the history of the church.

This being the case, why do most evangelicals seem enshrouded in silence and indifference? The first explanation offered by interviewers and call-in contributors was that those suffering are outside our field of vision. Then there was the opinion that American Christians are so comfortable with the status quo that they recoil at entertaining unpleasant subjects—such as missionaries being summarily executed, decapitated, or burned to death in their cars.

A few even offered this rationale: “After all, the Bible says that if we are believers, we are going to suffer persecution. Jesus said, ‘If they persecute me, they will also persecute you.’ If this is the case, it must be God’s will. So why should we be surprised or try to change things? And, besides, what can we do to make a difference anyway?”

Well, for starters, we are commanded to remember those who suffer persecution:

Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them who suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body (Heb.13:3).

Second, we will be held accountable for our conduct toward suffering saints, at home and abroad: If thou forbear to deliver those who are drawn unto death, and those who are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that weigheth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his works? (Prov. 24:11–12).

So where do we start? We start by daring to remember. Ignoring the suffering of our brothers and sisters blatantly violates God’s clear command. At the last supper, when our Savior instituted the ordinance of Christian communion, He instructed that it be done “in remembrance of me.” His suffering, death, and resurrection were all to be remembered. “Never forget,” He said, “what I have done for you.”

What did He do? He suffered that we might have life. May we be compassionate and, yes, obedient enough to remember and reach out to those who share in His suffering—all the while remembering that there will never be need to suffer to redeem us again. His suffering alleviated ours and insured for us an eternally better day, one free of blood and tears.


Elwood McQuaid is editor-in-chief for The Friends of Israel.
The children of Israel were ready to cross into the land of promise! The trip had been long—thirty-eight years longer than it might have been had their forebears believed God (Num. 14:33). The generation that had gone before them—that had departed Egypt after witnessing the most remarkable miracles any people had seen and yet refused to trust God—was lying dead in the wilderness; God had answered its rash, rebellious prayer (Num. 14:2).

Now a new generation, anxious to trust the God who had promised this land to them (Gen. 15:18), was commanded to prepare for the final stage of the journey, the trip across the swollen Jordan River and into the land of Canaan. But the swirling waters were not the most terrifying reality these Israelites faced. More frightening still was this sobering fact: Moses was dead. He had been buried by the hand of Yahweh Himself (Dt. 34:5–6). And this generation had never known any other divinely appointed, empowered representative.

How would the God of Israel now prove that He could accomplish His purposes through Joshua?
Lord of All the Earth

The command went forth for the nation to watch as the priests carried the Ark of the Covenant—the sacred, ornate box that functioned as the very throne of King Yahweh—to the edge of the Jordan River. At the moment the priests’ feet touched those roiling waters, the Jordan parted, as had the Red Sea some forty years earlier; and the priests led the nation through on dry land.

As that marvelous trek commenced, Joshua shouted, “Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into the Jordan” (Josh. 3:11). With that miracle—which so unmistakably resembled Moses’ parting of the Red Sea forty years earlier—Yahweh “magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel,” so the nation feared and followed Joshua just as it had Moses (Josh. 4:14).

In that regal announcement, made at that dramatic moment, Joshua referred to King Yahweh as “the Lord of all the earth.” Yahweh is not simply some local tribal deity, unable to move among any people but His own, powerless before the Canaanite gods, or susceptible only to Moses’ manipulations. Yahweh is Lord of all the earth! He will rule in the affairs of the inhabitants of Canaan despite their wicked unbelief. And He will empower and lead Joshua just as He had Moses.

Meaning and Usage

The word Lord in Joshua 3:11 is the Hebrew title Adonai, one of the more important names of God in the Old Testament. In that culture, “a name was chosen very carefully, and with attention to its significance” because “the Hebrews considered the name an embodiment of the person bearing it” (cf. Ex. 3:13–15). In fact, the name by which a biblical person is known not only describes that person; it “indicates the essential character of that to which the name is given.”

Thus the various names of God are important elements of His revelation of Himself to mankind. Indeed, “one of the most theologically significant modes of the divine self-disclosure is the revelation inherent in the names of God.” There is much to be learned from a careful consideration of this particular name of God, Adonai.

Adonai is usually traced to an Ugaritic root that means “lord” or “father.” There is no question as to the meaning of this term throughout the Old Testament. Much more important, however, is the way the term is used. Throughout Scripture, whether used in reference to men or God, the term means “lord” or “master.” It is used more than two hundred times to refer to a superior rather than to God, but even then it always refers to one of higher rank than the speaker.

For instance, Sarah spoke of her husband as Adonai (Gen. 18:12). Lot used the term of angelic visitors (Gen. 19:2); and the title is applied to the pharaoh of Egypt (Gen. 40:1), Joseph as the administrator of Pharaoh’s wealth (Gen. 42:10), Boaz by Ruth before they are wed (Ruth 2:13), Eli the high priest (1 Sam. 1:15), Elijah as the prophet of God (1 Ki. 18:7), and Shem as the “owner” of the hill of Samaria (1 Ki. 16:24).

By the same token, the word always retains the primary sense of “lord” when applied to God. The term is used of God more than three hundred times in the Old Testament, though the usages are concentrated in the Psalter (more than fifty times), Isaiah (forty-seven times), Jeremiah (twenty-nine times), Ezekiel (more than 150 times), and Amos (twenty-seven times). When the term consistently refers to God, it is plural; but that construction should be regarded as the “plural of majesty,” which only intensifies the sense of God’s control or sovereignty as “Lord of all the earth.”

God as Adonai in the Old Testament

Adonai is used as a divine title for the first time in Genesis 15:2 and 8, where Abram petitioned God using the compound title “Lord [Adonai] God [Yahweh].” The patriarch asked God for an heir so that he might realize the promise of a great family. Abraham profoundly sensed his own helplessness and realized the absolute authority and infinite ability of the One to whom he had come. Thus he came to God as a servant comes to his master, as a slave to his owner, and as a beggar to his benefactor.

All of these connotations reside in the title Adonai as it is used throughout the Old Testament. Compare, for instance, the sense of desperate need in Gideon’s prayer: “O my Lord [Hebrew, Adonai], wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house” (Jud. 6:15). Again, consider Yahweh’s majestic pronouncement concerning the evil machinations of pagan kings against the throne of David: “Thus saith the Lord [Hebrew, Adonai]...
GOD, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass” (Isa. 7:7). And again, note the contempt with which the Sovereign of human history regards men who set themselves against Him and His anointed: “He who sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord [Hebrew, Adonai] shall have them in derision” (Ps. 2:4).

Lord and Master of all—is at once an interminable frustration and an unspeakable delight. To one who is yet in his sin, such truth is a frustration. The essence of sin is selfishness, the determination to put oneself at the center of one’s own little universe, to live for self-satisfaction and self-aggrandizement. Thus people who are yet in the grip of sin will insist they ought to rule over their own lives. God’s claims on them will be an offense. The great nineteenth-century English preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon described this spirit of rebellion in compelling fashion:

Men will allow God to be everywhere except on His throne. They will allow Him to be in His workshop to fashion worlds and make stars. They will allow Him to be in His almonry to dispense His alms and bestow His bounties. They will allow Him to sustain the earth and bear up the pillars thereof, or light the lamps of heaven, or rule the waves of the ever-moving ocean; but when God ascends His throne, His creatures then gnash their teeth. But individuals who have come to God for the forgiveness He has provided in His Son, who have bowed their knees to the claims of God as Creator and Redeemer, have found Him to be benevolent indeed. Consider, for instance, the testimony of King David in Psalm 57. In his moment of desperation while fleeing Saul, David willingly cried out, “Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth” (v. 5).

And because it was the impulse and determination of David’s heart to exalt His God—because he had acknowledged God as Adonai in his life—this sweet singer was able to rejoice later in that same song: “I will praise thee, O Lord [Hebrew, Adonai], among the peoples; I will sing unto thee among the nations. For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds” (vv. 9–10). And thus did David close that song with the repeated refrain, “Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth” (v. 11).

Abraham profoundly sensed his own helplessness and realized the absolute authority and infinite ability of the One to whom he had come. Thus he came to God as a servant comes to his master, as a slave to his owner, and as a beggar to his benefactor.

This One is the true God, Lord of all the earth. He has made Himself known as Adonai, a term that bespeaks universal ownership and absolute lordship on His part and that demands submission and obedience on our part. Thus He demands and deserves to be honored as truly Lord over all we have and all we are.

But equally as important, He has proven Himself a Lord who can be trusted to do what is best for those who serve Him with a happy heart. Thus the testimony of David: “In thee, O LORD [Hebrew, Yahweh], do I hope; thou wilt hear, O Lord [Hebrew, Adonai] my God [Hebrew, Elohim]” (Ps. 38:15).

God as Adonai in Our Lives

The biblical reality that God is Adonai—truly and legitimately owned as truly Lord over all we have, as owner, and as a beggar to his benefactor. This One is the true God, Lord of all the earth. He has made Himself known as Adonai, a term that bespeaks universal ownership and absolute lordship on His part and that demands submission and obedience on our part. Thus He demands and deserves to be honored as truly Lord over all we have and all we are.

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5 McComiskey, 467.
6 The Hebrew form differs when it refers to man compared to when it refers to God. Alden (TWOT, 1:12–13) stated, when the term has no suffix (adon) “or when pointed for the first common singular suffix or with other pronominal suffixes,” the term refers to men. (Exceptions, however, are Exodus 34:23; Deuteronomy 10:17; and Psalm 8:1.) But when the term is plural with a first common singular pronominal suffix, it always refers to God.
7 Alden, TWOT, 1:13, stated, “Just as elohim (God) is plural in Hebrew, so this word might also be called an intensive plural or plural of majesty.” This linguistic artifice, common in Hebrew, pluralizes a singular entity to heighten its importance.

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Several years ago The Friends of Israel took a group of pastors, Christian laypeople, and staff members to the Embassy of Israel in Washington, D.C. The official who addressed the group provided an interesting, Hebrew slant on the Tetragrammaton. The Hebrew words commonly translated “I Am that I Am,” he said, can best be translated, “I shall be what it shall be.”

In Exodus 3:14, the Hebrew words for “I Am that I Am” are ‘ehyeh ‘asher ‘ehyeh. According to John Hannah in The Bible Knowledge Commentary, ‘ehyeh “is probably a wordplay on Yahweh,” God’s covenant name known as the Tetragrammaton, YHVH.1

Of all the names of God, the Tetragrammaton (Greek for “four letters”) is unique to Him alone. All nations had elohim (“gods”) whom they worshiped. All had adonai (“lords”) whom they called their masters. But only the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob received the name YHVH, also known as Jehovah. He alone was their Elohim.

Faithful and Covenant-Keeping

In Exodus 6:3, God told Moses, “And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty [Hebrew, El Shaddai], but by my name JEHOVAH [Hebrew, YHVH, vowel-pointed as Yehovah] was I not known.”

The Lord revealed to Moses that even though He had established a relationship with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; revealed His power and might to them; and established an unconditional covenant with them, He had never revealed to them His special name. His purpose in revealing it to Moses was clear: The 430 years of Jewish separation from the land of promise was about to end. God wanted His people to know that He remembered the covenant He had made with their father Abraham. So He revealed to Moses His unique identity to assure the Israelites that He would bring them into the land of their inheritance.

Bible scholar C. I. Scofield expounded on the covenant aspect of this unique name:
In this initial self-identification of God it is significant that the verb is in the first person; the Speaker names Himself, thus emphasizing His personal identification. It is the announcement of a present God, who has come to fulfill His covenant and keep His promise.
to the afflicted posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.2

Jehovah is different from the other two primary names, Elohim and Adonai. Jehovah is personal. It can apply to only one deity—the God of the Hebrew people, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The revered Jewish sage and rabbi from the Middle Ages, Moses Maimonides, said with regard to this name, All the names of God which occur in Scripture are derived from His works except one, and that is Jehovah; and this is called the plain name, because it teaches plainly and unequivocally of the substance of God.3

Nathan Stone, in his book on the names of God, quoted an unnamed commentator who stressed key aspects of God’s personality as revealed in His name: In the name Jehovah the personality of the Supreme is distinctly expressed. It is everywhere a proper name denoting the person of God, and Him only . . . Elohim . . . denoting usually . . . the Supreme. The Hebrew may say the Elohim, the true God, in opposition to all false gods; but he never says the Jehovah, for Jehovah is the name of the true God only. He says again and again, my God or my Elohim, but never my Jehovah, for when he says my God he means Jehovah. He speaks of the God (Elohim) of Israel but never of the Jehovah of Israel, for there is no other Jehovah. He speaks of the living God, but never of the living Jehovah, for he cannot conceive of Jehovah as other than living.4

Forever Present and Self-Existent

Jehovah seems to be closely related to the Hebrew word havah, or hovah, which is the verb “to be.” In the English Bible (Old Testament only), Jehovah occurs 6,823 times and is always identified as LORD or GOD (all capitalized). In Exodus 3:13–14 God reveals his personal name to Moses: And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

A possible explanation for the composition of the name Jehovah from the Hebrew might be yehi—he will be; havi—being; hah yah—he was.5 Jehovah might also be understood as an acronym using parts of the same Hebrew words, making Yehov-ah, a name that states, “I will be (future) because I am (present) because I was (past).”

YHVH not only contains the aspects of past, present, and future but also declares that God exists in the eternal present because all three aspects are the same to Him. He is, and He is eternity itself. Thus He was telling Moses in Exodus 13:14, “I will be what it shall be. Whatever happens, I am it. I am your past, I am your present, I am your future.”

In addition to being related to the verb “to be,” this particular name is also closely related to the Hebrew word chavah, “to live,” or “life.”6 Jehovah is the self-existent one, the everliving God. In Isaiah 43:10–11 He states, “Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD [YHVH], and beside me there is no savior.”

The Lord clearly proclaims that He was the beginning of everything, and nothing existed before Him. He is the only uncaused cause. He is the source of everything that is.

God . . . revealed to Moses His unique identity to assure the Israelites that He would bring them into the land of their inheritance.

Interestingly, no one really knows how to pronounce this most important of God’s names. Because it was considered too holy to utter, down through the ages YHVH was vowel-pointed with the vowels for Adonai. Today almost all Jewish people automatically say “Adonai” whenever they see this name in the Sidur (Jewish prayer book) or Scriptures. Some will simply say “Ha-Shem,” which means “the name.”
Such was not always the case prior to the destruction of the first Temple in 586 B.C. In those days the name was pronounced regularly, with its own vowels. This fact is clear from the Lachish Letters, written just prior to the Temple’s destruction. However, by the third century B.C., the pronunciation of YHVH was avoided altogether. This practice was begun by Jewish scholars who desired to do what Scripture commanded and honor the Lord’s great name. Interestingly, Hebrew has no letter w. So the correct Hebrew pronunciation could not be Yahweh or YHWH.

Far Different Than We

God Is Holy. Pronunciation aside, the name Jehovah reveals at least three unique characteristics of God. First, it confirms His holiness: “Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy; for I, the LORD your God, am holy” (Lev. 19:2).

The word holy comes from the same Hebrew root as sanctify or sanctification. It means “unique, different, or separate.” God is unique, different, and separate; and He requires the same from those called by His name. God’s standard is absolute perfection. He can accept nothing less.

God Hates Sin. A second characteristic is His hatred of sin. When someone sins, that sin ultimately reaches Jehovah’s throne because we were made by Him and for Him. Therefore, we are answerable to Him (1 Pet. 4:5). Thus He has the right to judge sin and punish sinners. Our sinfulness affronts His holiness: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek. 18:20).

The apostle Paul confirmed God as Judge when he declared, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men” (Rom. 1:18). Paul continued this concept in Romans 6:23: “For the wages of sin is death.”

God’s holiness requires that He hate sin. He warned Adam that if he disobeyed, or sinned, he would die. This truth can be seen in Genesis 3. After they sinned, Adam and Eve still evidenced life but clearly were spiritually dead. They attempted to cover their shame with fig leaves, pass the blame for their sin to each other, and ultimately hide from God Himself. They were spiritually dead, which is the natural condition of every physical descendant of Adam and Eve since their sinful rebellion against a holy God.

God Loves Sinners. Mankind’s seemingly hopeless situation reveals a third characteristic of the name Jehovah: His love for sinners. Despite everything, God loves those who have rebelled against Him. After Adam and Eve fell, Jehovah demonstrated His love for His rebellious creation. He had the right to destroy them instantly. But Scripture says, “For Adam also and for his wife did the LORD [YHWH] God make coats of skins, and clothed them” (Gen. 3:21).

The name Jehovah may not have been revealed until Exodus, but it was clearly present as early as man’s fall. Many scholars believe it was here, in the shadow of man’s greatest failure, that the first manifestation of God’s loving grace is seen, as He instituted the sacrificial system as a means for sinful man to cover his sin.

Earlier Jehovah’s love is even clearer as the first possible reference of the gospel is declared: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15). Here God reveals several significant truths. The woman’s seed (Messiah) will deliver a deathblow to the serpent’s head; but all the serpent will do is bruise, or crush, Messiah’s heel. A head blow to a serpent is fatal. Not so with a blow to the heel.

At the dawn of man’s rebellion, Jehovah was there, declaring His love for those He had created. Later, for their protection, Jehovah drove the rebellious couple from the garden so that they would not eat of the tree of life and remain forever in a lost and rebellious state. From then on, He continued to demonstrate His compassion and love for helpless humanity, despite His hatred of their ever-present sin.

The same grace was extended to Noah and his family and to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. None of them knew the name Jehovah, nor could they have understood fully all that it implied. But despite this void, Jehovah was there—the faithful, eternal, covenant-keeping, self-existent God who “commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

ENDNOTES

4 Ibid., 15-16.
6 Stone, 15.

Thomas Simcox is the Northeastern States director for The Friends of Israel.
### The Other Names of God

Biblical names are usually significant. Unlike the common practice today, ancient names were usually chosen for a specific reason. People were not as concerned with how a name sounded or what others thought of it as they were with what the name meant. More often than not, it revealed a specific character trait of the one being named.

Such is the case with the biblical names of God. They reveal the nature, character, and attributes of the only true and living sovereign of the universe.

God’s names are revealed as three primary names, then as compound names that stem from the primaries. The chart to the left covers a majority of the compound names found in the Bible. The first four use the primary name El, while the latter eleven have Jehovah as their root.

Accompanying each name on the chart is a key Scripture where the name is cited. Some names are used only once in the entire Bible, while others occur frequently.

### The Other Names of God

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Key Scripture Reference(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>El Shaddai</strong></td>
<td>The All-Sufficient One</td>
<td>Gen. 17:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>El Elyon</strong></td>
<td>The Strongest Strong One The Most High One</td>
<td>Gen. 14:20; Dan. 4:32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>El Roi</strong></td>
<td>The God Who Sees</td>
<td>Gen. 16:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>El Olam</strong></td>
<td>The Everlasting God The God Without Limits</td>
<td>Gen. 21:33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah Jireh</td>
<td>The L ORD Will Provide</td>
<td>Gen. 22:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah Rophe</td>
<td>The L ORD Who Heals</td>
<td>Ex. 15:26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah Nissi</td>
<td>The L ORD Our Banner</td>
<td>Ex. 17:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah M’Qaddash</td>
<td>The L ORD Who Sets Apart</td>
<td>Ex. 31:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah Shalom</td>
<td>The L ORD Our /Is Peace</td>
<td>Jud. 6:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah Sabaoth</td>
<td>The L ORD of Hosts</td>
<td>1 Sam. 1:3, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah Raah</td>
<td>The L ORD Is My Shepherd</td>
<td>Ps. 23:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah Shammah</td>
<td>The L ORD Is There / Present</td>
<td>Ezek. 48:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah Tsidkenu</td>
<td>The L ORD Our Righteousness</td>
<td>Jer. 23:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah Nakeh</td>
<td>The L ORD Who Strikes</td>
<td>Ezek. 7:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah El-Gomolah</td>
<td>The L ORD Is the God of the Recompense</td>
<td>Jer. 51:56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**El Shaddai**  
This name became well known through a popular Christian song in the 1980s. *El Shaddai* combines the Hebrew words El, which references strength or the Strong One, and shad, a Hebrew word for “breast.” The English Bible identifies *El Shaddai* as The Almighty.
Jehovah Rophe

Rophe can be translated “to cure, cause to heal, physician, or to make whole.” It reveals that God is indeed the Great Physician and the God who can heal, if it is His will.

Jehovah Nissi

Nissi is Hebrew for “standard, ensign, banner, or flag.” These items were often taken into battle and used as rallying points for troops as they engaged the enemy. Believers are in a spiritual war with Satan and his demons; and the Lord is our banner, our rallying point in our spiritual warfare.

Jehovah M’Qaddash

Qaddash literally means “to be clean, to make clean, to pronounce clean,” and “to hallow, to dedicate, to sanctify.” It is closely related to the Hebrew word for “holy.” This name not only implies sanctification but also that God is the one who cleanses us from sin and sets us apart for His service.

Jehovah Shalom

One of the most often recognized Hebrew words is shalom, which literally means “peace.” True peace comes only from the Lord, who is peace and can bring peace. This peace is vertical—between God and reconciled, lost humanity, and horizontal—between those who have received the peace of God that surpasses human understanding.

Jehovah Sabhaot

Tzavaot is the Hebrew word that becomes Sabhaot in the English Bible. It speaks of a mass, throng, or host of persons organized for or waiting for war or those who have assembled for war. In Israel today, the word is well known as a part of the name of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). In Hebrew the IDF is known as Tzava Ha Haganah L’Yisrael, which literally means “the host, or army, for the protection of Israel.” This name for the Lord refers to Him as the Lord of the armies of heaven.

Jehovah Raah

“To tend or pasture” is the meaning of Raah in Psalm 23:1. Thus the name The Lord Is My Shepherd.

Jehovah Shammah

Appearing only once in Scripture, this name fortifies the concept of God’s omnipresence. He has been and always shall be there, or present. There has never been a time or a situation where He has not been.

Jehovah Tsidkenu

This name implies truth, justice, equity, and doing what is right. These qualities clearly describe the Lord.

Jehovah El-Gomolah

El-Gomolah means “to give one his just desserts, to requite.” God is the one who will take care of His enemies and those of His people. He is the one who promised Jeremiah that He would pay Babylon back for what she had done to Israel.

God has given us these names because He desires that we know Him. Daniel 11:32 includes a beautiful promise to all who seek to know the one true God: “But the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.”

ENDNOTES

2 Ibid., 1,633.

Thomas Simcox is the Northeastern States director for The Friends of Israel.
A fascinating discovery was made in Jerusalem recently. In a “chance find,” a 20-inch-long limestone bone box called an ossuary was found. It once contained the bones of James, whose Epistle is in the New Testament. Even more extraordinary was the name that appeared on one of the outer sides of the box. An incision in clear Aramaic letters dating back to A.D. 63 read, “James, son of Joseph, brother of Yeshua.”

Scholars believe this ossuary is the earliest archaeological testimony for the person and name of Jesus. And, as names are the opening words to life stories, the name Jesus is no different. It reveals much about the Second Person of the triune God of Israel.

**A Sovereign Name**

“I am come in my Father’s name” (Jn. 5:43).

“I have manifested thy name unto the men” (Jn. 17:6).

An important point about a name is identity. A name tells you who a person is. It is unfortunate that there is so much debate about Jesus. The range of thought, in fact, runs from ideas that He was a moralist to the bizarre notion that He was an individual who struggled with “low fantasies.” Yet the truth is found in His name.

When Moses stood before the burning bush and asked God His name, The Lord replied, “I AM THAT I AM” (Ex. 3:14). The “I Am” in Hebrew relates to the personal name of God as represented by the four letters YHVH, commonly referred to as the Tetragrammaton. Jesus’ Hebrew name, Yeshua, is composed of the same four letters. And God does nothing by accident.

Yahweh of the Old Testament is Yeshua of the New Testament:
“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am” (Jn. 8:58). The implication is clear. The name Jesus, which is an English transliteration of the Greek Iesous, is a supreme, sovereign name of the true and living God. And the power of that name is confirmed repeatedly in the Bible and by the works Christ did while on Earth.

Zechariah 14:9 says, “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.” Because of this verse, the ancient rabbis used to say that when the Lord reigns on Earth, He will be known by his one name, YHWH. It is Yeshua who will be known throughout the whole earth. For when He returns and reigns, all will call Him “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev.19:16). So even now, proper expression of homage, respect, and adoration should be shown to the sovereign name Jesus. As Scripture declares, “At the name of Jesus every knee should bow” (Phil. 2:10).

A Saving Name

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name (Jn. 20:31).

The name Yeshua involves a Hebrew verb that means to “save or help” and signifies that the “Lord saves” or that the “save or help” and signifies that He is added to the name, Yeshua then conveys the full meaning of the “Lord is my salvation” or the “Lord is my help and deliverer.”

It has been reported that during the time of Christ, one out of ten people had the name Yeshua. However, only one ever claimed to be God (Jn. 5:18; 8:58) and bore the name to accomplish the very thing His name meant—salvation.

Prior to Jesus’ birth, an angel told Joseph that his intended wife, Mary, still a virgin, would bear a son who must be named Jesus because the child was destined to save his people from their sins (Mt.1:21). In those days, salvation from sin involved blood sacrifice at the Temple in Jerusalem. Yet the entire sacrificial system foreshadowed what was anticipated when Messiah would become the final blood sacrifice for sin (Isaiah 53:4–6).

In the midst of blessing his sons from his deathbed, the ancient patriarch Jacob earnestly exclaimed, “I have waited for thy salvation [Hebrew, Yeshua], O Lord” (Gen.49:18). Aged Simeon, who daily waited for the consolation of Israel, was at the Temple when Jesus was brought there at eight days of age. Simeon lifted the infant up in his arms and said, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; For mine eyes have seen thy salvation [Yeshua/Jesus]” (Lk. 2:29-30).

Jesus embodies and personifies God’s redemption story. In Him alone and in the power of His name are sinners saved and eternally secured because “neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Jesus is a saving name for all the world.

A Sure and Satisfying Name

The teachings of Scripture all culminate in the magnificent name of Jesus—a steadfast name that is sure and satisfying. The ancient rabbis viewed the Hebrew alphabet as sacred and full of wisdom. To them each letter radiated symbolism and meaning for life and thought. Devotionally, it is interesting to examine what “sacred mystery” the rabbis ascribed to each of the four Hebrew letters in the name Yeshua.

According to the rabbis, the first letter, yod, symbolizes humility because it is the smallest of all the letters. The second letter, shin, stands high among the sacred letters because it represents two names for God, Almighty (El Shaddai) and Peace (Shalom). The third letter is vav. It represents redemption (usually the Passover imagery) through anguish. And the fourth letter is ayin. It symbolizes a spring of water, as in Genesis 16:7.

All these symbolisms have full expression in the person and work of the God/man whose Hebrew name is Yeshua. Yod relates to Jesus’ Incarnation. Scripture states, “And, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:8). Yeshua is God’s earthly name related to His great purpose in coming in humility as a servant of men.

Shin points to the fact that Jesus is Almighty God: “For unto us a child is born . . . and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6). He also is our peace, who, by His shed blood, removed the barrier that separates man from God and Jews from Gentiles: “For he is our peace, continued on page 27
In Old Testament days the patriarchs and ancient Israelites were identified with names that had specific meanings. In Genesis 17:5, God changed the name of Abram (“exalted father”) to Abraham (“father of a multitude”). Genesis 17:15 records that God also changed Abraham’s wife’s name from Sarai (“my princess”) to Sarah (“princess”) because she would become a “mother of nations.”

These are but two examples of many where a name expressed a hope, wish, or prayer for the person named. Remember the birth of Hannah’s first child? First Samuel 1 records that God answered her prayer for a child with the birth of Samuel, a name that means “asked of the Lord.”

Nearly three thousand years have passed since then. Yet today Jewish tradition attaches the same importance to the naming of a child. The name selection process is different for Ashkenazi (European) and Sephardic (oriental) Jewish parents. Ashkenazi parents name their children after a special and significant deceased person. Sephardic parents do just the opposite, naming their children after significant living persons. Both groups hold a naming ceremony, where they publicly dedicate the child and the name.
Careful name selection is not exclusive to Jewish people. Christians also value names and their meanings. Many Christians name their children after individuals in the Bible, often hoping to teach the children to duplicate the qualities of their namesakes in their own lives.

In Scripture, God is known by many names. Three are considered primary: Elohim, Jehovah, and Adonai. In addition, He has many compound names that are revealed progressively throughout the Bible. Is the selection of these individual names for God important? The prophet Jeremiah recorded that the Lord Himself states, “I have sworn by my great name” (Jer. 44:26). David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, wrote Psalm 8 as praise to Yahweh: “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who hast set thy glory above the heavens!” (v. 1). David also called on God’s name when he wrote Psalm 20:1: “The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee.”

God’s name is excellent, and it protects us. God’s name implies the magnitude of all that He is, all His attributes. Not surprisingly, the New Testament is consistent with the Old Testament in its view of the importance of God’s name. John’s Gospel records, “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name” (Jn. 1:12). Jesus said, “If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it” (Jn. 14:14). Jesus made it clear that believing in His name equaled believing in God.

Moses, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, took little time to introduce us to the first name of God in the Torah (Pentateuch). Genesis 1:1 begins, “Berasheet bara Elohim,” “In the beginning God created.” Here the name used for God is the word Elohim. Of all God’s names, Elohim, used more than 2,500 times, is the most common one in the Old Testament. Using Elohim as the first name is most significant because it is a powerful name, a plural name, and a name used by two divine personalities.

A Powerful Name

Used thirty-two times in Genesis 1 alone, the name Elohim depicts the God of creation. The etymology of words and names can be difficult to prove. Yet there is reasonable, reliable evidence that the root of Elohim is El (Hebrew singular, “God”). Moses chose the word El in Numbers 23:22, proclaiming that El “brought them out of Egypt.” Used 250 times in the Old Testament, El is translated in English as “mighty, strong, and prominent.” Many individuals in the Bible incorporated the word El into their own names. Jacob’s name was changed to Israel, which means a “prince of God.” The young Jewish boy taken captive by Babylon was named Daniel, which means “my judge is God.” Elijah is translated “the Lord is God”; and Elisha, “my God is salvation.”

A word compounded with El is Alah, “which is said to mean to declare or swear. Thus it is said to imply a covenant relationship.”

When placed together, El-Alah-im (Elohim) takes on the meaning of the strong, faithful one who keeps His covenant.

Elohim, the strong and powerful one, is a keeper of promises—the faithful one. Elohim called to Moses in a bush that was not consumed. In Exodus 3:6 God spoke to Moses saying, “I am the God Elohim of thy father, the God Elohim of Abraham, the God Elohim of Isaac, and the God Elohim of Jacob.”

Although the name Elohim conveys the power of the true God, it is not always used that way. Bible teacher John MacArthur wrote, “Elohim is a general term for deity and a name for the True God, though used also at times for pagan gods ([Gen.] 31:30), angels (Ps. 8:5), men (Ps. 82:6), and judges (Ex. 21:6).”

It is, therefore, a name that should be interpreted in the context in which it appears:

“Thou shalt have no other gods [Elohim] before me” (Ex. 20:3).

“Ye shall not make with me gods [Elohim] of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods [Elohim] of gold” (Ex. 20:23).

“Thus saith the Lord thy God [Elohim] is God [Elohim] of gods [Elohim], and Lord of lords, a great God [El], a mighty, and an awesome, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward” (Dt. 10:17).

A Plural Name

Thus Elohim can be used to designate false gods. The “im” ending makes it a plural word. Why is God, the one who created the heavens and the earth, the one who keeps His covenant, the one who chose the Jewish people, referred to by a plural name? The answer varies from source to source, which means it is important to examine the various answers.
Some use the argument that the plural word *Elohim* denotes a plural of majesty. Jewish scholarship is one such source. It has typically held that the plural is used to demonstrate “the plentitude of might.” The *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary* agrees:

**Since the pl. [plural] word Elohim when used for God in the OT [Old Testament] is most emphatically sing. [singular] in meaning (Deut. 4:35, 39; 1 Ki. 8:60; 18:39; Isa 45:18, etc.), there is real probability that the Hebrews looked on it as a “plural of majesty.”**

The late evangelical, Hebrew-Christian scholar Dr. David L. Cooper, aware of this argument, wrote:

> The writer [Cooper himself] is aware of the argument that the plural noun *Elohim* is the plural of “excellency majesty.” He admits, frankly, that in the Semitic world such usage was common when subjects addressed their king or at times spoke concerning him; but in the passages examined in this section, and in numerous other passages, there is nothing in the context of any of them which warrants a departure from the strict grammatical interpretation of the words and the substitution of an interpretation invented to support a theological bias.5 Others argue that the plural *Elohim* implies “plural of intensity.”6 This intensity infuses a sense of strength to the name, insuring a stronger meaning. Thus the God of creation is seen as stronger and more powerful when made plural: “With Elohim the plural form teaches us that no finite word can adequately convey the idea of the infinite personality or the unity of persons in the Godhead.”7

The key to understanding the plurality of *Elohim* does not seem to lie in some explanation but, rather, in simply allowing the name to stand the way it is, as a plurality of personhood. Like the patriarchs before us, we do not have to understand it completely. Dr. Michael Brown wrote:

> The very concept of “compound unity” or “plurality in unity” was part of the language of the Tanakh. Such concepts would not be foreign to the biblical mind. So while these references to God or Lord in the plural do not in any way prove Trinitarian beliefs, they are certainly in perfect harmony with everything we are trying to say here, namely, that in some way the Lord’s unity is complex.8

### A Name Applied to Two Personalities

**Thy throne, O God [Elohim], is forever and ever; the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God [Elohim], thy God [Elohim], hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (Ps. 45:6–7).**

Regarding Psalm 45:6–7, Arnold Fruchtenbaum stated in his book *Messianic Christology*,

> It should be noted that the first Elohim is being addressed and the second Elohim is the God of the first Elohim. There are two quite distinct personalities here; it is Elohim’s Elohim who has set Elohim above His companions.9

This language is plain. The plural *Elohim* has set the plural *Elohim* above His companions. There is a unity to God.

William Shakespeare asked in *Romeo and Juliet*, “What’s in a name?” After the American Civil War, Confederate general Robert E. Lee was asked by an insurance company for permission to use his name for an endorsement. He reportedly said, “I have lost everything in the war except my name, and that is not for sale.”

The selection of a name, the meaning of a name, and the power of a name are all important. *Elohim* is the one true God whose personality is inherent in His plurality. And that fact should stimulate a thinking person to investigate all that this truth encompasses.

Most Jewish people hold God’s name in great reverence. In fact, many will not even speak it aloud. A number of years ago, my wife had the privilege of spending several days with an Orthodox Jewish woman. Her conversations were peppered with the phrase *Baruch ha Shem—Blessed be the Name*. It was never said lightly, but with great respect. “The Name” refers to one Person alone, to Him whose name many Jewish people consider too sacred to utter. May we be as respectful as we consider *Elohim*, Creator of the universe.

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**ENDNOTES**

2. The MacArthur Study Bible (Nashville: Word, 1979), 16 n. 1.1–2.3.

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ISRAEL MY GLORY 23
Sports radio, a relative newcomer in the arena known as talk radio, is a result of the mutual admiration between professional athletes and the fans who watch them.

The last names of the people who produce, direct, and host many of these programs read like the membership list of a typical synagogue. Add in the people who frequently call these shows, and you can quickly see that many Jewish people are passionate about sports. In fact, Jewish people around the world love sports; and their fervor is not limited to one type.

In Israel, soccer and basketball are extremely popular, with fans filling arenas and watching regularly on television. Canada’s Jewish population has an avid love for hockey. In New York City, home of the largest Jewish population in the world outside Israel, fans speak of their sports teams with the same passion as yeshiva students debating the Talmud.

Yet, according to traditional Judaism, this zeal for sports should never have arisen. Dating back to the time of Hellenism (323 B.C.–30 B.C.), Jewish leaders taught that involvement in sports was pagan. In those days, athletes participated in the nude. The practice was considered unclean, a violation of both rabbinic teaching and Hebrew Scripture.

Jewish people knew that to practice paganism was considered rebellion against God. Rather, they were to pursue separated, sanctified living. In addition, with little free time available, athletics were considered wasteful. Therefore, it was felt that time would be better spent studying and learning, rather than becoming polluted by the world. Through the years, this emphasis has resulted in a people much better known for producing doctors, lawyers, teachers, and social workers than athletes who could hit home runs, score touchdowns, sink baskets, or score goals.

Around two thousand years later, the Holocaust dramatically changed the Jewish community of Europe, and millions of Jewish people bravely made the move from the Old World to America. Over time Jewish families in America became less observant in their faith than they were in Europe. Their strong work ethic, allowed to flourish in a country blessed with freedom, eventually afforded them access to a lifestyle with increased leisure time. And their free
environment provided accessibility to the national culture, which exposed them to new interests.

Consequently, there arose a new generation of Jewish people who began to transfer to sports the zeal their parents and grandparents had applied to religion. The scenario was mirrored in almost every free country where Jewish people found themselves.

On October 6, 1965, Jewishness and professional athletics collided in a way that profoundly affected the Jewish community. If you ask Jewish people born in the 1950s or earlier what happened that day, and you remind them that it was Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), the highest holy day on the Jewish calendar, you might see a grin spread across their faces.

I remember that date well. Like most Jewish people, I spent the entire day with my family in shul (Yiddish for “synagogue”). Between liturgies, there was much talk that had nothing to do with atonement. It centered, of all things, on baseball.

The World Series had started that afternoon between the Minnesota Twins and Los Angeles Dodgers. It was the opening game, the most important in the seven-game series of a sport that was arguably the most popular one in America at the time. The identity of the teams was of little or no concern to our Cleveland, Ohio, congregation. Even the fact that one of the teams had a Jewish pitcher was not sufficient motivation to talk during the service.

What generated the enormous buzz in our synagogue that day was the fact that the Dodgers’ Jewish pitcher, Sandy Koufax, had made a decision that rocked the news media and spread like wildfire across the nation’s newspapers and airwaves. Koufax had refused to pitch the first game of the Series because it fell on Yom Kippur.

His reason was simple: He was Jewish. Just how big was that personal decision? Big enough that it had the entire Jewish community in the United States talking. And big enough to become a subject that Jewish people still discuss today.

In her book Sandy Koufax (HarperCollins), published only last year, Jane Leavy put it this way:

By refusing to pitch, Koufax defined himself as a man of principle who placed faith above craft. He became inextricably linked with the American Jewish experience. . . . In Jewish households, he was the New Patriarch: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Sandee.²

His decision enshrined him forever in Jewish hearts; and Koufax, now 67, is spoken of fondly to this day:

You see him on the menu at Gallagher’s Steak House in New York, on the wall mural celebrating the history of the Jews outside Cantor’s deli in Los Angeles, . . . on the library shelves at the Washington Hebrew Congregation in Washington, D.C. The [his] paperback biography, a quickie clip job published in 1968, was so well thumbed librarians had to put it between hard covers. It remains the most asked for book in the synagogue’s children’s collection.³

Sandy Koufax was not an observant Jew; but Rabbi Hillel Silverman, whom Ms. Leavy said “annually invoked Koufax’s name in his Yom Kippur sermon,” provided Koufax’s reasoning. Rabbi Silverman said Koufax told him, “I’m Jewish. I’m a role model. I want them to understand they have to have pride.”⁴ The rabbi told his congregants, “Not being observant and feeling a connection with his people, it’s [Koufax’s refusal to pitch] an even greater sacrifice.”⁵

Although he might be the best known of Jewish athletes, Sandy Koufax is not the only one. In fact, quite a number of them “rebelled” and found their place in the world of sports. The following list is by no means exhaustive, but rather provides a few names of Jewish people who have contributed significantly to the field of sports.

Baseball

Few people realize that Lipman Pike was “the first Jewish major leaguer” and “baseball’s first undisputed homerun king”⁶ or that Ron Bloomberg was the first designated hitter. Yet many are familiar with the names of infielder Al Rosen; outfielders Hank Greenberg, Shawn Green, and Gabe Kapler; and pitchers Steve Stone and Ken Holtzman.
Jewish Americans have long been enamored with the game of baseball.

**Basketball**

Eddie Gottlieb may not be the name on everyone’s tongue; but the fact is, Gottlieb was a founder of the National Basketball Association (NBA), a successful coach and basketball “mogul,” and a member of the Basketball Hall of Fame.

One of the most successful basketball coaches, winning nine NBA titles and called the “4th winningest coach” in NBA history, is Arnold (Red) Auerbach—also the Boston Celtics’ successful general manager and president. William (Red) Holzman was the Hall of Famer who led the New York Knicks to their only two NBA championships and 613 victories.7 Wrote Robert Slater: “He compiled a better record than any other active coach in pro basketball.”8 Larry Brown, a former American Basketball Association player, is known for his superb coaching in both college and professional basketball.

Ernie Grunfield, a former NBA player, served as general manager of the New York Knicks and currently serves in the same position for the Milwaukee Bucks. Adolph and his son Dan Shayes both played in the NBA. Abraham “Abe” Saperstein founded the world famous Harlem Globetrotters. And the current NBA commissioner is David Stern.

**Olympics**

Many people know the name Mark Spitz, considered by some to be the greatest Jewish athlete of all time. In the 1972 Olympics, Spitz swam his way to a record seven gold medals.

And who can forget 18-year-old Kerri Strug, who in 1996 bravely vaulted the U.S. Women’s Gymnastics Team to its first gold medal in history despite a broken ankle? The late Charlotte “Eppy” Epstein is considered “the mother of American women’s swimming.”9 She led the first women’s team in the Olympics in 1920. Harold Abrahams became better known as people viewed the Academy Award-winning movie Chariots of Fire. Abrahams won the Olympic gold for England in the 100-meter dash in 1924. Yael Arad became the first Israeli to win an Olympic medal, winning the silver medal in judo in the Barcelona Olympics in 1992. Jewish athlete Margarethe Nergman never made it to the Olympics because the Nazis forced her off the German team in 1936. She excelled in fencing and the high jump.

**Football**

There have been but a few Jewish American football players. Ron Mix, a Hall of Famer, played the obscure position of offensive lineman, while Randy Grossman was a less successful tight end. Current quarterback for the Miami Dolphins, Jay Fielder, is trying to follow in the footsteps of Sid Luckman, who led the Chicago Bears to four titles and was named the NFL’s most valuable player three times. Marv Levy coached the Buffalo Bills to four Super Bowls. Owners of NFL teams include the late Leon Hess of the New York Jets; current owner of the Oakland Raiders, Al Davis; and the New York Mets’ Fred Wilpon.

**Others**

Several Jewish people have been successful at tennis, including Angela Buxton who won the Wimbledon doubles championship in 1956 and became the world’s fifth ranked women’s player that year. Highly ranked Brian Gottfried played in the ’70s and ’80s, and Brad Gilbert plays now.

It would be remiss not to mention the names of several Jewish men who left their mark as sports announcers. These include the late greats Howard Cosell, Mel Allen, and Marty Glickman. When Glickman was eighteen, the Nazis barred him from competing in the 1936 Berlin Olympics as a sprinter because he was Jewish.

The Jewish love for athletics, coupled with the success of various Jewish athletes, resulted in the founding of the Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in 1979 in Netanya, Israel, not far from Tel Aviv.10 Those honored are distinguished athletes who are recognized for their extraordinary abilities.

Unfortunately, the world loves stereotypes. It projects an image of Jewish people as financiers, doctors, and lawyers. Certainly many Jewish people hold positions that require much education, partly because education is one thing persecution cannot take away from you. But they have left their mark in other areas as well, and their accomplishments in sports have blessed millions around the world.

**ENDNOTES**

3 Ibid., xiv.
4 Ibid., 183.
5 Ibid.
9 Ibid., 70.
10 Ibid., 335.

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The Sweetest Name, from page 20

who hath made both [Jew and Gentile] one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us” (Eph. 2:14).

The third letter is vav. The former Pharisee Paul said under inspiration, “Christ, our passover, is sacrificed [violently slain] for us” (1 Cor. 5:7). Redemption from sin has come to us through the anguish of His suffering, death, and majestic resurrection.

The fourth and final letter in the name Yeshua is ayin. During His final celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, Jesus “stood and cried out, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water” (Jn. 7:37–38). Indeed, He is the true source of living water. And anyone who comes to Him will be eternally satisfied.

To other great names the world may stand and applaud. But it will kneel and bow in worship to the name that is above all other names—the incomparable name of Jesus.

In a grave in Gainesville, Georgia, rests the body of Rev. Luther B. Bridgers. Like James, whose bones were once in an ossuary in Jerusalem, Rev. Bridgers is with the Lord. In 1910 he gave the world a beautiful hymn titled “He Keeps Me Singing.” And Rev. Bridgers probably still sings the song today—a tribute to the wonderful name of Jesus. Here is the familiar chorus:

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus,
Sweetest name I know,
Fills my every longing,
Keeps me singing as I go.

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Micah’s grief over the deterioration of Judean society is poignantly expressed in this final chapter. The prophet lamented Judah’s sinful condition, knowing that the nation could not go unpunished. In the midst of sorrow, Micah believed God would raise Israel from destruction.

His final message condemns the wicked and comforts the righteous. He assured the people that the Day of Judgment will come, but a brighter day will come as well—a day when God will fully deliver a repentant Israel and fulfill both the physical and spiritual deliverance promised in the Abrahamic Covenant.

Micah’s Confession

Micah used a metaphor to lament the moral breakdown in Judean society. Like a farmer searching in vain for “summer fruits” and “grape gleanings of the vintage” (v. 1), Micah sought in vain for a godly man within Judah. As one who “desired the first-ripe fruit” of the harvest, his soul craved to find an honest man of integrity (v. 1). But again, there was none.

In the midst of his sorrow, Micah lamented,

*The good man [godly] is perished [has been swept away] out of the earth, and there is none upright among men; they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net (v. 2).*

Instead of treating one another with respect and civility, men lay in wait to assault or murder their neighbors, as those who would snare a bird or wild beast.

In verse 3, Micah lamented the breakdown of Judah’s leadership:

*They . . . do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh [demands gifts], and the judge asketh for a reward [a bribe]; and the great [powerful] man, he uttereth [dictates] his mischievous desire; so they weave it together.*

These leaders used their positions and power to acquire whatever they desired. Rulers worked within the judicial system to acquire wealth from their countrymen through strong-arm tactics or by skillfully circumventing justice for financial gain—something the law forbade (Ex. 23:8; cf. Dt. 10:17). The “best” of these leaders were “like a brier”; and the “most upright,” pricklier “than a thorn hedge” (v. 4). People who came in contact with them were torn and wounded.

The “watchmen” (prophets) foretold of the time of judgment: “Thy judgment cometh; now shall be their perplexity.” The word now emphasizes that God’s judgment is soon to come; and when it does, Judah’s evil leaders will be thrown into “perplexity” (v. 4). Their confidence will be destroyed and they will become confused and confounded. This judgment fell on Jerusalem during the Babylonian invasion of 586 B.C. It also prophetically foreshadows Jerusalem’s fall in the future Great Tribulation (Zech. 14:1–4).

Micah further lamented the breakdown in both human relationships and family. The common man in the street lacked honesty and integrity in his dealings. The land was satiated with deception, dishonesty, disloyalty, and distortion. No one could be trusted—not a friend, guide, or relative (vv. 5–6). Treachery was so widespread that people had to guard their words, even to their spouses, or their spouses might turn against them.

Micah’s Confidence

In light of this societal deterioration, Micah prayerfully interceded on behalf of his nation. In his prayer, he expressed confidence and hope that the Lord would deliver a righteous Jewish remnant from the midst of injustice and oppression: “I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me” (v. 7).

The prophet focused intently on the Lord as though fixated on a
watchtower, looking expectantly for God to hear his prayer and eventually bring deliverance and spiritual salvation. He anticipated a future day when God will deliver all Israel from her sin, sorrow, and subjugation. This complete fulfillment will take place after the Great Tribulation, at the Messiah’s Second Coming.

Micah went on to warn Judah’s enemies not to “rejoice,” or gloat, over her judgment and fall (v. 8). Rejoicing was premature. Identifying with Judah, Micah said,

When I fall [face subjugation and captivity], I shall arise; when I sit in darkness [spiritual darkness and affliction], the LORD shall be a light [spiritual light to sustain and deliver a godly remnant in Israel] (v. 8).

Identifying with the sin of his people, Micah confessed, “I will bear the indignation of the LORD, against the Jewish people throughout history. Then Judah will witness God’s righteousness in repaying the nations for their anti-Semitic acts when He rights the wrongs she has suffered throughout the centuries.

Judah’s “enemy” had asked, “Where is the LORD, thy God?” (v. 10). These nations blasphemed God, implying that Jehovah had abandoned Judah because He was unable to deliver her. The nations who taunted Judah and her God, holding both in derision, will be put to shame and “trampled down like the mire [mud] of the streets” (v. 10). Israel’s enemies will be totally destroyed by the Messiah at His Second Coming (Ps. 2:1–3; Rev. 19:11—20:3).

The prophet announced that Judah and Jerusalem would be restored: “In the day that thy [Jerusalem’s] walls are to be built, in that day shall the decree be far removed” (v. 11). The word decree is better translated by the Hebrew phrase on that day will your boundaries be extended. This prophecy was partially fulfilled after the Babylonian Captivity, when Jerusalem’s walls were rebuilt. Its ultimate fulfillment will be during the Millennial Kingdom, when Jerusalem will be rebuilt, be expanded, and become the capital of the world.

Micah’s Call

Micah called on Jehovah to care once again for His people like a shepherd: “Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage . . . as in the days of old” (v. 14). The “flock of thine heritage” refers to Israel’s covenant relationship with God as His special possession. Israel will be restored and ruled by the Messiah, who will be her Shepherd during the Millennium.

Then Judah will no longer be scattered throughout the nations but will dwell in her own land, as verse 14 expresses by citing the areas of Carmel, Bashan, and Gilead. In that day, Israel will be separated from the nations, live in safety, and enjoy the land promised her in the Abrahamic Covenant. Verse 15 reveals that the Lord will perform many miracles in reestablishing Israel in her land, as He did when He delivered the nation from Egyptian captivity.

As a result of these future miracles, the Gentile nations will be
“confounded at all their [Israel’s] might” (v. 16). The nations will become awestruck, ashamed, and alarmed at Israel’s strength when God delivers her. They also will become powerless, humiliated, degraded, and disgraced. So they will “lay their hand upon their mouth; their ears shall be deaf” (v. 16). Thus Israel’s enemies will become speechless, no longer mocking Israel and her God or closing their ears so they would not hear of the nation’s victory.

In pictorial words, Micah said, “They shall lick the dust like a serpent; they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth; they shall be afraid of the LORD, our God, and shall fear the closing verses, the prophet celebrated the greatness of Jehovah. He praised the Lord by using a play on words relating to his own name: “Who is a God like unto thee . . . ?” (v. 18). Micah’s name means “Who is like the LORD?” Moses uttered the same words after God delivered Israel through the Red Sea (Ex. 15:11). Obviously, there is no other God but Jehovah; and nothing mankind worships compares to the Lord in the way He pardons sin and brings forgiveness and deliverance to Israel.

In the closing verses of his book, Micah’s heart expressed deep gratitude to God as he gloried in the Lord’s future deliverance of Israel. The prophet mentioned eight truths about God’s love toward His Chosen People Israel:

- The Lord “pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression [rebellious acts] of the remnant of his heritage” (v. 18). The reference is to a remnant of Jewish people who will be protected through the Great Tribulation and saved to enter the Millennial Kingdom (Zech. 12:10; 13:9; Rom. 11:26).
- The Lord “retaineth not his anger forever” (v. 18). He is ready to show grace to the repentant.
- The Lord “delighteth in mercy [lovingkindness]” (v. 18). He is ready to show compassion and forgiveness.
- The Lord “will turn again” (v. 19). He is always ready to dispense His mercy and compassion on Israel.
- The Lord “will have compassion upon us” (v. 19). He has tender, heartfelt concern for Israel.
- The Lord “will subdue [tread underfoot] our iniquities” (v. 19), rendering sin powerless and inoperative, as one would an enemy.
- The Lord will “cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” (v. 19), indicating a final end to an individual’s sin, whereupon God forgives and forgets it. Interestingly, Jewish people quote verses 18–19 on Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) when they recite this prayer of repentance in a service called Tashlick.
- The Lord will “perform the truth [be faithful] to Jacob, and the mercy [lovingkindness] to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old” (v. 20). Micah closed with these words that confirm the Lord will keep His promises to Israel, which He made to her forefathers in the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant.

Because of thee” (v. 17). In terror the nations will acknowledge and revere the Lord and prostrate themselves fearfully before Him in repentance because of His bond with Israel.

Micah’s Celebration

Micah was overcome with the Lord’s goodness and mercy. In the closing verses, the prophet celebrated the greatness of Jehovah. He praised the Lord by using a play on words relating to his own name: “Who is a God like unto thee . . . ?” (v. 18). Micah’s name means “Who is like the LORD?” Moses uttered the same words after God delivered Israel through the Red Sea (Ex. 15:11). Obviously, there is no other God but Jehovah; and nothing mankind worships compares to the Lord in the way He pardons sin and brings forgiveness and deliverance to Israel.

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These promises to Abraham are immutable because they were confirmed by God’s sworn oath (Heb. 6:13–18). And they stand in perpetuity to the Jewish people as a source of comfort and hope to Israel today. After reading what God has done for Israel, we, too, can say, “Who is a God like the LORD!”

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GOD IS SOVEREIGN (continued)

Webster’s New International Dictionary defines the adjective sovereign as follows: “Supreme or highest in power; superior in position to all others,” and “Independent of, and unlimited by, any other; possessing, or entitled to, original and independent authority or jurisdiction.”

Thus the God of the Bible is sovereign. Additional biblical revelation supports and reinforces that conclusion.

Assertions of Sovereignty

Assertions by God. Jehovah asserts that He is sovereign. In Isaiah 14:24, 26–27 He declares, “The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:... This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth, and this is the hand that is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?”

In Isaiah 43:12–13 He states, “Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God. Yea, before the day was, I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand; I will work, and who shall hinder it?”

In Isaiah 46:9–11 He asserts, “I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.”

God also declares, “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isa. 55:11).

Assumptions by Others. The Bible records angelic and human assertions of God’s sovereignty.

Job said the following concerning God: “He breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening” (Job 12:14). Also, “He is of one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth” (Job 23:13).

King Jehoshaphat of Judah exclaimed, “O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? And rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the nations? And in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee? (2 Chr. 20:6).

An angel stated, “The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of
right number of stellar bodies, and to call all those bodies by name (vv. 12–14, 22, 26). In light of this, He insinuated that no one can be compared to or equal with Him, “the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator” (v. 28; cf. Isa. 42:5; 45:12, 18; Jer. 10:12).

God declares, “I am a great King” (Mal. 1:14) and indicates the sphere of His rule when He says, “The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool” (Isa. 66:1). Edward J. Young explained that the latter statement asserts, “God is King of all and rules over all, and that all creation (heaven and earth; cf. Gen. 1:1) is subject to Him.” God signifies that He has that rule because He created the entire universe (Isa. 66:2).

David wrote, “The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all” (Ps. 103:19). King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon honored God as “the King of heaven” (Dan. 4:37), and Psalm 47:2 declares, “The LORD Most High . . . is a great King over all the earth” (cf. v. 7).

According to the twenty-four elders in heaven, God “created all things [the entire universe]” (Rev. 4:11; cf. Neh. 9:6; Col. 1:16; Rev. 10:6). The Greek text in verse 11 indicates that God created the entire universe because of His sovereign will.2

The apostle Paul recognized that, as its Creator, God is sovereign over the universe: “God, who made the world and all things in it . . . is Lord of heaven and earth” (Acts 17:24). The word translated “world” refers to the universe.3 Thus Homer A. Kent, Jr. wrote, “Paul explained that God is the creator, the sovereign of heaven and earth.”4

Psalm 93:1 proclaims, “The LORD reigneth,” asserting God’s sovereign rule. Then it states, “Thy throne is established of old; thou art from everlasting” (v. 2). It thereby draws a contrast between God’s existence and the beginning of His sovereign rule. God has always existed; He is eternal. But His “throne” (sovereign rule) was not established until creation.5 Thus, in eternity past, God, on the basis of His own sovereign will, determined to have a kingdom over which He could rule as sovereign King. He created the entire universe and everything in it to be His universal Kingdom.

The fact that God owns the universe signifies that He is sovereign over it.

In line with its Genesis 1 account of creation, the Bible repeatedly asserts that Jehovah is the source of the entire universe’s existence. For example, Moses stated, “For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is” (Ex. 20:11; cf. Rev. 10:6).

In His dialogue with Job, Jehovah emphasized His unique wisdom and power, through which He created the heavens; stellar bodies; and Earth, with its features, life forms, and the ordinances by which they operate (Job 38—41).

In Isaiah 40, Jehovah stresses that He alone has the knowledge and power to create the earth with precise measurements, the great expanse of the heavens with the

Spheres of God’s Sovereignty

The Bible reveals various spheres over which God has sovereign rule.

The Universe. God’s significant relationships with the universe indicate He is sovereign over it.

The fact that God created the universe signifies He is its sovereign.

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In Isaiah 40, Jehovah stresses that He alone has the knowledge and power to create the earth with precise measurements, the great expanse of the heavens with the

men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” (Dan. 4:17).

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon declared,

I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him who liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? (Dan. 4:34–35).
The fact that God sustains the universe indicates that He is sovereign over it.

In Colossians 1 the apostle Paul asserted that the Son is the Person of the triune Godhead who not only created the universe (“all things,” v. 16), but also sustains it (“by him all things consist,” v. 17). F. F. Bruce pointed out that the Greek word translated “consist” indicates that Christ “is the sustainer of the universe and the unifying principle of its life.”

To sustain the universe, Christ must have supremacy over all of creation. Paul’s designation of Christ as “the first-born of all creation” (Col. 1:15) indicates that He has that supremacy.

The writer of Hebrews, after stating that God created “the worlds” by His Son (v. 2), declared that the Son is “upholding all things by the word of his power” (v. 3), indicating that Christ continuously sustains the entire universe.

The fact that God will judge the universe indicates that He is sovereign over it.

David wrote that the Lord “hath prepared his throne for judgment. And he shall judge the world in righteousness” (Ps. 9:7–8). God declares, “I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land” (Hag. 2:6, 21). God will cause disturbances in the heavens and devastations on the earth during the seven-year Tribulation and Christ’s Second Coming (Rev. 6—19; Mt. 24:29), and He will destroy the present heavens and earth after the Millennium (2 Pet. 3:10–12; Rev. 20:11; 21:1).

ENDNOTES

T hey call them “chop squares,” execution sites usually outside mosques where the condemned meet their deaths at the hands of a sword-wielding executioner. For people found guilty of any of the following—murder, rape, armed robbery, drug smuggling, apostasy (turning your back on Islam) or witchcraft—the price is beheading.

These grisly executions are not conducted in primitive backwater societies but in the modern cities of one of America’s and the Western world’s foremost allies, Saudi Arabia.

In the Saudi kingdom, where the strictest form of Islam, Wahhabism, is the law of the land, turning from Islam to another faith can cost you your head.

And Christians are routinely imprisoned, tortured, and expelled.

International Christian Concern reported that three Ethiopian Christians held in the Breman Deportation center related being tortured by prison officials. The men were suspended in the air and flogged eighty times with a metal cable. Upon arriving at the prison hospital for treatment, they were slapped and told to come back when they were dead.¹

Thirteen Filipino Christians were detained for twenty-four days after Saudi religious authorities raided two houses in Riyadh where 267 Christians had gathered to pray. Forty were arrested.

A Christian hospital worker was arrested and interrogated for three and one-half hours about group meetings in his home. Authorities confiscated his computer, photo albums, Bibles, songbooks, and all of his audiocassettes and videotapes.

Evangelical Christians who have served in the armed forces or been employed by companies operating in Saudi Arabia have been made painfully aware that our oil-rich “ally” severely represses Christians and Christianity.

In an annual report issued by the U.S. Commission on Religious Freedom, a commission formed by Congress in 1998, Saudi Arabia has been named the world’s top violator of religious rights. Commission Chairman Felice Gaer stated after the release of the report, “It’s time to apply the same standards to Saudi Arabia that are applied elsewhere.” The Washington Times has reported that the commissioners
called on the Saudis to “let non-Muslims at least practice their religion in private and criticized the kingdom for ‘harassment, detention, arrest, torture,’ and deportation of foreign Christians employed in the country.”

The newspaper also said the commission called on the ruling royal family to end the “offensive and discriminatory language” disparaging Jews, Christians, and non-Wahhabi Muslims found in government-sponsored school textbooks, in Friday sermons preached in prominent mosques, and in state-controlled Saudi newspapers.

A recent poll of 350 evangelical Christian leaders found that 73 percent believe that stopping religious persecution should be a “top priority” of American foreign policy. But in countries like Saudi Arabia, freedom of religion does not exist; and persecution continues unabated.

One question the commission asked was why American officials acquiesce to such Saudi demands as the one that resulted in a recent U.S. Postal Service prohibition on mailing materials “contrary to the Islamic faith” to U.S. troops in the Middle East. Despite this and other egregious violations of human rights, Saudi Arabia has never been deemed a “country of particular concern (CPC),” the diplomatic term for the most severe human rights violators.

“We don’t understand how one could not name Saudi Arabia as a CPC,” a member of the commission said. The country has been “explicitly left out of any (State Department) citations.”

### A One-Way Street

The most frequently given answer as to why America has failed to crack down on Saudi behavior is that it might jeopardize the economic relationship between the two countries. Although that issue and American military interests in the region are clearly factors, it is also true that to endorse suppressing the private exercise of the religious freedom of American citizens is a serious violation of our most basic values.

In fact, for years the Saudis have operated on an uneven playing field in the religious realm as our politicians and most of our religious leaders look the other way.

There are no churches or synagogues in Saudi Arabia. As has been described, even worshiping quietly in private homes and possessing personal religious items can lead to imprisonment, torture, or deportation. Wearing such items as a small cross or Star of David or carrying a New Testament in your shirt pocket is considered a provocation. By no definition is Saudi Arabia a country of religious pluralism, and in no way does it tolerate a personal faith that is not Islamic.

However, Saudi ideas about propagating faith do not stop the Saudis from propagating their own faith outside the desert kingdom. It is well known that while enjoying the protection and sufferance of the West, Saudis have lavishly contributed to leading terrorist organizations bent on slaughtering Israelis and Westerners, including Americans and Europeans.

They have bankrolled the construction of hundreds of mosques and Muslim academic institutions in countries whose citizens are not allowed to worship publicly or build churches in Saudi Arabia. Most Saudi-sponsored educational institutions are based on Wahhabism teachings, which are extremely hostile to democratic, religious freedoms. And Saudis vigorously promote proselytizing in the West where it can be done freely and under the protection of law. Thus they blatantly practice in the West what would bring them imprisonment, beatings, torture, and worse if attempted by people of other faiths in their own country.

True, we are not on a level playing field when dealing with religiously repressive regimes, such as Saudi Arabia. Yet we are urged to believe that the war on terror and Islamic militancy is unrelated to religion. We are told that downtrodden Muslims are fighting a war of liberation, searching for a sense of identity, and striking out against those they feel have wronged them. That line is not true.

We are engaged in warfare with an Islamic element that is on a crusade to bring down the West, destroy Judeo-Christian democracies, and exterminate or subjugate the infidel enemies of Allah and Islam.

This is not an expression of ignorance or intolerance; it is simply a fact. And in the case of Saudi Arabia, at least one government agency, the U.S. Commission on Religious Freedom, is getting it right.

### End Notes

3 Ibid.

Elwood McQuaid is editor-in-chief for The Friends of Israel.
A former U.S. ambassador to an obscure Third World nation recently contributed his opinion on TV as to why the spate of terror attacks in the wake of the war in Iraq. His remarks postulated his belief that America’s incredible victory over Saddam Hussein riled international terrorists to the point of turning up the heat on the United States and their coalition partners, including such Muslim collaborators as Morocco and Saudi Arabia.

In the same vein, a prominent Democrat and contender for the presidency blamed the success of the suicide bombings in the Saudi kingdom directly on President George W. Bush. The administration, he said, is in “complete disarray,” and the president is not sufficiently “engaged” in taking effective preventative measures or in “building relationships.” This despite the fact that Bush warned the Saudis five times before the bombing occurred.

Which brings to mind the curious fact that in almost every undesirable situation that develops, America somehow ends up the root of the problem. The situation is artfully contorted; and the bad guys, we are told, are only reacting to our noxious attitude of “triumphalism.”

This syndrome, long ingrained in the neoliberal mindset, now dominates the thinking of American Pop Culture devotees. We hear it in the reporting of practically every horrific crime perpetrated on some hapless victim: “There must have been a reason for someone to do something this terrible. I wonder what he (or she or they) did to provoke such a violent crime.” Thus the perpetrator becomes the victim; and the victim, the aggressor.

As terror attacks accelerate, and they will, a groundswell of such convoluted rationale will demand that American and Western powers cease provoking terrorists by trying to stop them. The popular line will be, “If we only leave these downtrodden and desperate people alone and provide them with enough perks, there will be peace and harmony.”

But there will not be peace; neither will there be harmony. This conflict is not about reason, harmony, and peace. It is an all-out crusade that is global in scope and obsessive in its desire to destroy or totally subjugate Judaism, Christianity, democracy, and the Western way of life. That’s what it is all about.

The suicide bombings in Saudi Arabia were not isolated cries for help from a deprived and desperate few. They were the assaults of jihad—Islamic holy war. And all that stand in their way, including Muslims of a less militant persuasion, are candidates for death.

Neither America nor Israel nor their allies initiated this conflict, now turning into a struggle for survival. September 11, 2001, was not a reaction against some egregious wrong that America inflicted on innocent followers of Allah. It was a Pearl Harbor-style knife in the back of an unsuspecting and unprepared nation.

Israeli men, women, and children have not been shredded to bits by suicide bombers because they have not held out their hands in peace to the Palestinians. On the contrary, no rational person can claim that Madrid, Oslo, or Camp David were not legitimate efforts to find some reasonable accommodation to Palestinian demands. Israel made peace with Egypt and returned the Sinai. Jordan and Israel held out their hands in peace and, as with Egypt, achieved safe borders. In the intervening years Israel has never posed a threat to Cairo or Amman. The issue between Israel and the Palestinians has never been Israel’s unwillingness to give. It has been the Palestinians’ unwillingness to take—that is, short of taking it all.

The failure of many public officials and news media to clarify the crux of the conflict is a clear dereliction of responsibility. Until the world understands what the war on terror is really about, it will succumb to speculation, second-guessing, and disorienting guilt trips. It is not that the information is unavailable or that radical Islamists cloak their hate-filled motives. They preach them every Friday in many of the mosques. They proclaim them in state-run newspapers and over radio and television. Anyone who cares to know what Palestinian and other Arab leaders say in Arabic when not addressing Western audiences in English can easily find out.

After one of the May suicide bombings in Jerusalem, I viewed pictures of the demolished bus with the remains of some of the Israeli victims still inside. These photographs were not on the front page of any newspaper in the Western world. Had an unfortunate Palestinian child been the victim of collateral damage, that picture no doubt would have run with a banner headline.

What’s the difference? Why the silence? We need to know.
Did you know it’s possible to give a one-time gift to The Friends of Israel—a gift annuity—that will reap spiritual fruit among God’s Chosen People?

In addition, that same gift can increase your personal income and reduce your future tax payments.

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Indeed, a gift annuity is a gift with benefits both lifelong and eternal, allowing you to maximize the impact of your financial stewardship. For specific details about how a gift annuity can work for you, complete the form and mail it in the return envelope in this magazine. There is absolutely no obligation on your part.
King Solomon spoke three thousand proverbs and fifteen hundred songs (1 Ki. 4:32). The epitome of the philosopher-king, he was unequaled in wealth and wisdom, and his fame spread throughout the world. He ruled during Israel’s golden age—when the Jewish people lived peacefully in their own land, the Lord’s presence dwelled in the Temple in Jerusalem, and the Gentiles paid homage to the son of David.

Among those who traveled far to visit the Jewish king was a Gentile woman who has fueled the imaginations of nations, historians, and filmmakers alike. Although some people refer to her as Sheba, Scripture never tells us her name. Jesus called her the “queen of the south” (Mt. 12:42).

The Arabs call her Balqis. The Ethiopians call her Makeda and claim the land of Sheba is Ethiopia. From the thirteenth century on, they contended their dynasty descended from a child Makeda had with Solomon. Emperor Haile Selassie I, who was deposed in 1974 and died in 1975,
claimed direct descent from Solomon and even incorporated that declaration into Ethiopia’s constitution in 1955.1

Even the Qur’an speaks of her. Written in the seventh century A.D.—approximately one thousand years after 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles were written—it pits the queen of “Saba” in a battle of wits against Solomon, a worshiper of Allah. Solomon demands the queen’s throne be brought to him and threatens her ambassadors with war and humiliation. She eventually appears before him and converts to Islam: “I do (now) submit (in Islam) with Solomon, to the Lord of the Worlds” (surah 27:44).

The Bible, of course, tells it much differently:

And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD [Jehovah], she came to test him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bore spices, and very much gold, and precious stones; and . . . she talked with him of all that was in her heart (1 Ki. 10:1–2; cf. 2 Chr. 9:1).

Some commentators say the queen of Sheba was no different than other dignitaries who came seeking trade and military alliances with the powerful Jewish king. But that position seems unlikely because, of all those who visited Solomon, only this woman’s story appears in God’s Word. And almost one thousand years later, it was her visit alone that Jesus referred to when He spoke to the Pharisees (Mt. 12:42). Evidently, she came seeking much more than a treaty. And the likes of the pilgrimage she made will not be seen again until the Messiah returns.

The queen of Sheba went to Jerusalem when Solomon probably was in his prime. He had ascended the throne in 971 B.C. at about age twenty and spent twenty years building the Temple and palace (1 Ki. 9:10). The Temple took seven years; the palace, thirteen (1 Ki. 6:38—7:1). It appears they were finished when the queen arrived (1 Ki. 10:4–5), yet the navy of King Hiram of Lebanon still brought “almug trees” (sandalwood) that Solomon used for both (v. 12).

The unparalleled splendor of these buildings and Solomon’s immense wealth astounded her. Yet she was relatively wealthy herself. She had traveled 1,200 miles from southern Arabia, probably Yemen,3 with a vast retinue of camels and servants of her own. And she brought an enormous quantity of expensive spices and precious stones, along with gold worth approximately $3.5 million, to give to Solomon as gifts.4 Although she was deeply impressed with Solomon’s riches, they were not her main interest.

Jesus said, “She came from the farthest parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon” (Mt. 12:42). She asked him “hard questions” (1 Ki. 10:1) and “talked [communed] with him of all that was in her heart” (v. 2). And Solomon answered her.

Solomon’s knowledge obviously was immense. First Kings said he spoke of trees, beasts, fowl, creeping things, and fish (4:33) and apparently had an understanding of subjects people today pay thousands of dollars to study in universities.

But God gave him more than clinical knowledge. He gave him the ability to apply such knowl-

edge to practical, everyday life, as seen in the book of Proverbs. Furthermore, God gave him the wisdom and understanding of heart to be a just, righteous ruler of God’s people. Scripture says repeatedly, “The wisdom of God was in him, to do justice” (1 Ki. 3:28; cf. 1 Ki. 3:9, 11).

Whatever the queen asked, Solomon answered: “There was not any thing hidden from the king, which he told her not” (1 Ki. 10:3). He spoke with her heart to heart.

In the end the queen had a profound epiphany. She recognized that Solomon’s wisdom came from Jehovah and that a leader who rules with justice and righteousness is a blessing to his nation: “Blessed be the LORD thy God,” she said, “who delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel. Because the LORD loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee king, to execute justice and righteousness” (1 Ki. 10:9).

Justice and righteousness are of incalculable value in God’s sight. In a world that calls good “evil” and evil “good,” it is easy to forget that God says, “Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” (Prov. 14:34). The queen of the south was a picture of someone who sincerely sought wisdom and valued righteousness and justice. Yet she was a picture of something else as well.

Continued next issue.

ENDNOTES


Lorna Simcox is senior editor for The Friends of Israel.
Hamas says ‘No peace no way, no how’

“I’m telling you frankly, the attitude of Islam is not to accept a foreign state in this area.” So said senior Hamas spokesman Mahmoud a-Zahar on the BBC. He later met with Palestinian Authority (PA) Primer Minister Abu Mazen to discuss conditions for a “ceasefire.”

Arutz-7 reported that leaders of the Hamas terrorist organization said they would agree to a “year-long cease-fire” with Israel only if Israel released all imprisoned Arab terrorists and agreed to stop all counter-terrorism activities. The conditions essentially meant Hamas was rejecting the call to halt its terrorist attacks on Israel.

A-Zahar appeared recently on Tim Sebastian’s BBC show Hardtalk. Following is a partial, unofficial transcript made available by Arutz-7, in which a-Zahar admitted Hamas will never give up violence, regardless of how much Israel gives up in an effort to make peace.

Q: Dr. Zahar, I asked you a very simple question: If Israel accepts your conditions—the elimination of the occupation—will you renounce violence, yes or no?
Z: We are going to ceasefire—only ceasefire.
Q: Yes or no to that condition? Yes, or no?
Z: I, I, I, I answered you. It’s not the way to say yes or no. We are not going to—

Q: So how can Israel trust your assurances ever? You can’t even give a straight answer to a straight question. How can they trust your answers?
Z: The question is—just a moment. If Israel withdraws from our land, and says that they will not re-attack and reoccupy our country—that’s a big if—they are not going to do that, because they did that before: They occupied our country in ’48, occupied our areas in ’56, and in ’67, and Lebanon in ’82. [IMG Editor’s Note: The area a-Zahar referred to as “our country” was governed by the British not the Arabs prior to 1948 and had been designated as a national Jewish homeland by the League of Nations. The dates he gave refer to Arab-initiated wars to destroy Israel.]

Q: Why do you keep on with this attitude? You are seen by many people in the world as a bunch of ruthless killers, fanatics, terrorists. Are you happy with that picture?
Z: We’re not happy—[but] these people are seeing Islam as an enemy, as a terrorist, but this is a historical mistake. Because Islam is a supreme power in this area, sooner or later we are going to achieve our power, our moral principles, our virtue, in order to implement a real state.

Arutz-7’s Yosef Zalmanson noted that even the “ceasefire” a-Zahar referred to is merely a temporary cessation of hostilities until it feels strong enough to resume the fight.

Where is Jerusalem?

It seems that Israel has become the only nation in the world without a capital and that the U.S. State Department refuses even to acknowledge that Jerusalem is in Israel.

The State Department still refuses to allow “place of death” on Ben Blutstein’s death certificate to read “Jerusalem, Israel.” Blutstein, from Pennsylvania, was killed last July when Arab terrorists bombed the cafeteria at Hebrew University.

Furthermore, the American passports of his children state they were born in Jerusalem, but no mention is made of Israel.

David Bedein, a Jerusalem-based investigative journalist with the Israel Resource News Agency, has asked why the State Department refuses to recognize that Jerusalem is in Israel.

Bedein noted that the U.S. Consul in Jerusalem, Jeffrey Feldman, asked Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lopolianski to end construction of the Jewish neighborhood.
of Maaleh Zeitim, next to the Mt. of Olives. The mayor politely rejected the American request, explaining that Jerusalem is in sovereign Israeli territory. The U.S. Consul rejected that position.

Arutz-7 reported that American sources told Bedein a recent State Department directive favoring cessation of all Jewish construction in Yesha (Judea, Samaria, and Gaza) actually includes Jerusalem as well.

“The issue is clear,” Bedein wrote. “The U.S. challenges Israel’s sovereignty in Jerusalem in a direct, unprecedented way. . . . Israel’s supporters should demand that the U.S. recognize Jerusalem as part of Israel.”

Arutz-7 also has learned that the BBC Web site’s Country Profiles section does not state a capital for Israel at all. Other countries’ capital cities are classified, logically, as “capital.” But when it comes to Israel, the BBC uses “seat of government” instead.

Almost half of Israel’s children now suffer panic, nightmares

Arutz-7—According to new research carried out by the Adler Center at Tel Aviv University and the Judea and Samaria College in Ariel, 42.7 percent of Israeli children said they are suffering from symptoms of shock as a result of the Palestine Liberation Organization’s (PLO) terrorist war.

The research was based on interviews and data gathered from 3,000 children following a series of terrorist attacks last year. The symptoms include flashbacks of events, nightmares, panic, “troubling thoughts,” feelings of detachment, inability to concentrate, and a general feeling of uneasiness. One of every five children surveyed were found to have had a relative who was a victim of terrorism.

Research yields drug for Parkinson’s, test for Alzheimer’s

Rasagiline, an oral, once-a-day drug shown to be significantly effective in patients with advanced Parkinson’s disease, will soon be presented to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for approval. And a new testing system called Mindstreams may be able to detect the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease.

Rasagiline was developed at Technion’s Rappoport School of Medicine in Haifa by Profs. Moussa Youdim and J. Finberg. It has been studied for more than 25 years and probably will be tested on both Parkinson’s and multiple sclerosis patients, The International Jerusalem Post reported.

Arutz-7 reported that it may now be easier to differentiate between the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease and simple forgetfulness, thanks to a computerized battery of tests developed by the Israeli branch of an American company.

Until now, it has been hard to tell if patients are simply forgetful or have mild cognitive impairment (MCI), a precursor of dementias, such as Alzheimer’s.

The new testing system, called Mindstreams, was developed in Modiin and is considered highly reliable. It takes 20–30 minutes, compiles an instant report, and is user-friendly even for those with little or no computer experience, Arutz-7 said.

Its tests are interactive computerized exercises using standard computer input devices, such as the keyboard, mouse, or joystick, and test specific sets of cognitive and motor functions. They can also be used to diagnose traumatic brain injury, Parkinson’s disease, multiple sclerosis, substance abuse, learning disabilities, and more. The developers emphasize that the results must be interpreted in the context of other data relevant to the patient’s condition, Arutz-7 said.

If Rasagiline is put on the market for Parkinson’s sufferers, it will become the second proprietary drug ever made and marketed by Teva, the world’s largest maker of generic drugs. It also makes Copaxone, a primary drug for reducing the frequency and severity of multiple sclerosis attacks, said the Post.
The ninth day of the month of Av is drawing near (August 7). So the people of Israel come to the Western (Wailing) Wall, weeping night and day and reading the book of Lamentations, asking God why He has forsaken them.

They ask, “Why dost thou forget us forever, and forsake us for so long a time? Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old” (Lam. 5:20–21).

The ninth of Av is a serious fast day on the Jewish calendar. It is a day of mourning because so many tragedies in Jewish history occurred on that day. But the biggest tragedies associated with the ninth of Av are the destructions of the two Temples in Jerusalem. Both were burned on that date, 656 years apart.

All that is left today of the Second Temple is a retaining wall known as the Western Wall. Once a year, people flock here to mourn the destructions and lament the trouble that has come on the Jewish people over the centuries. Then they leave, and all is forgotten.

I often walk among them near the Wall and hear with what deep feeling they pray. After a few people finished praying recently, I asked them, “Why are you so sure the Lord has forsaken you?”

One of them asked me, “Who are you that you ask us such a question? And why did you ask us?”

“I asked,” I said, “because I know the Lord never forsakes us. We are the ones who forsake Him and abandon His commandments. It is clearly written in Isaiah 1:2, ‘I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.’ The Lord never forsakes us if we come to him with a sincere heart. There is mighty power in prayer.”

They looked at me carefully, examining how I dress because I do not wear the clothing of the Orthodox. “Look who speaks to us about faith! Why do you even come here? Are you so faithful?” someone asked with a sneer.

“I do not come as you do, wearing special clothes and praying in a way to make people look at me so that they will think I am so faithful.” I told them it is my obligation before the Lord to go to people and tell them the truth. God tells me to do so in the Bible. Then they became more interested and began to gather around me. They wanted to know to which sect I belong.

“I do not belong to any sect,” I said. “And I do not use all the many books you have here. You have so many books but not one Bible. Those many books were written by many different people. But all those books together do not have the value of one page of the Bible because the Bible was written by the Holy Spirit of God. It is written in Proverbs 19:21, ‘There are many devices in a man’s heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.’ Man proposes, but God disposes.”

They listened with great attentiveness. Then someone asked, “How do you know all this? Why shall we believe what you say?”

This time I read to them from Psalm 118:8: “It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.” I tried to show them that I am not like them, spending my life reading commentaries and books by Zvi in Israel
written by men. “I believe in the Lord,” I said, “only according to what is written here in the Bible. This is the most important book written. How shall you follow the commands of the Lord if you do not know the full truth written here?”

I began to show them more verses, and they were interested in reading them. I told them, “Mashiach Tzidkenu [“Messiah our Righteousness”], He is Yeshua [“Salvation”]. Yeshua is also the Hebrew name for Jesus. Only in the Hebrew language does this phrase work in this manner and is considered “kosher.” In such language I spoke to them and read more and more of the Bible to them. Then I read to them from Isaiah 53.

Then they understood quickly about whom I spoke. “You believe in this Man,” they said, meaning Jesus. But they could not be against me because I showed everything to them from the Bible. Yet it bothered them that all I had was one little book.

“From which books do you pray?” one asked.

“My prayer book is my heart. I come before the Lord and open my heart before Him. And I use no books. I read from the Bible.”

They asked me many questions and wanted to know who my rabbi is. I told them again that all I do is read the Bible and believe what is written there. “And the Lord encourages me. And so I never feel that He has forsaken me. That is why I can come with such confidence to people like you to teach you the truth.”

Some of them began to write down what I said. “We will ask our great rabbis. They will have an answer for us,” they told me. Then one asked me to come by again so that we could continue our conversation.

“I am always at your disposal,” I said.

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