

ISRAEL MY GLORY

PAGE 14
SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED

PAGE 20
IN JESUS' WORDS

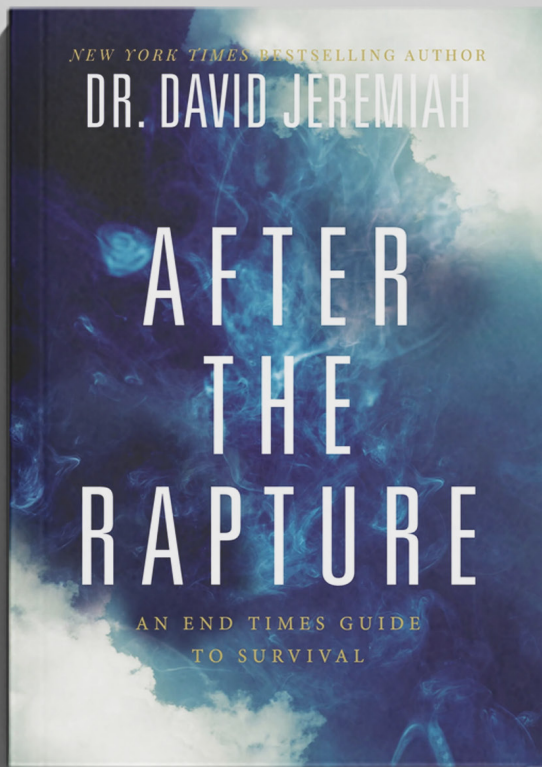
PAGE 26
**4 COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS
ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY**

Sealed!



**EXPLORING THE
HOPE AND SECURITY
OF OUR SALVATION**

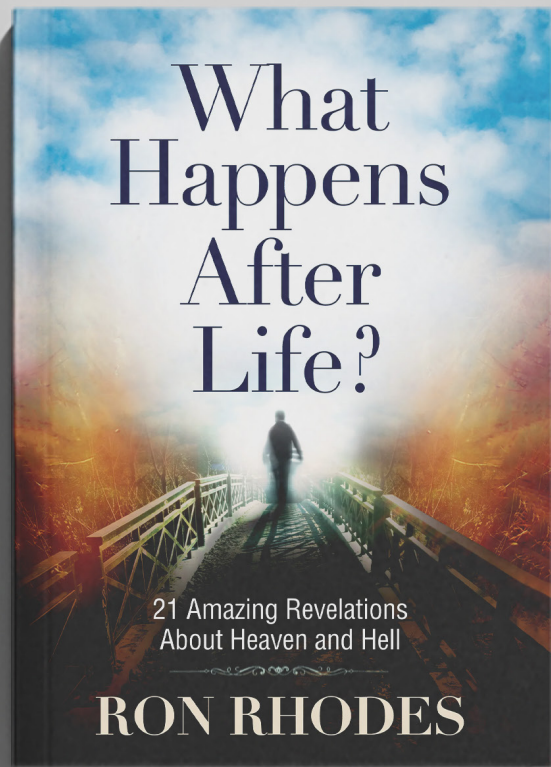
LEARN MORE ABOUT GOD'S PLAN FOR THE FUTURE



AFTER THE RAPTURE

Have you ever imagined what life on Earth will be like after the Rapture? Get a glimpse of what's in store for the world after Jesus gathers believers to Himself in this welcoming look at the end-times. Bible scholar Dr. David Jeremiah presents clear teaching to help you share the truth with the unsaved people in your life about Judgment Day, the Tribulation, the mark of the Beast, and finding an escape from the coming wrath.

\$14 US \$17 Outside US



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER LIFE?

We know there is life after death, but what will it be like? And how can we prepare for what comes next? Discover what Scripture teaches about what awaits believers after death. Find the truth about the new heavens and new earth, reuniting with Christian loved ones, how we'll spend time in heaven, and more as you search for the peace and clarity that can only be found in God's Word.

\$14 US \$17 Outside US

SEE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE FOR ORDERING DETAILS.



CONTENTS

12

Dying to Live

A brush with death in virtual reality makes people wonder if there is life after death. Scripture provides the answer.

Steve Herzig

14

Signed, Sealed, Delivered

One of the Holy Spirit's many ministries in your life keeps you under the shelter of the Almighty's wings forever.

Elwood McQuaid

18

The Difference Between 'Do' and 'Done'

Here is a look at the insecurity other beliefs offer compared to biblical Christianity.

Les Crawford

20

In Jesus' Words

Is belief in eternal security a fallacy? Not if you listen to what Jesus had to say.

Paul Pierce

26

4 Common Misconceptions About Eternal Security

Struggling with eternal security? Here is why you can't lose your salvation.

Dan Price



Page 20

MORE IN THIS ISSUE

- 4 From the Editor
- 5 Inside View
- 6 Editorial: Walking the Fine Line
- 7 Eye on the Middle East: Is Israel's Gaza Policy Working?
- 8 The Friends of Israel in Action
- 10 ALERT: The Early Warning System
- 23 The Berean Box
- 24 Unconfused!
- 30 Israel's 'Pearl Harbor'
- 35 Unearthing Truth With Randall Price: Judging the Book of Judges
- 36 Rightly Dividing: The Mind of Christ
- 38 Faith for Living: The Help of His Countenance
- 40 Jewish World Update
- 42 Apples of Gold



Israel My Glory (ISSN 8755-402X) is published bimonthly for \$22.95 per year by The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc., 1179 Almonesson Road, Westville, New Jersey 08093. Periodicals postage paid at Westville, NJ, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Israel My Glory, PO Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08099-0908.

Note: No materials contained in this magazine may be reproduced in any form without the permission of The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc. For all permissions, please write to The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc., PO Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08099. Or email permissions@foi.org. All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright ©1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The "NIV" and "New International Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™



FROM THE EDITOR

Hymns have a unique staying power. If you grew up singing hymns in your church, I'm sure you can attest to this fact. The sweet words of these songs lodge deep within our hearts and leave us with theological gems that we remember unexpectedly.

"It Is Well With My Soul," the inspiring hymn Horatio Spafford penned upon losing his four daughters in a shipwreck, has left cherished truths in my mind. Spafford wrote,

*My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!—
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!*

This timeless hymn teaches a sacred truth that brings a smile to my face: When we place our faith in Jesus the Messiah, our salvation from sin is secure now and forever! The Savior who bought our redemption assures us He will never take it away. What a blessing it is to know that through the Holy Spirit we are "sealed for the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).

Let's celebrate the certainty of our salvation in this issue of *Israel My Glory*. We cover Scripture's teaching on eternal security, the joy of our faith in the Holy Spirit's sealing of our souls, and the answers to your pressing questions about this doctrine. This issue also features a gripping, retrospective analysis of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, as we observe this October the 50th anniversary of Israel's hard-fought battle for survival.

The eternal security of our salvation especially comforts us in our fragile, changing world. In this life, almost nothing stays the same. Clothes wear out, buildings crumble, relationships fade, peace breaks, and the "good old days" wither away. One day, even "heaven and earth will pass away," Jesus said, "but My words will by no means pass away" (Mt. 24:35).

Take comfort, my friends, in the One "with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning" (Jas. 1:17). He has promised us salvation from sin and everlasting life when we turn to Him. I can think of nothing greater than to spend eternity with Him and, in the meantime, to live with confidence in this promise. I hope you feel the same as you read this issue!

*In His service,
Jesse King
Managing Editor*



MISSION STATEMENT

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

ADMINISTRATION

Executive Director and President: Jim Showers

Executive Vice President/Vice President of Media Ministries:

Steve H. Conover

Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer: John Wilcox

Vice President for Ministry Advancement: Tom Geoghan

Vice President of North American Ministries: Steve Herzig

Vice President of International Ministries: Mike Stallard

ISRAEL MY GLORY

Publications Director: Lisa Small

Managing Editor: Jesse King

Consulting Editor: Lorna Simcox

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

Magazine layout and design: JD Lemming

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chair: David R. Benner

Vice Chair: Jim Vogel

Secretary: William King

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

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

OFFICES

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

CANADA: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry—Canada, PO Box 84570
RPO Bloor West, Toronto, Ontario M6S 4Z7, Canada • 888-664-2584

AUSTRALIA: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, PO Box 455
Greenacres SA 5086, Australia • 08-8276-1333

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

TO PLACE AN ORDER

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

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

Online: Go to foi.org.

For magazine subscription rates, please see the enclosed envelope.

To subscribe online, go to israelmyglory.org.

Copyright 2023 The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc.

All rights reserved.

Printed in the USA by Waveline Direct.

R

Recently, I have had trouble seeing clearly. My doctor attributes my struggles with vision to advancing cataracts, which must be removed. It makes me think of what is hap-

pening in the church today.

I commonly hear people say prophecy is no longer taught in their churches. Indeed, eschatology—the study of prophecy—has been steadily declining in evangelical circles. Many no longer feel comfortable teaching it or consider it irrelevant, creating spiritual cataracts within the body of Christ.

These cataracts especially hurt younger believers, who support Israel less than older believers. They don't oppose Israel as much as they ignore it because they can't see what God's Word says about it.

Support for Israel and love for the Jewish people are proportional to our understanding of prophecy. We better appreciate Israel when we understand the unique role it plays in God's redemptive plan for the ages.

Prophecy tells us God is not finished with Israel. Modern Israel's existence confirms prophecy's relevance today because God's Word is being fulfilled as He foretold. He is carrying out His promise to gather the Jewish people from the four corners of the earth where He scattered them and plant them in the Promised Land, never to be uprooted again (Isa. 11:11–16; Amos 9:14–15).

The apostle Paul used prophecy to introduce Gentiles to Jesus. Prophecy validated Jesus' First Coming and helped explain the gospel. It gave believers hope that He would rapture the church out of the world prior to His Second Coming.

Is it any wonder that, in his closing remarks in 1 Thessalonians, Paul told the church, "Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good" (5:20–21)? The command "Do not quench the Spirit" (v. 19) precedes these statements. Taken together, they teach that despising prophecies quenches the Holy Spirit's fire.

Some say Paul was speaking of Thessalonian believers who had the gift of prophecy prevalent in the early church. Others believe he spoke in a broader context that included both prophetic words spoken by contemporary Thessalonians and the prophetic Old Testament Scriptures Paul often used in his teaching.

Either way, Paul taught the Thessalonians that prophecy is vital for believers and must not be despised. Disregarding prophecy, divine truth revealed by the Holy Spirit, produces spiritual cataracts.

Paul addressed biblical prophecy because some believers had undervalued it and began teaching their own views on



important matters, such as the First and Second Advents, Christ's return for His bride, and God's coming judgment. Believers were accepting these persuasive orators, rather than prophetic teaching from the Lord. They couldn't see the consequences of their decision.

So, Paul told the Thessalonians to test all things, comparing what someone teaches to the Word of God and holding fast to biblical truth. Doing so would remove their spiritual cataracts and allow them to see clearly.

As in Paul's day, replacing God's revelation with human preferences and excluding prophetic teaching quench the Holy Spirit. A prophecy-conference movement in the early 20th century led to the formation of Bible colleges and ministries like The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry. It fueled a belief in Restorationism, the understanding that God would physically restore the Jewish people to the land He had promised them. It is time for the church to return to a high regard for all of God's Word.

The solution to my eyesight issue is simple: Remove the cataracts. Similarly, the church must remove its spiritual cataracts—its disregard for prophecy—and embrace God's prophetic truth. Those who value prophecy can see the truth clearly: Modern Israel is no mistake in history. It is a fulfillment of prophecy right before our eyes.



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

WALKING THE FINE LINE

BY CHRIS KATULKA

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas recently visited China at the invitation of President Xi Jinping. Last year, the Chinese Communist Party leader promised Abbas his commitment to “work for an early, just, and durable solution to the Palestinian issue.”

Xi is undoubtedly flexing his muscles in the region to boost Beijing’s credentials on the world stage. He recently scored a big win after negotiating a peace deal between two sworn Middle East enemies: Saudi Arabia and Iran. One Palestinian Authority source said, “Xi is meeting with lots of Arab leaders because he knows they are not happy with the U.S. taking a back seat in the region.”

Before Xi wooed Abbas to Beijing, China had already invested \$19 billion in Israel from 2007 to 2020. China’s interest in Israel’s burgeoning tech industry has placed the “Startup Nation” at the center of the U.S.-China rivalry, forcing Jerusalem to choose sides.

In 2022, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared his determination to strengthen Israel’s economic relationship with China and vowed he would “continue to work with China” while “protect[ing] our national interests.”

In his autobiography, *Bibi: My Story*, Netanyahu confessed to walking “a fine line” in his ambition to partner with China, saying he “wanted to open the enormous Chinese market to Israel and also lure Chinese investments to Israel.” Netanyahu’s willingness to deepen ties with his neighbors to the east was criticized by the United States, Israel’s ally to the west.

Chinese investments in Israel have significantly declined; and Israeli exports to China have stalled, while Chinese exports to Israel continue to rise. Netanyahu wrote that he seeks to maintain ties with China while preserving the “solemn commitment to our great ally the United States.”

Israel faces palpable pressure as the temperature continues to rise between the United States and China. Situated in far west Asia, Israel is located right at the divide of the Eastern and Western worlds. The United States and China are thousands of miles from the Holy

Land, yet Israel is swept up in their international tug-of-war for global dominion.

Walking a fine line has long been Israel’s forte. In 332 BC, Israel was caught between Persia and Greece, two empires battling for world domination. In 200 BC, the Jewish people were plunged into the territorial ambitions of the Ptolemies and Seleucids, two Greek kingdoms that clashed at Caesarea Philippi. In the 11th and 12th centuries AD, the Muslims and Crusaders fought for sovereignty over the Holy Land, leaving the Jewish people trapped between two evils.

China is taking advantage of the leadership vacuum in the Middle East, opened by the Biden administration’s 2021 withdrawal from Afghanistan. Israel’s current position between the East and West is reminiscent of past predicaments, being forced to choose sides, uncertain of the future.

Yet Scripture reveals the future clearly. The prophet Daniel saw the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven. God bestowed on Him “dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:14).

God has always preserved Israel and the Jewish people as they have walked the fine line between contentious kingdoms. But one day, the kingdoms of Earth will give way to God’s Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed (2:44). The King of Israel, Jesus the Messiah, will rule from Jerusalem and “have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth” (Ps. 72:8).

At that time, Israel will no longer be stuck in the middle, walking the fine line between Gentile nations. God will exalt Israel above all others and make it “the head and not the tail” (Dt. 28:13).



Chris Katulka

is the director of North American Ministries for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry and the host of *The Friends of Israel Today* radio program.

IS ISRAEL'S GAZA POLICY WORKING?

The recent round of hostilities between Israel and Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip has sparked a debate over Israel's continued acceptance of an Islamist stronghold on its southern border that is committed to the destruction of the Jewish state.

When Israel unilaterally disengaged from Gaza in 2005, Israeli leaders hoped the Gaza Strip would blossom into a Palestinian Hong Kong or Singapore—a prosperous, independent state living alongside Israel in peace. The opposite happened.

In January 2006, Hamas, whose charter calls for the destruction of Israel through jihad, won Palestinian legislative elections and gained administrative control over Gaza. In June 2007, Hamas won an armed conflict with its rival Fatah, the largest Palestinian political party, and gained military control over Gaza. Since then, Hamas has launched tens of thousands of rockets into Israel.

In December 2008, Israel launched Operation Cast Lead to stop indiscriminate Palestinian rocket fire into Israel. That conflict, also known as the Gaza War, ended in January 2009 when Israel, facing international criticism over mounting civilian casualties, declared a unilateral ceasefire. Since then, Israel has repeatedly conducted military operations in the Gaza Strip, including Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012), Operation Protective Edge (July–August 2014), and Operation Guardian of the Walls (May 2021). These operations all ended inconclusively.

In May 2023, Israel launched Operation Shield and Arrow after Palestinian Islamic Jihad, an Iranian proxy, launched hundreds of rockets from Gaza toward Israel, including Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

After five days of clashes that threatened to drag Israel into another major war, Egypt mediated a ceasefire. Most experts agree it is only a matter of time until Palestinian militants launch the next barrage of missiles into Israel.

Israel's failure to neutralize, much less eliminate, the missile threat from Gaza now faces scrutiny. In a policy paper titled "How Israel Can Solve Its Gaza Problem" published by the Middle East Forum, an American think tank, Brig. Gen. (Res.) Yossi Kuperwasser wrote that the Israeli government has "defined its goals vis-à-vis Gaza as achieving the longest possible intervals of relative calm between major eruptions of violence." He noted that Jerusalem "does not challenge Hamas's ability to attack Israel" and that, "in between the rounds of escalation," it allows Hamas to "continue its military buildup," as "the Israelis seldom strike first, and the government's responses to Hamas's limited attacks are always measured and proportionate."

Kuperwasser wrote that Israel's current approach is flawed because it grants Hamas "the ability to develop its offensive capabilities, increase its political power, and condemn Israelis—especially those living within range of the Gaza Strip—to persistent threats from Hamas terrorists." A better definition of victory, he argued, "would be to rid Israel of Hamas's threat by disarming it, prohibiting its rearmament, and demonstrating conclusively that threatening Israel is indisputably against its interests."

The Israeli government "must reassess



* Security wall between Israeli and Arab neighborhoods

its strategy and embark on such a campaign to end permanently Hamas's threats . . . as soon as possible, especially should Hamas again attack," Kuperwasser wrote. In military terms, "Israel must achieve the ability to suppress totally the capability of Hamas and the other groups to launch attacks from the Gaza Strip."

According to Kuperwasser, the Israeli government must formulate and implement "a proactive and decisive strategy" aimed at forcing Hamas to "accept a new set of rules that will relieve Israel of this threat." Such a strategy, he argued, "will weaken Hamas's political standing and send a message of deterrence to Iran, Hezbollah, and their allies." It may also "aid the diplomatic process by demonstrating that armed attacks and jihad against Israel harm Palestinians, and that their conditions will improve only after they accept Israel as the Jewish state."

To read "How Israel Can Solve Its Gaza Problem" in its entirety, go to meforum.org/64463/how-israel-can-solve-its-gaza-problem.



by **Soeren Kern**,
a Writing Fellow for
the Middle East Forum

READING PAUL WITH THE RABBI

From a rabbi dressed as Spider-Man to an Elvis impersonator at an Israeli wedding, some interesting characters have crossed Ty Perry's path over the past eight years of ministry in the Jewish community. But he never thought he would meet a rabbi who leads a study of the New Testament—until he did.

As Field Ministries manager for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry (FOI), Ty always searches for ways to

As a student, Ty tried to respect the teacher while also correcting some of the rabbi's assumptions and theories about the New Testament. After correcting the rabbi on a doctrinal issue in the first class, Ty emailed him, thanking him for allowing him to attend the class. He explained that, though he disagrees with much of the rabbi's theology, he enrolled in the class to learn, not to stir up trouble.

The rabbi responded warmly, thanking Ty for his comments and even his criticisms. He invited Ty to continue contributing to the class.

Throughout the duration of the class, the rabbi often asked Ty to explain Christian practices and how believers interpret certain verses in Paul's epistles. In fact, on one occasion, Ty briefly taught about believer's baptism by focusing on the accounts of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26–40) and the Philippian jailer (16:25–40).

Though Ty and the rabbi agreed on little of Paul's doctrine, Ty appreciated his opportunity to take part in such a unique class. Not only did he learn more about how Jewish people might interpret the New Testament, but he also strengthened his faith by defending and teaching biblical truth.

"It was a great learning experience," Ty said. "I am grateful for the opportunity to have been accepted into the class and to share more about what I believe with the Jewish community."

get involved in the Jewish community. One way he gets involved is by enrolling in classes on various aspects of Jewish culture and belief at his local Jewish Community Center. When he discovered that a Reform rabbi at the center was teaching a class on the apostle Paul's epistles, Ty knew he had to join.

The class approached Paul's letters to the churches from a theologically liberal perspective. The rabbi believes, for example, that Paul did not write 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, or Colossians. He taught that the church developed the doctrine of substitutionary atonement much later than the epistles and that Paul never taught it.

* Ty Perry lights a candle at a Yom HaShoah commemoration.



If you would like to support Ty Perry and others like him serving in North American outreach with The Friends of Israel, please visit foi.org/NAMoutreach. You can also call our toll-free ministry-support line at 800-257-7843. Thank you for your prayers and financial support.

GIVING THANKS IN WARTIME

More than a year has passed since the war in Ukraine began, and Russia has only increased its bombardments on western Ukrainian cities. Our Eastern European teams are facing immense challenges as they minister to those suffering in the war.

Throughout the entire conflict, our workers have consistently put themselves in harm's way to show the love of Christ to Ukrainian communities; refugees; and those hit hardest by this conflict, both Jew and Gentile. Thank you to all of you who have prayed and supported the work of each of our field representatives in Eastern Europe, especially Tetiana Kritenko, our worker from Kyiv, Ukraine. Recently, she sent this note for our American supporters and ministry partners:

For me, one year has been like 10. Approximately 7 million Ukrainians now live abroad, most of them in Poland. We also have a huge-scale migration of people within Ukraine from the east to the west. Electricity and other utilities are subject to frequent outages and shutdowns. When items we need are available in stores, they are often so expensive that people cannot afford them.

When I asked a leader in the Jewish community in a small town near me what her people needed, she asked for carrots, onions, and beets. She hesitantly wondered about the possibility of getting the luxury of chocolate. It's hard to believe. Ukraine has been the breadbasket of Europe forever, and now we can't afford what little food we produce. I'm so grateful that through FOI we are able to meet some of these basic needs.



* Tetiana Kritenko (left) helps a Ukrainian family make aliyah.

However, today I would like to share my gratitude for you and my FOI family, everyone who prayed and continues to pray. Ukrainians here don't know all of you who donated and have helped us, but we are extremely grateful.

Thank you for bread and light (literally!) in Ukrainian homes and synagogues. Thank you for buses out of war zones and plane tickets to Israel for those who wished to immigrate. Thank you for the happy smiles of our children who have lived through these challenges. We have hundreds of reasons to say "thank you," FOI family and ministry partners. We feel so much stronger because of you and your support.

We thank God for His protection and provision in Ukraine, and we thank you for your faithful prayers and support for our workers in Ukraine.

If you would like to support our Eastern European teams and other FOI ministries like this around the world, visit foi.org/INToutreach. You can also call our toll-free ministry-support line at 800-257-7843. Thank you for your prayers and financial support.



* Hanya Ciešlar (second from left) and Andrzej Ciešlar (far right) deliver supplies to Ukrainians.

The Early **Warning** System

British physician John Scott Haldane noticed a problem as he observed miners working underground: By the time they realized they had been in contact with poisonous gases beneath the earth's surface, it was often too late.

Haldane advised that miners take mice and canaries, animals far more sensitive to the effects of these gases than humans, into the mines with them. If the animals died, it was time to get out—hence, the idiom *canary in the coal mine*.

The Jewish people are the canaries in the world's cultural coal mines. Where antisemitism is accepted, other forms of persecution will arise. History demonstrates that antisemitism is an early indicator of a troubled culture. And recent events indicate that the United States is a nation in peril.

In February, members of the Goyim Defense League (GDL), an antisemitic hate group, gathered outside a Chabad center in Orlando, Florida, where they harassed ultra-Orthodox Jewish people leaving the property.

In a video of the event posted on Twitter, GDL founder Jon Minadeo Jr. shouts slurs, such as “You filthy Jew!” “Heil Hitler, Jew!” and “Leave our country, go back to Israel—you know, where you bomb Palestinian kids.”

That same month, Jack Eugene Carpenter III was arrested for making murder threats against Jewish officials in Michigan's state government. He tweeted that he would “carry out the punishment of death to anyone that is Jewish in the Michigan govt [sic].”

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, who is Jewish, later tweeted, “The FBI has confirmed I was a target of the heavily armed defendant in this matter. It is my sincere hope

that the federal authorities take this offense just as seriously as my Hate Crimes & Domestic Terrorism Unit takes plots to murder elected officials.”

Days after Carpenter's arrest, antisemitic hate groups organized a national “Day of Hate” to take place on February 25. A New York City Police Department memo warned officers that these groups were “instructing likeminded individuals to drop banners,

place stickers and flyers, or scrawl graffiti as a form of biased so-called action.” Though no incidents of widespread acts of hatred were reported that day, the very proposal of the event is deeply disturbing.

Such actions and threats should alarm every American. Antisemitism demands denunciation. Hatred of our Jewish friends and neighbors must never be tolerated.

On top of these threats, the Gentile world must understand that hatred of Jewish people does not stop with Jewish people. Antisemitism is merely the starting point.

In a 2022 interview, Deborah Lipstadt, noted historian and the U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, spoke to this point:

Antisemitism is like the canary in the coal mine of democracy. It is a threat, a warning. If you're an antisemite, then you think, well, the justice system isn't fair because it's controlled by Jews. The government isn't fair because it's controlled by Jews. The media isn't fair because it's controlled by Jews. You lose faith in the democratic institutions. As a historian, I can think of no democracy that tolerated antisemitism and remained a vibrant democracy.

The best case in point is Weimar Germany turning into Nazi Germany. . . . I'm looking at Weimar Germany as a fragile democracy that was beginning to thrive, but as the antisemitic forces, along with other forces, became stronger and stronger, its fate was doomed.

Embracing Jew-hatred is one of the first indicators not only of a culture in decline but also of God's impending judgment. Just look at ancient Egypt, Philistia, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, the Byzantines, the Crusaders, the Spanish Empire, Nazi Germany, and the Soviet Union.

Such societies are doomed because he who touches Israel touches the apple of God's eye (Zech. 2:8). The United States and other Western nations should take this truth to heart before it's too late.

History demonstrates that antisemitism is an early indicator of a troubled culture.



by Ty Perry,
Field Ministries manager and Bible teacher for
The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry in Michigan

UNRAVELING THE MYSTERIES OF THE BIBLE DVD

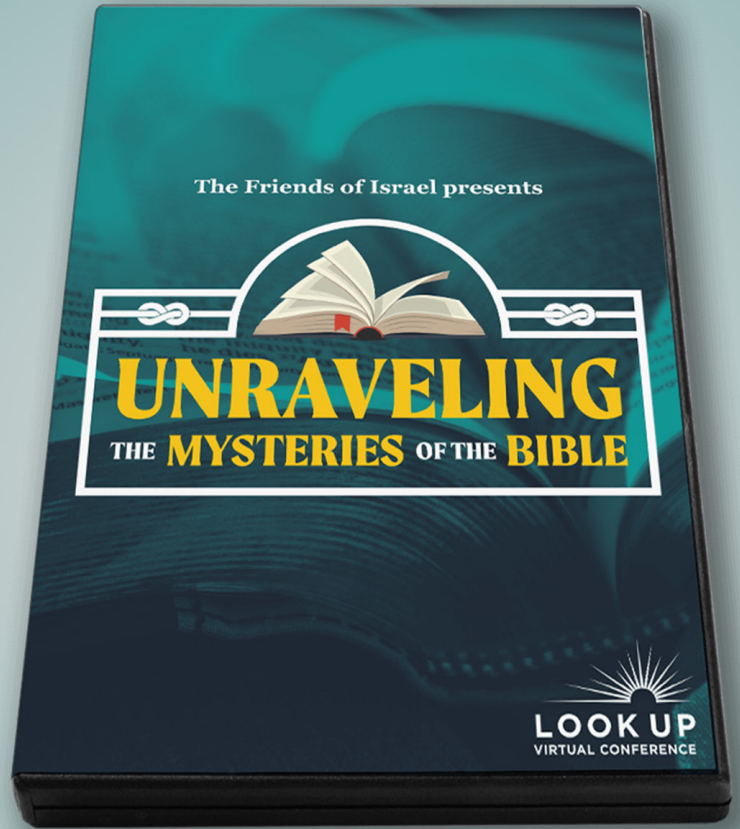
Many people have trouble understanding the Bible on their own. Got questions? You're not alone!

Find biblical answers on issues that matter most:

- ✧ The Importance of Prophecy Today
- ✧ The Signs of Christ's Coming
- ✧ Why Things Must Get Worse Before They Get Better
- ✧ Where the United States Will Be in the End-Times
- ✧ When the Kingdom Will Begin
- ✧ Why There Must Be a Millennial Kingdom

Enjoy timely teaching from our Look Up Conference again and again on DVD as you grow to love the Lord and understand His Word deeper than ever before!

\$20 US \$24 Outside US



Now available in Canada!

The Gift That Gives Back

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? And that same gift can increase your income and reduce future tax payments.

If you want to invest in the Lord's work yet need to make the most of your financial resources, then you may want to consider purchasing a gift annuity from The Friends of Israel.

If you decide to give appreciated property such as stock or real estate, rather than sending a check, you will pay capital gains tax on only part of the appreciation. In addition, the capital gains tax will be spread over many years, rather than all being due in the year of your gift.

A gift annuity has benefits both lifelong and eternal, allowing you to maximize the impact of your financial stewardship. For details about how a gift annuity can work for you, complete this form and mail it in the return envelope in this magazine. There is absolutely no obligation on your part.

Our Canadian friends can contact our Canadian office at 888-664-2584 for specific benefits.

Our Team



Tom Geoghan
Vice President
Ministry Advancement



Dan Dark



Leesa Kuhn



Mike Gann



Billy Ramsdell



Steve Weir
Canada

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

(Offered in the United States and Canada)

Date of Birth (month/day/year) _____

(Minimum age of 65)

Name of Joint Annuitant _____

Date of Birth (month/day/year) _____

(Minimum age of 65)

Relationship to First Annuitant _____

Phone (_____) _____

Possible Amount of Annuity \$ _____

(Minimum annuity amount is \$10,000)

Income to be paid:

- Quarterly Semiannually Annually

DYING



TO LIVE

A BRUSH WITH DEATH IN VIRTUAL REALITY MAKES PEOPLE WONDER IF THERE IS LIFE AFTER DEATH. SCRIPTURE PROVIDES THE ANSWER.

BY STEVE HERZIG

Marcus is dead. His lifeless body lies on a hospital bed. The doctors attending him look down on his corpse. Only minutes ago they were busily monitoring his vitals when he suddenly went into cardiac arrest and flatlined. Then, something amazing happens. Marcus sits up, rises from his bed . . . and takes off his virtual reality (VR) simulator.

Marcus was a participant in “Passing Electrical Storms,” an artistic virtual show created by Australian artist Shaun Gladwell.¹ “It was really cool,” Marcus said. “As you put on the goggles, you see yourself [lying] on the bed from above; so it really changed the experience from just the traditional VR, as you are able to step outside of yourself from a different perspective.”

Gladwell described the experience as “moving away from yourself and then floating off into the giant universe.” This “death show” carries some risk, as some VR participants experience anxiety and panic. Gladwell arranged for participants to stop the experience whenever they choose by pushing a button or raising their hands.

The VR death experience often causes participants to

ponder their mortality. Marcus testified to that effect, admitting, “It does make you contemplate what happens after death.” King Solomon also pondered death, writing, “Better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men; and the living will take it to heart” (Eccl. 7:2).

Solomon knew—and Gladwell’s VR show demonstrates—that taking mortality to heart sparks a good question: Is there life after death? But most people are missing a good answer.

Is This All There Is?

Carl Sagan, scientist, astronomer, and cosmologist, was often asked about life after death. His answer was always emphatic: “As much as I want to believe that, and despite the ancient and worldwide cultural traditions that assert an afterlife, I know of nothing to suggest that it is more than wishful thinking.”²

Richard Dawkins, eminent evolutionary biologist and author of the popular book *The God Delusion*, answered the question while interviewed by British broadcaster Piers Morgan: “There is no afterlife for an individual. . . . I believe I [will] rot and nothing of my ego shall remain.”³

Matt Dillahunty, American atheist activist and former president of the Atheist Community of Austin, said, “It’s not about getting used to the idea of there being nothingness; that’s the scary thing, because people get it in their head, if there is no afterlife then when they die they will experience nothingness forever, and they don’t know what that means, because it’s nonsense. You won’t be experiencing anything;

there will be no you to experience.”⁴

The number of people denying life after death is legion. The common denominator of most is their denial of God’s existence. They reason that if life comes from nothing, then death leads to nothing. But if life originates from a life-giver, the end of the story changes dramatically.

Evidence of the Afterlife

As Bible-believing Christians, we know that God through Christ is the Life-Giver. He provides hope to all who believe in Him by faith. The apostle Paul explained it this way: “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

What is faith? The writer of Hebrews said, “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony” (11:1–2).

Hebrews 11 is often called the Hall of Faith because it lists Old Testament saints whom God counted righteous because of their faith. “Without faith,” the writer concluded, “it is impossible to please Him” (v. 6).

Those without biblical faith are left without hope and cannot provide hope for others. By denying God, they conclude this life is all there is. On the other hand, people of faith “understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible” (v. 3); and they live in hope all the time.

Hope in Life After Death

In the summer of 1992, my friend George asked me to officiate his son Ron’s funeral. Ron had been a prodigal similar to the son in Luke 15; and just like that son, he had returned to his family and faith. But then a tragic accident killed Ron at only 29 years of age. I asked George what he wanted me to say, especially considering Ron died so young. I’ve never forgotten his answer.

“Tell them the truth,” George said. “Remind them of the truth of the gospel.” He knew where his son was—alive with Jesus. He knew because of his faith in the Lord and His Word, like King David, who wrote, “In God (I will praise His word), in the LORD (I will praise His word), in God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid” (Ps. 56:10–11).

In Psalm 61, David wrote:

Hear my cry, O God; attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to You, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For You have been a shelter for

me, a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. . . . For You, O God, have heard my vows; You have given me the heritage of those who fear Your name. So I will sing praise to Your name forever (vv. 1–5, 8).

Like the saints in Hebrews 11, George and his son believed by faith.

This spring, George’s daughter Beth called to tell me her 86-year-old father had passed away. She wondered if I would speak at his memorial service. This time I didn’t need to ask what to say. I simply used the advice George gave me 30 years earlier. I shared the truth of the gospel and the fact that George was now with his son in heaven.

So, while it is now possible to experience a VR death and live to tell about it, it won’t provide any answers about

what comes next. When asked about life after death, philosopher Sam Harris said, “This concept of the afterlife really functions as a substitute for wisdom.” Yet, when pressed to answer if there is life after death, Harris

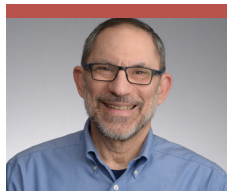
admitted, “We don’t know what happens after death. . . . I don’t think anyone does know. . . . I don’t know what I believe about death.”⁵

Well, King David knew, Ron knew, George knew, and I know—there is life after death. The truth is so simple yet so profound: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:16). ★

“REMINDE THEM OF THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL.”

ENDNOTES

- 1 Jane Herz, “You can now experience how death feels through virtual reality,” *New York Post*, March 27, 2023 <nypost.com/2023/03/27/you-can-now-experience-how-death-feels-through-virtual-reality/>.
- 2 Carl Sagan, *Billions & Billions: Thoughts on Life and Death at the Brink of the Millennium*, cited on [goodreads.com](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/100000000-Billions-Billions-by-Carl-Sagan) <[tinyurl.com/CSagan-1](https://www.tinyurl.com/CSagan-1)>.
- 3 Piers Morgan Uncensored, “Richard Dawkins On What Happens When You Die,” YouTube, March 22, 2023 <[youtube.com/watch?v=YXia0SsK84](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXia0SsK84)>.
- 4 Atheistsplaining, “Matt Dillahunty on ‘Nothingness after death,’” Reddit, October 2, 2021 <[tinyurl.com/NothingnessAfterDeath](https://www.tinyurl.com/NothingnessAfterDeath)>.
- 5 Big Think, “Sam Harris: On Death | Big Think,” YouTube, June 2, 2011 <[youtube.com/watch?v=d_Uahu9XNzU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_Uahu9XNzU)>.



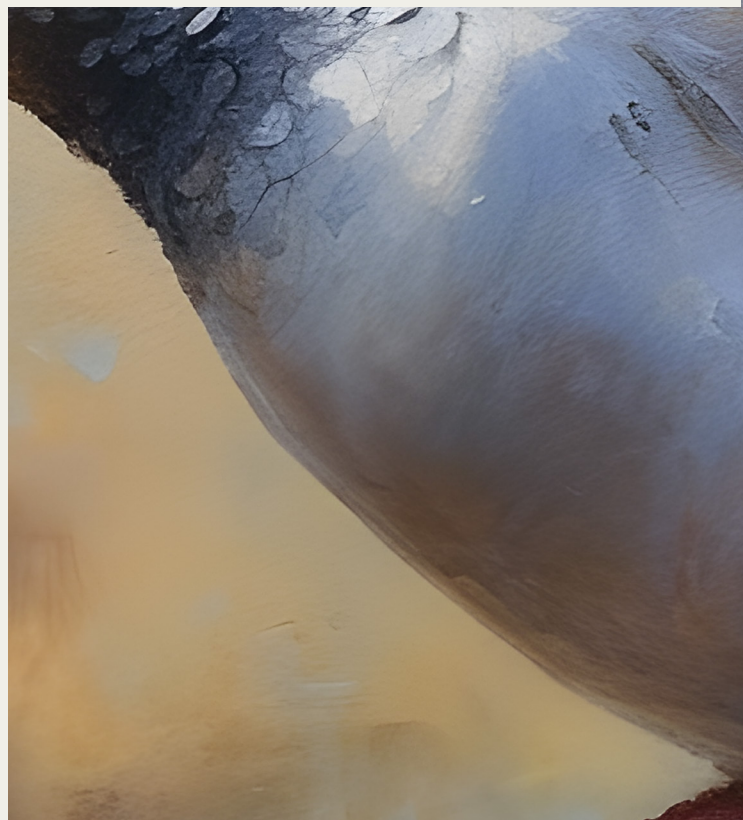
Steve Herzig

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



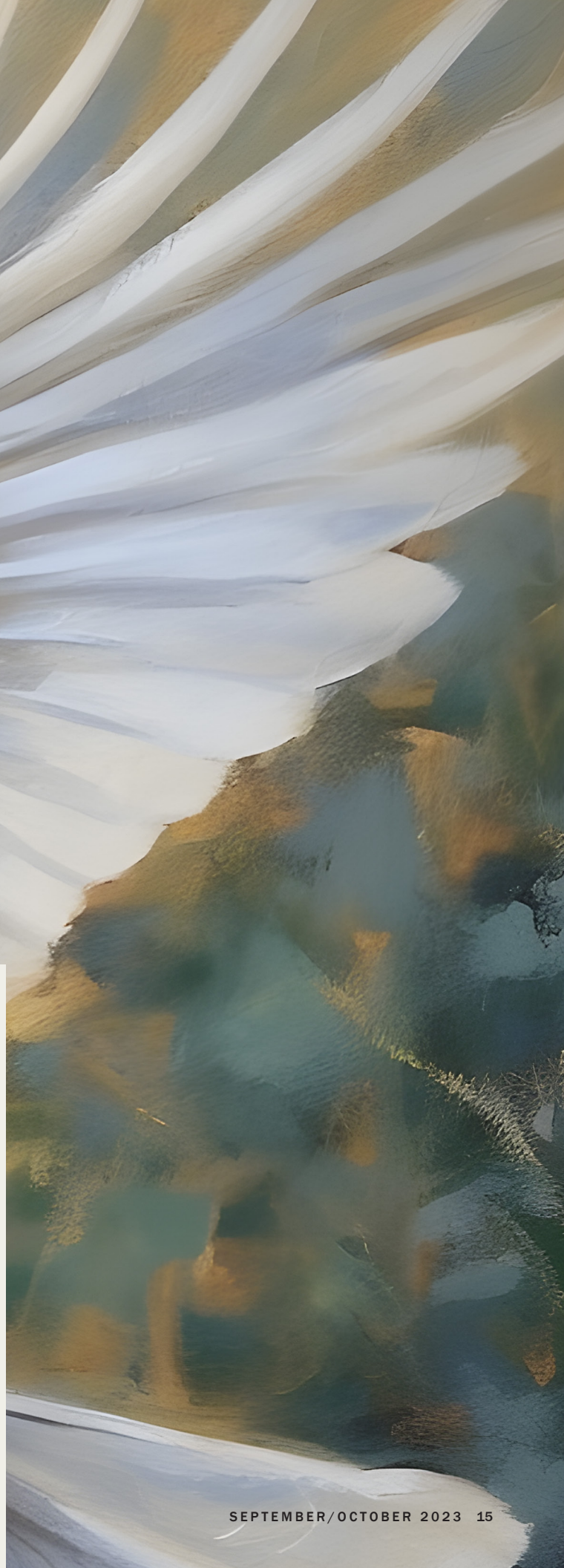
SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED

BY ELWOOD MCQUAID





**IF YOU'RE A BELIEVER, THE
HOLY SPIRIT HAS MANY
MINISTRIES IN YOUR LIFE.
BUT ONE IN PARTICULAR
KEEPS YOU UNDER THE
SHELTER OF THE ALMIGHTY'S
WINGS FOREVER.**





Most people want a stamp of affirmation when they complete a transaction. All types of affirmation exist. Yet one—and only one—brings relief and confirmation in a way that reflects something of far greater significance. That affirmation comes from God alone. It is His gift to believers, accompanied by words of assurance and (above all) the peace we long for.

After the traumatic event of Jesus' crucifixion at Calvary, the Lord's disciples gathered in an upper room in Jerusalem, praying and waiting for what would come next. It was the Feast of Pentecost (*Shavuot*), which drew great numbers of observant Jews to Jerusalem from around the ancient world.

They came to participate in religious festivities God ordered long ago through Moses: "You shall keep . . . the Feast of the Harvest [Pentecost], the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field" (Ex. 23:15–16).

They were there to celebrate what God ordered in the past.

But on this day, God would initiate a new era—one that far transcended anything these pilgrims could have conceived. A new birth was about to engulf them. The Holy Spirit was about to make His entrance.

THE HOLY SPIRIT ARRIVES

The Holy Spirit was no stranger to Old Testament saints. Joshua, Samson, Gideon, and others received power from the Spirit for certain purposes. But these divine interventions did not constitute a permanent indwelling.

Now God would do something beyond anything He had done in the past. He would send the Holy Spirit to indwell believers. The disciples gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem, as Jesus had commanded, and waited for the promise of the Father. "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire" (Acts 2:2–3). And these men "were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (v. 4), an indwelling never before experienced in the history of humanity.

One Bible commentator compared it to Jesus' arrival in Bethlehem. In Bethlehem, God sent His Son into the world. In Jerusalem, He sent the Holy Spirit to take up residence permanently within individual believers.

“

For thousands of Jewish people at Pentecost, that particular *Shavuot* embodied laying before the Lord not the fruit of their fields alone, but of their hearts.”

Because of this divine transaction, Jesus' followers became empowered to minister to the throngs of people at the feast in these people's own languages. When the apostle Peter stood up to preach, it became wonderfully apparent that something special had taken place. This man could not have generated such a change on his own.

Prior to Pentecost, Simon Peter was a man of many moods, with a mercurial temperament often punctuated by outbursts that likely caused others to back away from the fisherman when he was angry. It was Peter who promised that, while

others may deny the Lord, he never would. Yet in a matter of days, as the chief priests interrogated Jesus, Peter cowered outside and disavowed any association with the Lord.

But after the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, another Peter emerged—one whose boldness, ability, and passion shone consistently for the remainder of his life.

THE HOLY SPIRIT SEALS BELIEVERS

The grace gift the Lord gave Peter—and provides for all true believers in Jesus Christ—is like a stamp of affirmation, signifying that we belong to Him:

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come (2 Cor. 1:21–22, NIV).

The Holy Spirit's indwelling presence is a deposit that stays with us always. It guarantees "what is to come," namely, the completion of our salvation and our eternal life with God. God "set his seal of ownership on us," and Scripture never says He removes it.

For thousands of Jewish people at Pentecost, that particular *Shavuot* embodied laying before the Lord not the fruit of their fields alone, but of their hearts. They became what we call *saved* by submitting to Peter's gospel message about the Savior they had scorned while He lived among them. The glory of that gospel we now proclaim is, in its simplicity, presented as a grace gift that Christ obtained at immeasurable cost.

To acknowledge our sin, confess it, and cast all our hope and faith on Jesus and His work on the cross on our behalf secures never-to-be-rescinded eternal redemption. In short, we become children of God forever.

At the moment of our salvation, however, another work also takes place—perhaps not as dramatic a work as the passage from eternal death to eternal life but one that transforms us nonetheless: The Holy Spirit enters our lives. As Bible scholar Dr. John MacArthur said,

When a person becomes a Christian, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in his life. Life in Jesus Christ is different because the Spirit of God is now within [sealed]. He is there to empower us, equip us for ministry, and function through the gifts He has given us. The Holy Spirit is our Helper and Advocate. He protects and encourages us.¹

PEACE IN A TROUBLED WORLD

No one can seriously contend that we are not living in troubled times. The anguished outcry of people the world over is for peace. It is heartening to know a peace that indeed "surpasses all understanding" (Phil. 4:7) is readily available from the one source where it can be found: the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Those who receive Christ as Savior find a state of peace that is the harbinger of a state of life ensuring purpose, contentment, and the absolute knowledge that our lives are in God's hands. Furthermore, we can communicate to others what Christ has done for us. Never in the history of our beloved United States has there been a time when the need for Jesus was greater.

We often hear speculation on how to avoid the apocalypse striking us. The answer lies in our midst. It rests within the assembly of true believers—people sealed by the Spirit—who exhibit the fruit of true faith and manifest His indwelling for the purpose of glorifying the God who saved them and waiting confidently for His return.

His return is our abiding expectation. We have His promise of it, a promise that crowns every aspect of our lives:

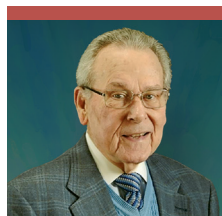
Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for

you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also (Jn. 14:1–3).

If you have repented of your sin and asked Jesus to forgive you and become your Savior, you are signed, sealed, and delivered. Who could ask for more? ★

ENDNOTE

- 1 John MacArthur, "What Does It Mean to Be Sealed With the Holy Spirit?" gracetoyou.org, October 13, 2022, from *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary on Ephesians 1* <tinyurl.com/sealeddd>.



Elwood McQuaid

is a former executive director of The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry and retired editor-in-chief of *Israel My Glory* magazine. His newest book, *Almost There*, is available through The Friends of Israel.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'DO' AND 'DONE'

A LOOK AT THE INSECURITY
OTHER BELIEFS OFFER COMPARED
TO BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY

BY LES CRAWFORD

If you're like me, you examine the guarantee offered when you buy a product. The better the guarantee, the more confident you are the item will function well and hold up as advertised. Sadly, a guarantee is only as good as its provider; and often, providers offer no protection or fail to deliver what they promise.

The same principle holds true when it comes to religion. All religions promise entrance into paradise, heaven, nirvana, or some other positive place based on human performance. Biblical Christianity is the sole exception because the Bible teaches that entrance into heaven is not based on our works but, rather, on the work Jesus did on our behalf. That is why biblical Christianity can offer absolute assurance that "absent from the body [is] to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8).

All the other religious options can be summarized with one word: *Do*. Only Christianity can be summarized with *done*.

TOEING THE MARK

World religions and cults operate on a "do" basis. Followers must perform certain good works, which form the basis of their salvation and entrance into the future promised by the group. But how many good works are enough? How is failure resolved? What assurance do adherents have that their performance is adequate?

Muslims, for example, must keep the five pillars of Islam: faith, prayer, giving *zakat* (support of the needy), fasting during the month of Ramadan, and the pilgrimage to Mecca once in a lifetime for those who are able.

But even keeping these pillars does not guarantee entrance into paradise. In Islam, only a martyr's death in a holy war secures paradise. Islam gives no one but martyrs such assurance.

Rabbinic Judaism also requires good works and ceremonial observances for salvation. Jewish people are expected to repent for wrong actions and do better in the future. According to beingjewish.com, "If you do good, you will get good."¹

Yet, this system cannot guarantee entrance into God's presence; and it certainly offers no assurance to faithful followers. How good is good enough? As sinful human beings, we can't be sure our performance meets the requirements.

CATHOLIC QUALIFICATIONS

In Roman Catholicism, adherents must keep the sacraments,

stay within the church, and perform good works to enter heaven. Sin is divided into two types: mortal and venial.

Mortal sins, such as adultery, separate the guilty person from God; cannot be atoned for in this life; and require time in a place Roman Catholics call purgatory. Venial sins, such as a bad attitude, only injure one's relationship with God and can be addressed through the confessional and penance.

Yet, even performing the sacraments consistently, doing good works, and being loyal to the church do not guarantee entrance into heaven.

Although the Roman Catholic Church holds to many key Christian doctrines, such as the divinity of Jesus, it adds other doctrines, such as veneration of Mary, that undermine the biblical fundamentals. Still worse, it denies justification by faith, the Bible's teaching that a righteous standing before God is based solely on faith in Jesus Christ.

In Roman Catholicism, works win acceptance with God. This is a recipe for uncertainty and insecurity in the most important aspect of life: one's eternal destiny.

WITNESSES AND MORMONS

The variety of cults in the world is enormous, but their characteristics are virtually identical. Followers must keep the cult's rules, remain active within the cult, and conform to its expectations.

For Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, unquestioned allegiance to the hierarchy, regular attendance at the Kingdom Hall, and witnessing in the community through visitation are required to remain in good standing and might grant you entrance to the coming earthly kingdom. (Only a select 144,000 go to heaven.) Failure to conform results in expulsion from the Kingdom Hall and eventual extinction, along with the others who fail to enter the coming kingdom. There is no guarantee of eternal security.

In the Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter-day Saints, Mormons are taught that Joseph Smith, an American religious leader who published the Book of Mormon in 1830, was a true prophet and that the Book of Mormon is sacred Scripture. Mormons must have faith in those tenets and remain in good standing with the Mormon Church so that they can participate in religious ceremonies, including baptism and celestial marriage.

Falling short disqualifies Mormon men from the promised future of attaining divinity and ruling a planet of their own with an eternally pregnant wife. But there still are no guarantees.

A belief system that mixes faith with works cannot guarantee eternal security with God. Humanity is not capable of performing its part perfectly in this combination. Furthermore, how could we ever know if our works have satisfied God? Unbiblical belief results in no security and no assurance.

IT IS FINISHED!

In contrast, biblical Christianity offers eternal security and personal assurance for all true believers. Its foundation is the finished work of Jesus Christ in His atoning death on the cross, where He endured the penalty of sin for mankind and paid the redemption price to set us free (Rom. 5:6–9; 1 Pet. 3:18).

From the cross, Jesus declared, "It is finished!" (Jn. 19:30), communicating that the work of redemption was completed. Jesus did it all; thus, biblical Christianity can be summarized by the word *done*.

People can do nothing to save themselves (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 3:11) or add anything to Christ's sufficient sacrifice (Heb. 9:25–28; 10:12–14). We must receive His amazing provision for us by genuine faith, apart from good works (Rom. 4:1–25; 5:1–2; Eph. 2:8–9).

True believers cannot undo what God has done, which involves regenerating them through the new birth (1 Pet. 1:3, 23) and justifying them (declaring them righteous before Him; Rom. 4:22–25).

Our new standing is guaranteed by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:14) and sustained by the indisputable promises of God the Father (Rom. 8:31–39; Phil. 1:6).

Both our eternal security and personal assurance rest on what God has done for us, which is final and unchanging. This fact gives genuine believers confident hope in their final destiny, despite their sins and failures—which are many.

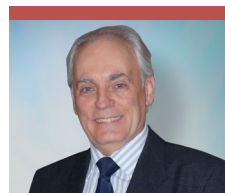
No follower of Christ is sinless in this life (1 Jn. 1:8, 10), although we should sin less as we mature as believers (Rom. 6:6–14). Jesus Christ's sacrifice covers all sin—past, present, and future—for every true Christian. Jesus is our High Priest (Heb. 4:14–16) and legal Advocate (1 Jn. 2:1) and neutralizes any charges against us.

God's people are safe and secure in His love, which produces personal peace (Rom. 5:1) and heavenly hope (v. 2), as well as a reciprocal love (v. 5; Gal. 5:22; 1 Jn. 4:19) that we express through obedience to God's commands (Jn. 14:15). Our obedience becomes good works that God has prepared in advance for us to perform (Eph. 2:10). These good works do not precede salvation but, rather, are produced by it.

God's guarantee contains no deceptive fine print or hidden exceptions, and He will never renege on His promise. True believers have every reason to rejoice (Phil. 4:4) and look to the future with confidence (1 Jn. 4:17), thankful to God and happy to worship Him as our guarantee of eternity in His presence (Heb. 12:28). ★

ENDNOTE

- 1 "How Does a Jew Attain Salvation?" <beingjewish.com /toshuv/salvation.html>.



Les Crawford

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

IN JESUS' WORDS





IS BELIEF IN ETERNAL SECURITY A FALLACY? NOT IF YOU LISTEN TO WHAT JESUS HAD TO SAY.

BY PAUL PIERCE



For many who come to faith in Jesus Christ, the phrase *once saved, always saved* plays an integral part in their discipleship. For others, eternal security is a false teaching; and still others believe claiming such assurance is nothing short of arrogance or self-righteousness.

Is belief in eternal security a false interpretation of Scripture? Are believers who hold to the security of their salvation arrogant to make such a claim?

No, they are not. Jesus Himself taught the permanency of a true believer's salvation.

John 3:16. This well-known, widely memorized verse certainly indicates that genuine belief results in eternal life, as well as eternal security: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." The last seven words declare believers will not perish but will have eternal life. The word *have* means "having possession of."

When Jesus articulated John 3:16 in a discussion with His nighttime visitor, Nicodemus, did He really mean that “everlasting life” was both eternal and eternally secure? Bible scholar Dr. John MacArthur spoke to this issue in his message “Eternal Security (Rom. 5:1–11)” on his *Grace to You* broadcast: “Since a dying Savior succeeded in bringing us to God, a living Savior can certainly keep us there.” What kind of a Savior would Jesus be if He had the power to save us but not to keep us?

John 4:13–14. When the Lord Jesus spoke to a Samaritan woman at a well, He explained that people who drink physical water always need to drink again. However, anyone who drinks of the spiritual water He offers will never again thirst spiritually: “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”

Grammatically, the words *shall never thirst* are future tense and indicate that all who were yet to believe would never thirst again. Their thirst would be quenched permanently.

John 6:35–40. The day after Jesus fed 5,000 men with five barley loaves and two fish (vv. 4–14) and then walked on the Sea of Galilee (vv. 16–21), He encountered the crowd He had fed. He challenged those people not to work for food that perishes but, rather, for food that endures to eternal life (vv. 26–27).

They asked for a sign like that of the manna their forefathers ate in the wilderness when they fled Egypt. Jesus replied that the manna was a gift from God, not Moses; the spiritual bread they desperately needed also comes from God; and He was indeed the bread of life from God. Therefore, “He who comes to me,” Jesus said, “shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst” (v. 35).

Jesus explained that the Father not only provides spiritual bread but has given to Jesus everyone who believes:

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day (vv. 37, 39–40).

This text literally says believers are God’s gift to His Son, who receives each gift (v. 37), holds onto it securely (v. 39), and will never cast it away.

John 10:27–29. Later, Jesus spoke with unbelieving Jewish leaders during the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah). They

demanded to know if He was the Messiah. His answer challenged their questions while also providing assurance regarding the eternal security of those who believed in Him:

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.

As the Good Shepherd, Jesus came that people “may have life” (v. 10). His sheep would hear and recognize His voice, and He would know them. He also said, “I give them eternal life” (v. 28). The verb *give* is present tense, indicating a continual action.

He added, “They shall never perish, neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand” (v. 28). *Snatch* is used in the future tense, indicating this action would not happen then or at any time in the future.

Jesus, as the perfect Good Shepherd, is able not only to give eternal life, but also to guarantee it forever. It is impossible for Jesus to lose even one person who has placed his or her faith in Him.

Luke 22:31–32. Following the final Passover Jesus celebrated with His disciples—and mere hours before His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane—Jesus specifically addressed the apostle Peter and the spiritual battle being waged.

Satan had demanded to “sift” not only Peter, but all of the disciples, as the word *you* in the phrase *sift you* is plural: “And the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat’” (v. 31). But Jesus prayed specifically for Peter: “But I have prayed for you [singular] that your faith should not fail” (v. 32).

During this time, Jesus prayed His High Priestly prayer (Jn. 17:1–26) before He and the disciples made their way through the Kidron Valley and into the Garden of Gethsemane: “Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me. Keep them from the evil one. I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me” (vv. 11, 15, 20).

Jesus clearly was praying for His disciples, as well as for all who would become believers in the future, that God would protect and keep them from Satan. Hebrews 7:25 says, “He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God

It is impossible for Jesus to lose even one person who has placed his or her faith in Him.

through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” The words *save* and *lives to make intercession* are present tense, indicating a continuous action.

HOPE, ASSURANCE, AND PEACE

The texts we looked at are clear statements from Jesus Himself that He not only has the power to save us, but also the power to keep us saved forever. The fact that He continuously makes intercession for us is, in itself, a powerful statement of security.

The biblical truth of eternal security not only impacts our future, but it also impacts our daily lives, providing three cherished comforts:

1. Hope. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Pet. 1:3). “This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast” (Heb. 6:19). Hope is best defined as the guaranteed, confident expectation and joyful assurance of the future anchored in truth. In a world of growing hopelessness, we have a

glorious hope in the security of our salvation and the guarantee of spending eternity with God.

2. Assurance. “And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 Jn. 5:11–12). If we have the Son, we have life. Our assurance lies in the very Word of God.

3. Peace. “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1). Peace is not merely the absence of conflict; it is also the abiding confidence and calmness that results from being reconciled to God through Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ not only offers us eternal life, but He also guarantees this life—giving us hope, assurance, and peace that are only possible through Him. ★



Paul Pierce

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



THE BEREAN BOX

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PARTAKE OF THE DIVINE NATURE?

Originally, humanity was created perfect by God. People possessed a perfect human nature by which they could think and reason about themselves and creation. Unlike animals, people possessed the ability to know God, communicate with Him, and rule over all His perfect creation (Gen. 1:26–27; 2:7).

God gave Adam and Eve a simple test, permitting them to eat of any tree within creation except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Disobedience would bring them spiritual and physical death (2:17).

The serpent, controlled by Satan, tempted Eve to sin by questioning what God had said to her and then lying that she would “not surely die” by eating from the forbidden tree (3:4). Eve succumbed to the temptation; ate the fruit; and gave it to Adam, who also willingly ate (v. 6). As a result, all mankind inherited Adam’s sin nature, resulting in separation from God and condemnation to spiritual and physical death (cf. Rom. 5:12–14).

Knowing that Adam and Eve would sin, God, in eternity past, had already prepared for humanity’s redemption. God would destroy Satan through the Seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15; cf. Heb. 2:14–15), God’s incarnate Son, Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:16; Gal. 4:4–5).

All who trust Christ for salvation are born again and become new creations in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). They are indwelt with a new nature and the Holy Spirit, who empowers them to live lives of righteousness and godliness. Nothing can separate believers from God’s sovereign security of life in Christ (Jn. 10:27–30; Rom. 8:31–39).

So, what does it mean to be “partakers [sharers or partners] of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4)? It does not mean Christians cease to be human or possess a divine nature equal to the triune God. It means believers share in a new relationship with Christ, enabling a deep, intimate, spiritual fellowship and communion with Him. They are granted all the awesome promises of eternal life.

Symbolically, believers are crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20) and participate spiritually in His victory over sin and death (Rom. 6:1–6). They possess a new spiritual life bestowed by Christ through the Holy Spirit.

At the Rapture of the church, Christians will receive glorified bodies prepared for eternity (1 Th. 4:13–18). After this life, believers have a heavenly inheritance “incorruptible and undefiled,” one “that does not fade away, reserved in heaven” (1 Pet. 1:4). Hallelujah!

by David M. Levy

BY PETER COLÓN

UNCONFUSED!

Are you perplexed?

**Do you wonder if genuine, born-again Christians can lose their salvation?
Apparently, the apostles Paul and Peter didn't wonder.**

Paul and Peter wrote 59 percent of the New Testament's 27 books. Paul wrote 14 (some people believe he also wrote Hebrews), and Peter wrote two. And both men were convinced salvation endures forever.

They believed Jesus, who said, "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand" (Jn. 10:28–29).

Paul taught that God has "sealed" true believers and "given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee" (2 Cor. 1:22). In ancient times, a seal on documents or objects signified authenticity and a completed transaction. It also conveyed permanency and security. Metaphorically, the term *seal* refers to the seal of salvation, the seal of the Holy Spirit, and the seal of eternal security.

SEAL OF SALVATION

Jesus is the seal of salvation (Acts 4:12), the certainty of which Paul declared in Romans:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (8:35–39).

The seal involved Jesus taking our sin upon Himself and making us children of righteousness and citizens of heaven, and that position can never be lost. We belong to Him. Salvation is a gift from God. It did not come through any work of our own (Eph. 2:8–9).

Therefore, it's impossible, unthinkable, and unscriptural for God to lose someone Jesus bought with His blood: "You were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:18–19).

SEAL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Our almighty God gives us the seal of the Holy Spirit in our

hearts: “Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee” (2 Cor. 1:21–22).

Notice the four security affirmations: God (1) establishes us, (2) anoints us, (3) seals us, and (4) gives us the Spirit. There is no uncertainty or confusion regarding the permanency of salvation: “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:16).

The sealing of the Holy Spirit reveals God’s faithfulness to fulfill His promise. God’s pledge to true believers is security in Christ:

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory (Eph. 1:13–14).

Furthermore, “We also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:23). The Spirit is referred to as our firstfruits. Israel has an annual harvest festival called *Shavuot* (Pentecost), which occurs seven weeks after Passover. On the *Shavuot* after Jesus’ death and resurrection, the Holy Spirit came (Jn. 14:25–26; Acts 2:1–4). Just as the early firstfruits offered during *Shavuot* anticipated a greater harvest to come, so, too, the Holy Spirit is God’s assurance of our greater blessing to come: eternity with Jesus.

SEAL OF ETERNAL SECURITY

The apostle Peter also reminded believers of God’s sure promises and seal of security:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Pet. 1:3–5).

Believers are kept by God’s power and have a sure reservation in heaven that is incorruptible, undefiled, and cannot fade. This everlasting inheritance affirms our sealed, imperishable salvation that is confirmed in heaven (cf. Eph. 1:11, 13–14; Heb. 9:15). We are constantly being kept by God’s

omnipotent power until our salvation, or final redemption, is revealed in glorification (1 Pet. 1:5). Nothing can alter the certainty of our inheritance:

Whatever God does, it shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear [reverence] before Him (Eccl. 3:14; cf. Heb. 6:17–18).

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal (2 Cor. 4:16–18).

An old Jewish axiom says, “The seal of the Holy One, blessed be He, is truth” (Shabbat 55a, Babylonian Talmud). It indicates that God alone is the ultimate guarantee of all truth. Jesus said the same thing: “I am the way, the truth, and the

life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (Jn. 14:6).

God’s Word is always true. “God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and

will He not make it good?” (Num. 23:19).

Those who trust in Jesus possess the eternal seals of salvation, the Holy Spirit, and eternal security. There is no reason for doubt or confusion. Instead, we should rejoice because, through faith, we are sealed and secured for eternity. As the great 19th-century hymn writer Fanny Crosby wrote:

*Sweet assurance, Thou hast sealed me
With Thy precious blood divine;
And I know, for Thou hast told me,
I in life or death am Thine.
Sweet assurance, O my Savior,
How it cheers this heart of mine!
While Thy loving Spirit whispers,
I in life or death am Thine. ★*

Just as the early firstfruits offered during Shavuot anticipated a greater harvest to come, so, too, the Holy Spirit is God’s assurance of our greater blessing to come: eternity with Jesus.



Peter Colón

is the creative resource coordinator and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.



4 COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY

WHY YOU CAN'T LOSE YOUR SALVATION

BY DAN PRICE



As I sat at a sidewalk café with a parishioner and her husband one sunny afternoon, I could see the woman was nervous. Her husband held her hand and encouraged her to talk to me. “You need to ask your questions,” he told her. “I don’t know the answers, but he might. It’s eating you up!”

The bright, kind young woman had been attending our church for about a year and was invested in teaching her young children about Jesus. I couldn’t imagine what was troubling her.

Finally, she mustered up her courage, looked me in the eye, and said, “Pastor Dan, I’m just so afraid I’m going to die with unconfessed sin and go to hell.”

The tale that tumbled out revealed constant anxiety and fear about losing her salvation, a doctrine taught to her as a child. So, I introduced her to the Bible’s teaching on eternal security and watched her fear melt away as we dealt, one by one, with her misconceptions.

Every Christian needs to know the assuring truth that once we place our faith in Jesus’ work to save us, we can never lose our salvation. The doctrine of eternal security brings us to the very heart of the gospel. Perhaps you have been concerned about your salvation or that of a loved one. Here are four common misconceptions about eternal security.

MISCONCEPTION #1: I CAN SIN ENOUGH TO LOSE MY SALVATION.

Eternal security is God’s guarantee that His gift of salvation, once received by faith in the work of Christ, cannot be lost or removed. Ephesians 2 calls salvation “the gift of God, not of works” (vv. 8–9). We don’t earn this gift or influence it from its inception to its fulfillment. God is the one who makes our gift eternally secure—not us.

Consequently, no sin can ever cause us to lose God’s gift. In fact, Romans 8 makes this point exceedingly clear: “Whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified” (v. 30). In God’s eyes, everyone He has saved has been justified (declared righteous) and glorified.

Our security is a fact made certain by God’s character and work in His purpose to save us. And nothing will ever separate us from His love and acceptance through Jesus (vv. 38–39).

Of course, this fact doesn’t mean we’ll never sin after we have been saved. We certainly will (chap. 7). But the point of the apostle Paul’s teaching about salvation being a gift is that it is not removed based on our good or bad behavior. In the same way that we received the gift by God’s grace, we keep it by God’s grace.

We can never become good enough to be acceptable to God in the first place, and we can never sin more than Jesus’ blood is capable of cleansing. Salvation is God’s gift to us, which

He ensures by Himself. Like a skydiver who jumps from an airplane, some things move only in one direction. God’s work to save those who come to Christ is one of those things.

MISCONCEPTION #2: BECAUSE I’M ETERNALLY SECURE, I CAN SIN ALL I WANT.

Some people claim the doctrine of eternal security means all saved people can happily sin their way into heaven and that those who teach eternal security are encouraging Christians to live as sinfully as they want.

But that position is erroneous and not what the Bible teaches. Paul strongly refuted this notion in Romans 6:1–2: “Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” (v. 1). His answer: “Certainly not!” (v. 2). The certainty of God’s grace isn’t a license to sin; it’s a motivation *not* to sin.

We fight sin not to ensure our salvation but, rather, to love and thank God for it and to grow in Christ. The purpose of our salvation transcends getting us into heaven. It’s also about living now in communion with God, doing His will, and glorifying Him in the world Jesus died to redeem. Walking with God and knowing we are eternally accepted by Him helps us live in preparation and anticipation of that perfect relationship with Him that we’ll enjoy forever.

MISCONCEPTION #3: I CAN REJECT MY SALVATION.

Recently, there seems to be a flood of well-known laymen and pastors who are “deconstructing” their faith. This process used to be called apostasy, or the rejection of a previous confession of faith.

Perhaps you know someone who walked away from belief in Christ. What are we to make of this phenomenon? Those who dispute eternal security point to such examples as evidence that believers can indeed lose their salvation if they intentionally reject it. But is that true?

In John 10:28, Jesus said the sheep (people) the Father gave Him are in His hand; and He will certainly give them eternal life: “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.” Jesus Himself called eternal life a certainty for those who belong to Him. Not even the sheep themselves can derail the inevitable conclusion of the life Jesus grants.

Consequently, only two logical explanations exist concerning people who profess faith and later repudiate it: (1) Their professions were not genuine and consequently failed to result in eternal life; or (2) these people remain in Jesus' hand, though far from His heart, living in a state of sinful rebellion.

In either case, our task is to pray earnestly that God will draw such people into a deeper relationship with Christ, whether for salvation or maturation, trusting God's determination on their eternal destinies. Meanwhile, we must remember that no one's story is finished until he or she leaves this life. God may still graciously draw even the most rebellious soul back to Himself.

MISCONCEPTION #4: SCRIPTURE INDICATES I CAN LOSE MY SALVATION.

Many teachers of conditional security point to New Testament passages that seem to indicate Christians can lose their salvation. Though dealing with this premise in exegetical detail is not possible here, it is important to address the charge that we who believe in eternal security do not take these passages seriously. We do!

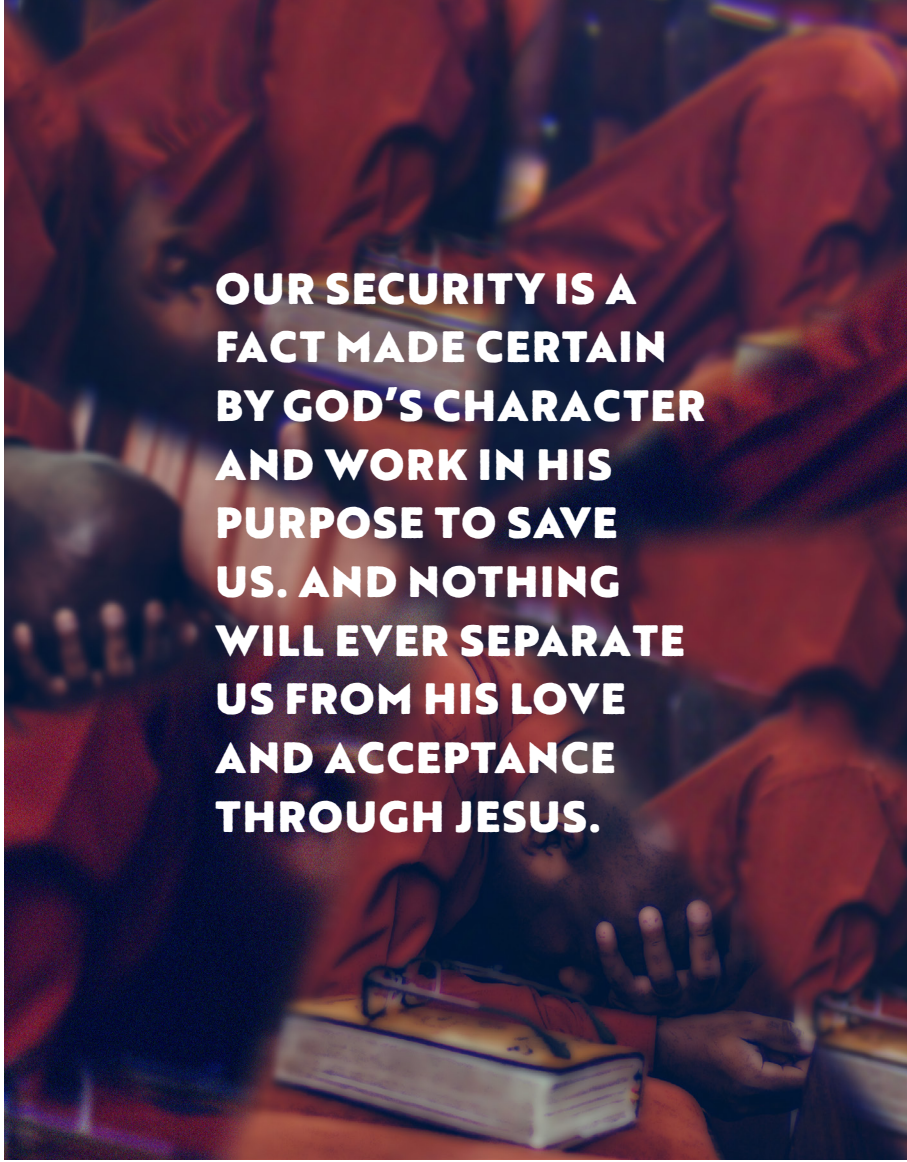
Throughout Scripture (1 Cor. 15:1–2; Heb. 2:1–4; 5:11–6:8), God dramatically exhorts Christians to remain faithful to Him in both belief and lifestyle. Though some of these passages may seem to indicate backslidden Christians can lose their faith, that is far from a clear exegetical conclusion.

If we let Scriptures that are clear inform our understanding of unclear passages (an important principle of Bible study), then no passages lead to a conclusion that we can lose our salvation. Rather, Scripture teaches about our complete inability to save ourselves or even remain faithful to God without His work in us.

When we place our faith in Jesus, an entire network of events goes into motion. First, Jesus' death is applied to our sin account, paying our debt and justifying us before God. Jesus becomes our Mediator and Intercessor, and His righteousness is applied to us.

Second, the Bible says we become indwelt by the Holy Spirit, "having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever" (1 Pet. 1:23). We were "dead in trespasses and sins," and Christ "made [us] alive" (Eph. 2:1), giving us spiritual life.

Third, the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the body of Christ, uniting us with Jesus and all other believers as one body. In addition to all these things, the Spirit seals us "for the day of redemption" (4:30).



**OUR SECURITY IS A
FACT MADE CERTAIN
BY GOD'S CHARACTER
AND WORK IN HIS
PURPOSE TO SAVE
US. AND NOTHING
WILL EVER SEPARATE
US FROM HIS LOVE
AND ACCEPTANCE
THROUGH JESUS.**

If it were possible for us to lose our salvation, then God either misapplied Jesus' payment for us or that payment was insufficient, making us "unjustifiable." Similarly, Jesus would stop advocating for us and remove His righteousness from us. The Holy Spirit also would leave us, since we no longer would be a suitable habitation for Him.

And, of course, we would revert to being spiritually dead. The universal body of Christ would lose limbs, and Scripture would be extremely wrong to say we have been sealed until the day of redemption when we were only sealed until the day we lost our salvation.

These scenarios are antithetical to God's character and purposes in saving us. Thank God neither our salvation nor our eternal security depends on us. We receive both through His matchless work and grace. ★



Dan Price

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



ISRAEL'S 'PEARL HARBOR'

AN ISRAELI POLITICAL SCIENTIST LOOKS BACK
50 YEARS AT THE 1973 YOM KIPPUR WAR.

BY ELLIOT JAGER



*
Yom Kippur War fighter cockpit

Spies warned that conflict was imminent. Enemy troops were visibly massing. Yet, when the attack came on October 6, 1973—Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), the Jewish Sabbath, and the 10th day of Ramadan—it caught an overconfident Israel unprepared.

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) intelligence insisted Egypt and Syria did not want a confrontation. The Mossad (Israel's national intelligence agency) supposed otherwise and on October 4 learned that Soviet civilians were evacuating Egypt and Syria. Only on Friday, October 5, was Israel's cabinet persuaded that war was coming.

IDF Chief of Staff David Elazar pleaded for a preemptive strike. Defense Minister Moshe Dayan was hesitant. Prime Minister Golda Meir worried that the administration of U.S. President Richard M. Nixon—in the throes of the Watergate scandal—would blame Israel if the Jewish state struck first or even mobilized its citizen army. Only on Yom Kippur morning did Meir authorize the call-up. Because there are no broadcasts on Yom Kippur, messengers had to alert reservists, sending them rushing from home or synagogue to military staging areas.

At 2 p.m. on October 6, Syria in the Golan Heights and Egypt in the Sinai launched hostilities; and Israel was unprepared and hit hard—much like the United States was when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

The combat was chaotic, fierce, and traumatizing. Israel was unready, outgunned, and outnumbered. IDF brass had assumed military intelligence would give them weeks—not hours—of warning to prepare. On the southern front, some 70,000 Egyptian forces traversed the Suez Canal to attack the 100-mile-long Bar-Lev Line (a chain of ramparts) in the Sinai desert defended by merely 500 IDF troops.

From the Golan Heights in the north, Syria's Soviet-manufactured tanks reached the Sea of Galilee and repulsed IDF counterattacks. Soviet-supplied compact antitank missiles made life hellish for IDF tank crews, while Moscow's mobile

surface-to-air missiles initially presented insurmountable obstacles for Israeli pilots. Syria was the more immediate threat.

As the land, air, and naval war unfolded, with Arab forces advancing on all fronts, General Elazar warned on October 7 that the “Third Commonwealth”¹ was about to fall. Moshe Dayan suggested readying an atomic bomb for a demonstrative explosion to warn the Arabs. Golda Meir nixed the proposal but gave discreet orders to assemble Israel’s tactical nuclear weapons to stave off total defeat.

THE TIDE TURNS

Then the tide began to turn. It took until October 10 to push the Syrians off the Golan Heights. IDF artillery bombarded the outskirts of Syria’s capital, Damascus.

Israel’s counterattacks in the south came on October 14 and 15, when the IDF crossed to the Egyptian side of the Suez Canal. An attempt to encircle Ismailia in Egypt and the Egyptian Second Army failed. But the IDF reached within 70 km (43.5 miles) of Cairo. Egypt’s Third Army in Sinai was surrounded.

Throughout the war, the Soviets resupplied Egypt and Syria. Jordan, Iraq, Morocco, and Kuwait sent troops. Palestinian irregulars launched attacks from Lebanon. Cubans bolstered the Syrians. North Korean pilots confronted the Israeli Air Force (IAF). Israel was in trouble.

The U.S. airlift of military hardware began arriving in Israel only on October 14. Europe had refused to let American

planes refuel. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) messaged Washington that it would join peace talks if the resupply were stopped.

The cost of the war was astounding. Syria suffered 3,500 killed and lost 1,100 tanks and most of its warplanes. Some 15,000 Egyptians were killed, and 8,300 were taken prisoner and later exchanged for 230 IDF prisoners of war (POWs). The Syrians and Egyptians tortured and killed scores of Israeli POWs.

A staggering 2,800 Israelis out of a 3.2 million population were killed (2,225 in the first week) and 8,800 wounded. The deaths were the equivalent in 1973 of the United States losing 185,412 soldiers in battle—50,000 more than it lost in World War I, Korea, Vietnam, and Desert Shield/Storm combined.²

Then the war petered out. With their Arab clients thwarted, the Soviets voted for a ceasefire on October 22 under UN Security Council Resolution 338. The Arabs charged Israel with breaking the truce. On October 25, UN Security Council Resolution 340 reiterated the cessation of hostilities. Moscow proposed a joint Soviet-U.S. force to implement the truce, threatening to act unilaterally otherwise.

The threat led the United States to put its military on strategic alert. U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger sent Israel conflicting signals, warning Washington would “dissociate” from Jerusalem while querying how much longer it would take to mop up Egypt’s Third Army.

In a surprise development on October 28, Cairo agreed to negotiate the Third Army’s fate directly with Jerusalem at Sinai’s Kilometer 101. An agreement was signed on November 11 that left Egyptian troops on the eastern side of the Suez Canal, authorized the UN’s humanitarian resupply of the Third Army, and involved an exchange of POWs.

AN INTELLIGENCE DEBACLE

The war was an IDF intelligence debacle. A cocky general staff had ill-prepared Israel’s military for the latest Soviet weaponry. Military Intelligence Chief Eli Zeira received multiple indications that war was imminent yet failed to comprehend why Egypt’s leader, Anwar Sadat, would go to war when there was no way he could recapture the entire Sinai.

His analysts misread massive enemy mobilizations as Egyptian war games or Syrian jumpiness. Despite having spies and electronic signal-tapping, Zeira was convinced the Egyptians would not attack because they did not yet know how to use newly delivered Scud missiles and had no long-range bombers.

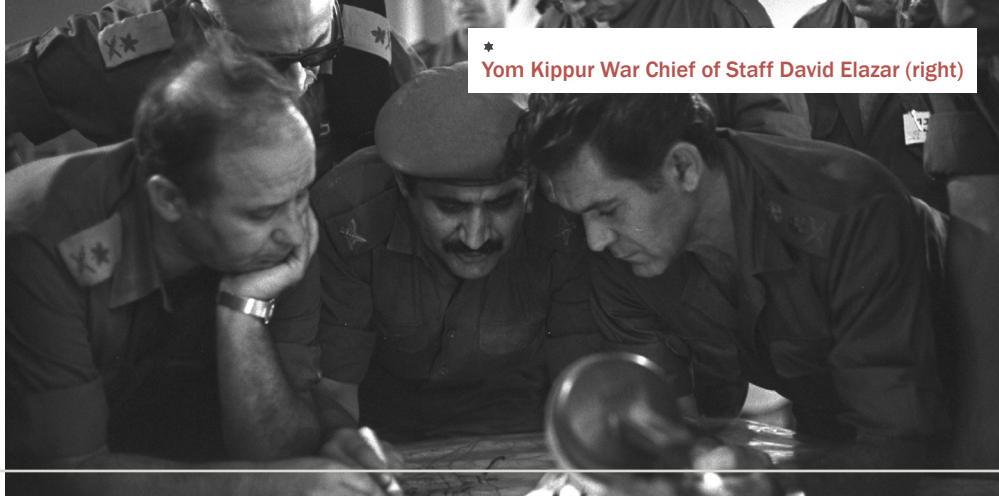
Every assumption about “the next war” proved wrong, explained journalist-historian Abraham Rabinovich in his book *The Yom Kippur War*. IDF intelligence did not provide ample warning; the air force could not cope with the newest Soviet antiaircraft and antitank missiles; and with the IAF constrained by surface-to-air missiles, the infantry lacked



* Grieving for fallen loved ones of the Yom Kippur War

the proper artillery to compensate for the lack of airpower

Israel's fact-finding Agranat Commission, headed by U.S.-born Shimon Agranat, issued its report on April 2, 1974. Meir, Dayan, and the Mossad were absolved, while Elazar and Zeira were cited for "grave failings." The electorate didn't buy it. Meir resigned, and Dayan was eased out.



* Yom Kippur War Chief of Staff David Elazar (right)

AN ARAB VICTORY

The war was a psychological and diplomatic victory for the Arabs, even as it showed they could not overcome Israel militarily. The Arab-led OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) imposed an embargo against the United States in retaliation for resupplying the IDF and to sway American policy away from Israel.

Historians believe Egypt's Anwar Sadat had limited war goals, namely, to establish a bridgehead in the Sinai to negotiate the return of the entire peninsula. Sadat, who had assumed power in October 1970 after Gamal Abdel Nasser's death, had already asserted that he accepted a 1969 Nixon administration peace plan that promised an Israeli pullback to the 1949 armistice lines. Syria's Hafez al-Assad ignored Nixon's proposal.

Kissinger saw the war as an opportunity to initiate a process by which Israel would exchange captured territory for peace. Meir was convinced that Kissinger had withheld intelligence that would have confirmed the impending attack and, furthermore, held up resupplies to the IDF, wanting Egypt to finish the war in a position of strength.

Over Israel's protests, Kissinger convened an international peace conference in Geneva in December 1973, circumventing

Israel's longstanding demand for direct bilateral talks. He falsely assured Jerusalem that Washington would block the PLO from the diplomatic arena.

By bringing together Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Soviet Union, the UN, and the United States under one roof (Syria refused to attend without the PLO), Kissinger changed the zero-sum perception of the conflict. The Arabs ceased to look like the intransigent enemies they were, and Israel was forced to respond by trading land for peace.

Kissinger spent 34 days traveling in the Middle East to bring about a Syria-Israeli armistice deal. He pressed Israel to cede parts of the Golan that it had secured during the war. On June 5, 1974, Syria signed an agreement in Geneva that freed IDF POWs and committed Damascus not to mass troops on the Heights.

The war demonstrated that the Arabs would not abide by the outcome of the 1967 Six-Day War in which Israel gained control of the Golan Heights and the Sinai. Paradoxically, the controversy over whether the PLO would be invited to the Geneva Conference reaffirmed the centrality of the Palestinian problem. The ensuing oil embargo chipped away American-Jewish confidence in supporting Israel.

The war also upended the Arab League's post-Six-Day War Khartoum Resolution of 1967: "No peace with Israel, no negotiation with Israel, no recognition of Israel." Instead, the sense now, real or not, was that Israeli concessions could deliver peace. And lastly, within Israel's internal political arena, the war weakened the long-ruling Labor Party, paving the way for Likud and its religious allies to govern. ★

FOR FURTHER READING

The Yom Kippur War by Abraham Rabinovich (updated 2017).

"Military Intelligence Chief Misled Israeli Leaders Ahead of 1973 War, Declassified Doc Reveals" by Ofer Aderet, May 9, 2020, *Haaretz* <[tinyurl.com/Aderet-1](https://www.haaretz.com/1)>.

"Enigma: The anatomy of Israel's intelligence failure almost 45 years ago" by Bruce Riedel, September 25, 2017, Brookings <[tinyurl.com/BrookingsIs2](https://www.brookings.edu/enigma)>.

"Missing Signal" from "The 'Special Means of Collection'" by Uri Bar-Joseph, *The Middle East Journal*, Autumn 2013, cited in *The Wilson Quarterly*, 2014 <[tinyurl.com/Missing-U2](https://www.wilsonquarterly.com/missing)>.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Israel considers the First-Temple period to be the First Commonwealth; the Second-Temple period, the Second Commonwealth; and the State of Israel, the Third Commonwealth.
- 2 "America's Wars," Department of Veterans Affairs <[tinyurl.com/USWARR](https://www.va.gov/USWARR)>.



Elliot Jager

is a Jerusalem-based political scientist. He blogs at elliottjager.blogspot.com.



THE FRIENDS OF ISRAEL TODAY



CHRIS KATULKA
HOST/TEACHER

STEVE CONOVER
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER/
CO-HOST



TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH...

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
Romans 10:17

The Friends of Israel Today radio program is supported by donors, listeners, and friends like you. We need your help to share biblical truth about Israel and the Messiah, Jesus, to the world! With your financial gift, right now, you will be taking the gospel to the ends of the earth with trustworthy, uncompromising Bible teaching and timely interviews. We need your help to continue to produce and share the Good News of our Savior on the radio, podcasts, and our website.

PLEASE GIVE TODAY AT [FOI.ORG/RADIOSUPPORT](https://foi.org/radiosupport)



TO LISTEN OR FIND A STATION NEAR YOU,
VISIT [FOIRADIO.ORG](https://foiradio.org) or find us on



JUDGING THE BOOK OF JUDGES

* Philistine temple at Tell Qasile

➔ The book of Judges chronicles cycles of Israel's discipline and deliverance as the Israelites settled in the land of Canaan. Just as conflict began Israel's entrance into its promised possession, conflict continued under the judges—Israel's civil administrators and military deliverers—because enemies remained in the Promised Land.

Today, conflict swirls around the book of Judges, as its uncertain origin and chronology have led biblical critics to doubt its historical accuracy. Rather, they consider the events heroic folklore designed hundreds of years later by Jewish nationalists to embellish a narrative of the Hebrews' origin. However, archaeological evidence confirms that certain details in the book could only have occurred how and when Scripture indicates (Judg. 11:26; cf. 1 Ki. 6:1).

One such archaeological detail is found in the story of Samson, the last of the judges. Samson's war with the Philistines culminated not in the glory of conquest but in the ignominy of defeat. Contrary to popular portrayal, his size and weight were relatively ordinary. A Nazirite (dedicated to God), Samson found strength not in his long, seven-braided hair but in the Spirit of God.

Bribed by the Philistines, a woman named Delilah deceived and spiritually defiled Samson; and the Lord departed from him (Judg. 16:20). Without the Lord's presence, Samson was captured, chained, imprisoned, blinded, and forced into hard labor by the Philistines (v. 21). His captors ultimately made him an object of derision in Gaza at the Philistine temple of Dagon.

In a last act of defiance, praying to Israel's God to avenge him, Samson placed his hands against the two central pillars on which the temple stood and brought down the entire structure on the Philistines. As a result, he killed more in his death than during his life (vv. 21–30).

The Samson saga bears the marks of historical accuracy. Excavations at Tell Qasile¹ and Tel Miqne (ancient Ekron)²,

both near the modern city of Tel Aviv, have uncovered the remains of two Philistine temples. These temples have the same design as the temple described in Judges 16, featuring an antechamber and main hall with its roof supported by two central pillars made of wood resting on round stone bases. The pillars were placed along a center axis and separated by a distance of only six and a half feet, making it possible for someone to dislodge them from their stone bases and collapse the building.

A Bar Ilan University archaeological team also discovered a Philistine temple at Tell es-Safi, the site of the Philistine city of Gath and home of the Philistine giant Goliath. This temple also has pillar bases set within the inner sanctum.

While the exact temple Samson brought down in Gaza cannot presently be excavated because it lies under the modern city, these temples sufficiently confirm the account in the book of Judges. Dating to the early 10th century BC, the temples are consistent with the period of Philistine ascendancy that King David ended when he firmly established the Israelite monarchy by the late 11th century BC.

Since the Philistines were overthrown, details of their political and religious lives, including their temple construction, would have passed into obscurity. Only an eyewitness familiar with the events during the time of the settlement and early monarchy (ca. 1200–1000 BC) could have accurately recorded such details. That eyewitness could only be the biblical writer.

Again, the spade has supported the Scripture, reminding us that just as God has preserved His Word, He has preserved evidence to confirm His Word.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Amihay Mazar, "A Philistine Temple at Tell Qasile," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 36:2 (1973), 42–48.
- 2 Seymour Gittin, Steven Ortiz, and Trude Dothan, "Field IV Upper and Field V The Elite Zone (Part 1); Iron Age IIC Temple Complex 650," *Tel Miqne-Ekron Excavations 1994–1996* (Ann Arbor, MI: Eisenbrauns, 2022).



Randall Price

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

THE MIND OF CHRIST

PHILIPPIANS 2:5–11

In Philippians 2:3–4, Paul admonished Christians to live in spiritual unity with one another. Nothing was to be done within the church through selfish ambition or arrogant pride. Christians in Philippi were not to be self-centered, focused only on their own interests and plans, but genuinely concerned about others. They were to love and care for others as they would for themselves.

But Christians are molded by various environments and education, so they often differ greatly. How can believers ever be of one mind as Paul described?

Paul charged the Philippian believers and all Christians to pattern their lives after the One whose example of selfless humility stands above all others: Jesus Christ. In verses 5–11, Paul disclosed the unfathomable truth and glory of Jesus and His example for all believers to follow.

CHRISTIANS EXHORTED

Paul wrote, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (v. 5). This is not a suggestion but a command. By using the word *mind* (Greek, *phroneo*), Paul wanted believers to share the same attitude or way of thinking.

Naturally, the Philippians may have wondered, “What kind of mind is this?” In Jesus’ case, this mind was focused on a life of obedience to God the Father in selfless humility and sacrifice during His earthly ministry. Naturally, followers of Christ cannot duplicate Jesus’ ministry precisely; but they can exhibit His attitude and actions of self-denial and self-sacrifice.

In verses 6–8, the apostle detailed the attitude and character traits Jesus manifested. This major doctrinal passage is commonly called the *kenosis* passage, a theological term used to emphasize Christ’s humility during His incarnation and ministry. *Kenosis* refers to Jesus’ deity, incarnation,

substitutionary death, and exaltation to the right hand of God. Although the passage has great doctrinal significance, Paul presented these truths as an illustration of how Christians are to exhibit the mind or attitude of Christ throughout their lives.

CHRIST’S EXAMPLE

Paul detailed Jesus’ attitude and character traits on Earth:

SUBSTANCE. He was “in the form of God” (v. 6). The word *form* speaks of His preexistence as deity before His incarnation as a man. It refers to His essence, person, and divine nature (Jn. 1:1; 10:30).

SOVEREIGNTY. He “did not consider it robbery to be equal with God” (Phil. 2:6). Though Jesus already possessed equality with the Father, He did not cling to His privilege. Instead, He laid it aside at His incarnation.

SURRENDER. He surrendered His position and “made Himself of no reputation” (v. 7). This phrase literally means “to empty” or “to make empty” and refers to Jesus emptying Himself of what He possessed in His preexistent state with God the Father.

This concept has been misunderstood and misinterpreted for centuries. Some believe Christ emptied Himself of His deity, which cannot be true because He is eternally God and cannot stop being God. Others believe He emptied Himself of His divine attributes or nature. But without the attributes of God, He would not be God. Still others believe He emptied Himself of the use and power of His divine attributes. This view, too, is incorrect. While on Earth, Jesus used His divine attributes to perform miracles.

The incarnation did not strip Jesus of His essence, nature, or power as God. It simply added humanity to Him as the divine Son of God who became subordinate to God the Father.

SUBORDINATION. While on Earth, Christ accepted a subordinate role in the Godhead. He took “the form of a bondservant, [while] coming in the likeness of men” (v. 7; cf. Mt. 20:28; Lk. 22:27; Jn. 5:19; 12:49–50). Here the incarnate Christ is as a bondservant in human form. The word *form* is also used in Philippians 2:6 to describe the divine, preincarnate Christ.

The phrase *coming in the likeness of men* (v. 7) means Christ entered a new state of being when He became flesh. He was not an apparition, phantom, spirit, copy, or illusion. He was a genuine man, being both divine and human and possessing both a divine and human nature (Jn. 1:14) but without man’s sin nature. In the incarnation, Christ stepped down from His sovereign position in heaven to become a submissive slave on Earth.

SUBMISSION. “And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself” (2:8). The word *appearance* refers to how men saw Him, without perceiving His inner nature

and essence. Christ “humbled Himself,” meaning He made Himself low by leaving the glories of heaven to become a man. Lehman Strauss put it well when he wrote:

*He took upon Him a body like ours and faced a limited human existence on earth. The world has never witnessed a truer expression of self-renunciation. When we ponder the fact that God became Man, labored with His hands, faced life in every respect as Man, served, sorrowed, and suffered, we stand in holy awe and wonder at so great condescension. The Sovereign of all became the Servant of all.*¹

SACRIFICE. Christ “became obedient to the point of death” (v. 8). His death was not accidental, nor were its circumstances out of His control. Rather, His crucifixion was thoroughly in God’s providential plan. The Lord Jesus was obedient to the Father in all things “to the point of death,” voluntarily and sacrificially giving up His life (Jn. 10:17–18; Heb. 5:7–8; 10:9). All men are born to live; but Jesus came to die, so people might experience salvation and eternal life.

SUBSTITUTE. Christ’s death, “even the death of the cross,” was a substitutionary sacrifice (Phil. 2:8). The definite article *the* is not in the original Greek text, which reads, “death on a cross.” Jesus died as a common criminal via the form of capital punishment meted out by Roman law. He died as one who is cursed (Gal. 3:13).

Dying on the cross, Christ became a substitute, experiencing God’s wrath for mankind’s sin. He took the punishment all people deserve and reconciled mankind to God so that people can receive eternal redemption through faith. His death was foreknown, preordained, vicarious, substitutionary, and redemptive.

CHRIST EXALTED

Because Jesus willingly left His glorious position in heaven to suffer shame, humiliation, and the ignominy of crucifixion, God the Father “has highly exalted Him” (Phil. 2:9). The phrase *highly exalted* indicates He was elevated to the highest position of veneration and worship possible in heaven. Christ was resurrected from the dead (Heb. 4:14), is enthroned “at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (1:3), and serves as believers’ advocate in heaven (7:25; 9:24).

He is also highly esteemed. The Father has “given Him the name which is above every name” (Phil. 2:9). Notice, the text does not say Christ was given a name but, rather, *the* name. The word *given* means to grant, bestow, or give generously. Christ’s name is the “name . . . above every name.”

IN THE INCARNATION, CHRIST STEPPED DOWN FROM HIS SOVEREIGN POSITION IN HEAVEN TO BECOME A SUBMISSIVE SLAVE ON EARTH.

Many people have opinions about this name. Some believe it is “Son” or “God.” Others say it is “Jesus.” Others believe it is “Lord” or “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:16). Some teach it will be a name “written that no one knew except Himself” (v. 12). Others believe the definite article that appears with the word *name* means Paul was speaking about Jesus’ office, rank, and dignity. Whatever the name is, it must sum up Jesus’ majesty, sovereignty, and supreme authority over everything.

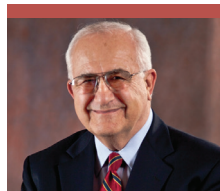
All of creation will honor and worship Jesus: “Every knee should bow,” whether in “heaven,” “earth,” or the abode of Satan and his demonic followers “under the earth” (Phil. 2:10). Every creature will acknowledge Christ, and “every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (v. 11). Believers, unbelievers, and the entire demonic realm will declare, “Jesus Christ is Lord!”

Jesus’ self-humiliation, submission, sacrifice, substitutionary death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation all fulfill God’s plan and purpose. Because of Christ’s work of redemption, God bestows grace, mercy, and salvation on sinful people who trust Him as Savior, bringing “glory [to] God the Father” (v. 11).

No wonder Paul calls believers to humble themselves and surrender completely to serving God. We should marvel at Jesus’ majesty and fall on our faces in worship at God’s magnificent plan and purpose.

ENDNOTE

¹ Lehman Strauss, *Devotional Studies in Philippians* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1959), 114.



by David M. Levy,

Bible teacher, author, former pastor, and the retired director of International Ministries for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry

THE HELP OF HIS COUNTENANCE

BY CECILIA WEER

A 5-year-old girl was enjoying a picnic with her family one day when she noticed a cluster of older girls yelling nearby. Curious, she moved closer and saw a girl cowering in the middle of the group. She was close enough to hear taunting, and she could see the girl in the center withering before her eyes as the others mocked her.

“You look so stupid.”

“Only ugly people wear ugly hats like that.”

A sense of urgency rose up in the heart of the 5-year-old. She burst through the gathering of jeerers; marched up to the diminished girl; and, with beaming face and cheerful tone, announced, “I like your hat!” Suddenly, the jeering stopped; and the girl with the hat lit up like a Christmas tree.

The 5-year-old girl was my mother. When she told me this story, she said the change in the taunted girl’s face made her own face change and her heart shine.

I remember her story when I read Psalm 42. When David was cast down and disquieted, he said to himself, “Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance” (v. 5). Then David repeated himself and victoriously declared, “For I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God” (v. 11). How amazing that a 5-year-old can learn that countenance matters.

COURAGE, COMPASSION, AND JOY

What could give such a young child the courage to fearlessly enter a figurative pack of wolves and speak up for a wounded soul? How did she know how to serve up compassion with a heavy dollop of joy? And how did she end the bullying and

get her loving point across without inciting the wolves? What winsome power she had!

Glimpses into her childhood gave me insight. My mother, called “Little Sissy” because she was fourth born, received Jesus as her Savior very young. She adored her big brother, Bobby, who was born with cerebral palsy. From her earliest recollections, Little Sissy observed the cruelty he endured because of his pronounced limp and withered hand. The paralysis also limited his ability to speak and swallow normally, and he carried a handkerchief

that was always wet. All these issues set him up for ridicule. She stood with him faithfully when he was bullied.

Very early in life my mother learned to be courageous because she loved her brother. She learned compassion because she felt his pain. Love was the source of her power, and the result was always joy.

Throughout my life I’ve always marveled at my mother. She was the joy of our home and the best of all of us. She loved fiercely, cared deeply, cried easily, and pursued the Lord Jesus with all of her heart. She prayed about all sorts of unlikely things, from parking spaces to weather reports to trips into town to which flannel shirt to buy for Daddy. Her prayers of intercession were brought before God for any variety of people: the president of the United States, my sisters and me every morning before we got on the school bus, a sad lady she saw at the fair, and even sick animals. Nothing was too big or too small for her to pray about.

And she could laugh. Her laughter was so full and hearty that tears rolled down her cheeks, and everyone laughed right along with her. But when her heart was broken, she wept. I never knew anyone else as deep of soul and delightful in spirit as my mother.

As an adult, whenever I asked her how she was doing, she would invariably respond, “I’m just praising the Lord,”

"I'm just believing the Lord," or "I'm going to talk to the Lord about this." Whenever I had a problem, I'd call my mother; and she would pray for me then and there on the phone. I always felt encouraged, enlightened, and full of hope when I left her.

At one Mother's Day fellowship, I talked about my mother and spoke from Romans 14:17: "For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." It was easy to speak about this verse because I had watched her live out its truth my whole life. She didn't buckle under fear but let her faith fortify her. She lived knowing the help of God's countenance made her own countenance healthy.

Three days after that event, she passed away. When I saw her lying in the casket at the funeral home, I realized it was the first time I ever saw her that her eyes weren't twinkling

and acknowledging each one. Heads lifted and smiles of recognition replaced vacant stares, like flowers blooming in her wake. I never forgot that. She saw Christ's compassion with her periscope eyes. When she showered it around, everyone blossomed.

When someone or something wounded her, up went the periscope to focus on the Lord. She saw beyond the pain. She looked to God diligently "lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble" for her (Heb. 12:15). She had learned that bitter countenances, not hats, make people ugly. Her forgiveness took away the power of people and circumstances to control her attitude. This ability to demand forgiveness of herself astounded me.

When I had questions about the leading of the Lord, she had a formula. "First and most important, pray and know the Word of God. See, honey girl, the Lord will never lead

She took the Lord with her when she went to the grocery store, hung clothes on the line, or cooked dinner.

and her arms weren't outstretched to greet me. I cried for months.

After her death, I realized how much I had depended on my mother. Her example built confidence in my heart. I wanted her courage, compassion, and infectious joy.

She had always reminded me, "The joy of the LORD is your strength" (Neh. 8:10) and cautioned me to love the Giver more than His gifts. I wanted to love the Lord as completely as she did. Her reminder encouraged me to study the names of Christ so I could see His countenance for myself. As I immersed myself in Scripture, I discovered the secret of her joy.

PERISCOPE EYES

My mother had periscope eyes. She was always looking above her circumstances to see the anchor of her soul (Heb. 6:19); and when she did, she was keenly aware of His abiding presence. She truly believed Psalm 139:7-13 and lived in confidence, knowing God was always with her, smiling at her, and walking beside her. She took the Lord with her when she went to the grocery store, hung clothes on the line, or cooked dinner.

Once, I accompanied her to the nursing home to visit my Uncle Bobby. When we prepared to leave, the residents were lined up in wheelchairs awaiting entrance to the dining room. As she passed by, she briefly greeted them, smiling

you to do anything contrary to His Word, so you must obey Him," she instructed me. "Next, you need to have the Lord's peace ruling in your heart about the decision. And last, look at the circumstances and check that it is the Lord leading and that you're not barging through doors. Make sure all three things line up, and then pray again."

My mother's faith for life was so uncomplicated. "Believe God!" she said. The power behind her courage, compassion, and joy was the unshakable assurance of His presence. Psalm 27:8 says, "When You said, 'Seek My face,' my heart said to You, 'Your face, LORD, I will seek.'" By practicing this precept, her life was blessed according to Aaron's priestly blessing: "The LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace" (Num. 6:25-26).

May we live like this: a lifestyle of courage, compassion, and joy because of the hope and security of our salvation and the gift of God's countenance upon us.



Cecelia Weer

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

OCCUPATION OR LIBERATION?

BY JEROLD S. AUERBACH



(JNS)—*The New York Times* Jerusalem bureau chiefs and columnists have long referred to Israeli “occupied territory.” In a recent *Times* issue, bureau chief Patrick Kingsley again displayed this obsession with Israel’s “56-year occupation of the West Bank.”

He either does not know or prefers to ignore Israel’s stunning victory in the Six-Day War that returned the territory to biblical Judea and Samaria, occupied by the Kingdom of Jordan ever since Israel’s War of Independence. That was liberation, not occupation. But the *Times* remains oblivious to history—and reality.

Ancient Jewish history in the Promised Land framed 20th-century Zionist restoration. Following World War I, Britain received a League of Nations Mandate to govern then-Palestine. The Mandate cited “the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and the legitimacy of grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country”—east and west of the Jordan River. There was no mention of “Palestinians,” who did not exist as a self-defined people.

But British Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill gifted the land east of the Jordan River to Britain’s wartime ally Abdullah. It became known as the Kingdom of Jordan. The League of Nations Mandate, however, continued to protect “close settlement” by Jews on the land west of the Jordan River. This fact was disregarded by the Kingdom of Jordan, which, during Israel’s 1948 War of Independence, seized the territory that became known as the “West Bank.”

Israel’s victory in the 1967 Six-Day War redrew the boundary. A UN Security Council resolution permitted Israel to administer its newly acquired territory—the West Bank, Golan Heights, and Gaza—until “a just and lasting peace in the Middle East” was achieved. There was no restriction on Jewish settlement.

Indeed, an Israeli government report in 2012 reiterated that ever since the League of Nations Mandate nearly a century earlier, Jews held an internationally guaranteed legal right, never revoked, to “close settlement” west of the Jordan River. Because Jordanian sovereignty in the West Bank had not been recognized under international law, Israel could not be considered a “belligerent occupier” of that land. The report concluded that Israelis “have the legal right to settle in Judea and Samaria.”

That fact did not deter former U.S. President Barack Obama from declaring, “The only way for Israel to endure and thrive as a Jewish and democratic state is through the realization of an independent and viable Palestine” located in the biblical Jewish homeland.

Obama was not alone. Israel’s critics continue to insist that Jewish settlements are the major obstacle to peaceful relations with Israel’s Arab neighbors. But as recent events in Gaza demonstrate, the entire Jewish state, not only settlements, is the target of Israel’s enemies.

Not all Israelis accept the return of Jews to their biblical homeland. Soldiers, condemning a government policy of “occupation, repression, and colonization,” occasionally refuse to serve in Judea and Samaria. Settlers have been accused of a “fascist, fanatical ideology”; and so-called occupation has been condemned as “a moral crime.”

An organization called Courage to Refuse absurdly claimed that “refusal to serve in the territories is Zionism.” A group of soldiers who had served in Hebron organized Breaking the Silence to condemn Israel’s “occupation” of the ancient Jewish city. They were oblivious to Hebron’s history as the burial site of the biblical patriarchs and matriarchs and as the location of the ancient Jewish capital before King David relocated his throne to Jerusalem.

Amid their obsessive focus on “evil” settlements, these groups seldom recognize that, geographically and demographically, a Palestinian state with a Palestinian majority already exists within historic Palestine. It is the Kingdom of Jordan, which occupies two-thirds of the land defined as “Palestine” by the League of Nations after World War I. Jordan is home to the world’s largest percentage of Palestinians, who comprise more than half the population.

But it is highly unlikely *The New York Times* Jerusalem bureau chiefs and columnists will acknowledge Jewish history and the legitimacy of Jewish settlements in biblical Judea and Samaria.

**For news about Israel updated daily,
log on to foi.org/news.**

STUDY THE BIBLE FROM A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE FOR FREE

Join FOI Equip's growing online community today!
Our free, online classes feature expert teachers who will:

- ✧ Teach Scripture
- ✧ Unravel the colorful world of Jewish culture and customs
- ✧ Help you understand and celebrate the feasts of Israel
- ✧ Reveal God's prophetic plan
- ✧ And more!



FOI EQUIP

THE BIBLE FROM A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

**ALWAYS ONLINE.
ALWAYS FREE.
LEARN MORE AT [FOIEQUIP.ORG](https://foiequip.org).**



* The Church of the Holy Sepulchre

PHOTO: ADOBE STOCK

“So it is our obligation in Jerusalem to teach His salvation.

by Zvi Kalisher

People from nations all over the world come to visit Israel. It is written in Isaiah 34:1, “Come near, you nations, to hear” and in Isaiah 49:6 that we are to bring God’s salvation to the ends of the earth. We see many people from Eastern Europe come to our country. Their arrival is a great opportunity to bring salvation to many who have never heard the Good News.

The Lord has blessed me with the ability to speak many languages, which helped me speak to these people. Most of them are Roman Catholic, and not many of them love Israel.

When I started to speak with a group of them about the Lord, one of them said, “We are not Jewish. We believe in the One whom you have killed. He is our God, and His name is Jesus.”

“I also believe in Jesus, but not as you believe,” I answered. “The Jesus in whom I have believed is no longer on the cross but in heaven.”

They looked surprised. “How can it be that a Jew can believe in Christ?” one asked.

I asked, “Do you know what is written

in the Bible?”

“Yes!” some replied.

I opened my Bible to Deuteronomy 18:15 to read it to them. But first I asked, “How many gods do you believe in?”

“There is only one God,” one said.

I read for them, “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren’ [Dt. 18:15]. To which nation do these brethren belong?”

A few of the people were members of a Baptist church in Poland. They were happy to hear such a clear witness about the Lord here in Jerusalem—from a Jewish man, no less!

“It is written in Isaiah 2:3, ‘For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word



of the LORD from Jerusalem,” I said. “So it is our obligation in Jerusalem to teach His salvation.”

The Catholics mentioned that this was the first time they had heard Jews speak about Christ.

“We have to tell this to our priests!” one of them said.

“I have brought the Good News to priests,” I said. “They have trusted in their commentary books, but I showed them that these books are not the Word of the Lord. The priests are like the ultra-Orthodox Jewish leaders who believe in their rabbinical traditions.

“Likewise you have believed what your cardinals have said, but you are far from the full truth of faith in Christ.”

I showed them that my belief in Christ is according to the Holy Bible. This caught them by surprise.

“We want to see where this is written with our own eyes,” one of them said.

Their reaction reminded me of the zealous ultra-Orthodox I have met. They often read from their books more than from Scripture, so I engaged with them from our common roots—the Holy Bible. I read Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2 for them, prophecies about Jesus, and said, “Take a good look. Am I reading from the Bible?”

They saw that I was and started to ask me questions. “How can a Jew believe in Christ?” one asked.

“Who were most of the apostles? They were Jewish. And what did the Lord tell His Chosen People in Isaiah 49? ‘You are My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified’ [v. 3]. It is our obligation to bring the truth to people like you so you can know the full truth about Jesus Christ. This is no commentary but the original Word of God.”

They asked me where they could find a Bible like mine that they could show to their priests. I had a few Polish Bibles, so I gave them one. They received it joyfully and told me they would surely read it. They wanted to know how I came to the Lord, and I was happy to tell them.

Our conversation took a long time because of their many questions. But most importantly, I believe they will remember the friendship I developed with them when they return to their home countries; and I pray they will come to know Christ as I do.

From The Friends of Israel archives



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

GO UP TO JERUSALEM WITH THE FRIENDS OF ISRAEL!

MARCH 8–18, 2024
OPTIONAL PETRA EXTENSION MARCH 18–20

COST STARTING AT \$4,389

FOR MORE INFO, VISIT FOI.ORG/TOURS



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



Biblical Truth about ISRAEL and the MESSIAH

NEW!

PROCLAIM is our two-day nationwide conference that focuses on biblical truth about Israel and the Messiah. Diving deep into topics that ignite Christians' hearts for God's Chosen People and His plan for Israel, our passionate Bible teachers will expound on God's Word, leaving you encouraged and full of hope.

UPCOMING DATES

SEPTEMBER 29-30
TAMPA, FL

COST: FREE

OPTIONAL \$15 LUNCH
AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE
AT ONLINE REGISTRATION

OCTOBER 13-14
LANCASTER, PA

COST: FREE

OPTIONAL \$15 LUNCH
AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE
AT ONLINE REGISTRATION

2023 THEME: THE WORLD ON EDGE

Discover how the sweeping global changes we are witnessing relate to God's ongoing conflict with Satan and His plan to triumph over the Evil One. You will be strengthened in your faith and grow in the hope to endure these troubling days.

REGISTER AT
PROCLAIM.FOI.ORG



THE WORLD ON EDGE

**Biblical
Insights Into
the Global
Transformation**