



A MOSQUE IN LAHORE, PAKISTAN. ONE OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MOSQUES AROUND THE WORLD IN WHICH ISLAM'S GOALS ARE PROCLAIMED, AND ALL OTHER RELIGIONS DEFAMED AND CURSED.

IT'S NOT ISIS, IT'S ISLAM

By Shira Sorko-Ram

In theory, a Muslim is a believer in the fundamental Islamic precepts brought to the world in the seventh century by Allah.

So what produces a peace-loving Muslim, versus a violent one?

True Christians understand the description of a devout follower of Yeshua – a per-

son who loves and studies the word of God, and endeavors to live each day of his life as a disciple of the one and only True God.

On the other hand, a nominal Christian who may call himself a Christian, but knows little of the word of God and does not follow the commandments of Yeshua is the norm today in western civilization. At funerals, nominal Christians speak of their loved ones who are now in heaven,

but on earth these people live as any other non-believer. The center of their universe is not God.

So it is with Islam. Many Muslims are not really interested in being “religious.” They know they were born a Muslim, and revere Islam, but know little of the precepts of their faith, don’t go to the mosque, don’t pray five times a day, don’t look forward to a “hajj” – a once-in-a-lifetime religious

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AN ISLAMIC SCHOLAR TEACHES HIS CLERICAL STUDENTS IN IRAN'S CLERICAL CAPITAL QOM, IRAN.

sojourn to Mecca.

On the other hand, a devout follower of Mohammed, a person who loves and studies the Koran and other Islamic holy books, endeavors to live each day of his life as a disciple of the “one and only true god, Allah.”

Born-again, devout Christians are often called “fundamentalists.” Their belief system is considered “mainstream Christianity.” Many Christians like to explain that their faith is based on “original Christianity” which in turn is based on “early Christian” belief based on the Old and New Testaments.

In a way, the same adjectives apply to devout Muslims. Instead of the misnomer “radicalized,” these Muslims are fundamentalists. Their belief system is based on “mainstream Islam” because they are following “original Islam” based on “early Islamic” belief of the three pillars of Islam, the Koran, the Hadith (stories about Mohammed) and the Sira (biographies of Mohammed).

The difference between the two faiths is that the closer a Christian or a Messianic Jew is in a personal relationship with God and His Son, Yeshua, the more he or she studies and practices the Word of God, the more like the Messiah of Israel

this person becomes. Through the Holy Spirit, the Christian aims to exude these qualities: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Because of the incredible role-model of Yeshua who gave His life for us, the true Christian/Messianic aims to be a giver and a blessing to his world.

On the other hand, the more devout a Muslim, the more he adopts the lifestyle of his role-model Mohammed and studies and practices the chief doctrines laid out in the written words of Islam. Some of the most important laws of Islam are:

1. The penalty for leaving Islam is death. Freedom of religion is not an option with Islam.
2. Human rights for women are all but non-existent.
3. The goal of Allah and all true Muslims must be to conquer all nations and create a global caliphate (a world super nation).
4. Sharia will be the law for all human beings.
5. The sword is to be used, if necessary, to reach this goal.
6. Every Muslim is obligated to spread Islam. Devious methods are obligatory when necessary. These tactics are particularly suitable to the methods of the

Muslim Brotherhood.

7. Although there is no promise in Islam that a Muslim will be selected to go to heaven, there is one exception: If a Muslim becomes a martyr while fighting for Islam, he is guaranteed a place in heaven, with the well-known hope of 72 virgins at his service, and “eternal virginity” for women martyrs.

8. The Jihadist is stimulated in this world by the knowledge that women he captures in war are his sex slaves. (Part of the great attraction of ISIS.)

9. Christians and Jews must convert to Islam, pay a tax or be killed. No new buildings of any other religions can be built.

The Muslims-in-name-only cannot successfully argue against these Islamic standards because it's all written down in clear and forceful language in the books they supposedly believe are sacred.

MAINSTREAM VERSUS NOMINAL ISLAM

But the raging question among westerners is just how many fundamentalist Muslims are there? The usual figure given is about 15%. Out of 1.6 billion, that's about 240,000,000 Muslims who are bent on conquering the world.

But then, 85% of all Muslims are thought to be peace-loving people. That's the usual benchmark given by experts and only some 15% are considered died-in-the-wool Jihadists.

But the percentage of “nominal” Muslims worldwide who say they desire Sharia law is actually much higher. Among the Palestinian population, 89% want Sharia law according to a Pew poll.¹ No wonder an 11-year-old Palestinian child who grabbed a knife and seriously wounded an 11-year-old Jewish boy on a bike told the police, “I wanted to be a martyr.”

In Europe, according to the Pew poll, 13% of Muslims believe that Muslims who convert to Christianity should be executed. In South Asia, 76% believe the same way.

THE SEAT OF SUNNI ISLAM SPELLS IT OUT

The Islamic university, Al Azhar in Cairo, Egypt, is considered by Sunni Muslims the most prestigious university in the world. It has 450,000 students and 9,000 schools. Within this university, there rages great controversy over the above violent laws.

Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah Nasr is a scholar of Islamic law and graduate of Egypt's Al Azhar. When asked why Al Azhar, which regularly denounces secular thinkers as un-Islamic, refused to denounce the Islamic State (ISIS),² Sheikh Nasr explained,

The Islamic State is a byproduct of Al Azhar's programs. So can Al Azhar denounce itself as un-Islamic? Al Azhar says there must be a caliphate and that it is an obligation for the Muslim world [to establish it]. Al Azhar teaches the law of apostasy and killing the apostate. Al Azhar is hostile towards religious minorities, and teaches things like not building churches, etc...Al Azhar teaches stoning people. So can Al Azhar denounce itself as un-Islamic?³

One press report spoke of the similarity between ISIS thought and Al-Azhar University's curriculum, which “allows for killing a Muslim who does not pray, one who leaves Islam...gouging their eyes and chopping off their hands and feet, as well as banning the construction of churches...”⁴

A sermon delivered by popular Saudi

Sheikh Muhammad Salih al-Munajjid clearly demonstrates why Western secular relativists and multiculturalists — who currently dominate media, academia, and politics — are incapable of understanding, much less responding to, the logic of Islamic intolerance. Journalist Raymond Ibrahim explains the thinking of the Saudi Sheikh:

“Some [Muslim] hypocrites” wonder why it is that “[Muslims] don't permit them [Western people] to build churches, even though they allow mosques to be built.” Any Muslim who thinks this way is “ignorant” and wants to equate between right and wrong, between Islam and kufr [non-Islam]...and gives to each side equal weight, and wants to compare this with that, and he asks: “Why don't we build them churches like they build us mosques? So we allow them this in return for that?” Do you want another other than Allah to be worshiped? Do you equate between right and wrong?... And Prophet Muhamad said: “By Him in whose hand is the life of Muhammad (By Allah) he who amongst the Jews or Christians hears about me, but does not affirm his belief in that which I have been sent, and dies in his state (of disbelief), he shall be of the residents of Hellfire.”

If, as Munajjid points out, a Muslim truly believes that Islam is the only true religion, and that Muhammad is its prophet, why would he allow that which is false (and thus corrupt, cancerous, misleading, etc.) to exist alongside it? Such gestures of “tolerance” would be tantamount to a Muslim who “wants to equate between right and wrong,” as the sheikh correctly deplores.⁵

EGYPT'S PRESIDENT CALLS FOR ISLAMIC REFORMATION

It is true that the President of Egypt Abdel Fattah al-Sissi has made a call for reforming Islam. And there are voices within Islam that are taking up his cry for a religious revolution. Al-Sissi has gone further to protect Christians in Egypt than any other recent ruler. But he has a tremendous uphill challenge. Primarily, he must avoid assassination by Jihadists who believe he has made himself an apostate to Islam.

Al Azhar University in Egypt of course

has different theological movements within its walls. There are voices within Al Azhar trying to remove from textbooks such subjects as sex slaves and the spoils of war, saying they were applicable during the Muslim conquests but are now considered out of date. They are insisting that students should not read old religious texts without guidance. On the other end are the Salafists [considered the strongest “fundamentalists” or followers of original Islam] who are fighting reform with all their might. They claim that the “reformers” within Islam “are seeking to destroy the university's important role in protecting Egypt.”⁶

In short, the phenomenon known as “ISIS” is not a temporal aberration within Islam but rather a byproduct of what is considered normative thinking for Al Azhar — the Islamic world's most authoritative university.⁷

Many western military experts, not impeded by political correctness, say the West could easily defeat ISIS. Islamic expert Daniel Pipes says, “It's a little bug that the powers could quash at will if they put their minds to it.”

But mainstream fundamentalist Islam among 1.6 billion people is the evil weapon that no human force can defeat.

There are hundreds of fundamentalist Islamic groups who are fighting for a worldwide caliphate. When ISIS is defeated, if it is, many other mainstream Islamist movements will continue to rise up out of the womb of original Islam.

From the book of Revelation, where it speaks of multitudes of believers in heaven that were beheaded, it appears that worldwide Islam will continue to grow until the Lord himself with His two-edged sword smites the evil one. However, there is no doubt in my mind that there is power now in the universe that can stop Islam today in specific local areas. God's people must wage a war in the Spirit and cast down the evil forces that are bent on taking our neighborhoods, our towns, our states and our nations. ■

¹ www.pewforum.org; link: www.goo.gl/8ZyJUK

² www.al-monitor.com; link: www.goo.gl/149K6L

³ www.meforum.org; link: www.goo.gl/5RXJ4K

⁴ www.al-monitor.com; link: www.goo.gl/149K6L

⁵ www.raymondibrahim.com; link: www.goo.gl/1J77Tk

⁶ www.haaretz.com; link: www.goo.gl/1sQwvx

⁷ www.meforum.org; link: www.goo.gl/8nRl6o



A NEW ALBUM FOR MESSIANIC JEWISH CHILDREN AND THEIR FRIENDS!

What child doesn't like stories? And what better way to teach our children about God than from amazing stories from the Bible.

The new Children's CD we are working on consists of stories from both Old and New Testaments. This Maoz first-of-a-kind project started from three songs written by Hadasa Natali Shechtman, a children's pastor at "Beit Emmanuel" congregation in Jaffa, and quickly grew to a ten-song music

CD - all, of course, in Hebrew!

The songs were born and written from the writer's experience with the children from her congregation, in cooperation with Roman and Tanya Kadin of Maoz Music Department, who composed and arranged the songs.

The Biblical story receives new life when it is performed by children with innocent and pure voices coupled with contemporary music. Each song has a different mu-

sic style; in the songs there are touches of various genres. The project makes the Bible accessible to children through lyrics, rhyme and music that is enjoyable and catchy.

Several children from our 'Music-Making For Kids' program participated in the recording of this CD, and the little singers come from families of both believers and non-believers. This CD will be completed soon and we are extremely excited to share it with the children of Israel!



OUR MAOZ TEAM

IN TEL AVIV. YOU MIGHT CALL US A HEBREW 'START-UP' MINISTRY TEAM BECAUSE WE LOVE TO BREAK THROUGH NEW HORIZONS IN EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP.

AND WE LOVE TO PARTNER WITH OTHER MINISTRIES - WITH EVERY TOOL AT OUR DISPOSAL: PUBLISHING, SOCIAL MEDIA, MUSIC VIDEOS, LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES, AND HELPING NEW PASTORS GET STARTED!



LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

By Sean Steckbeck



Something amazing is happening in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza among Muslims and traditional Arab Christians. The Holy Spirit is breathing on the beginnings of a Disciple-Making Movement. There are new geographical-based teams forming, new pioneer areas

being reached, and disciples making disciples that is starting to spread across the West Bank and Gaza. Some of these areas are dangerous to say the least.

At the heart of such a move is the Great Commission, which commands us to, “teach them to observe everything

I have commanded” (Matthew 28:20). One of the commands of Jesus is to “Love Your Enemy” and specifically to the Arab people group, it is the Jewish people. We have seen the Holy Spirit move in amazing ways to change their hearts in order to fulfill this command.

in contact with Jewish people. However, now, living in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) God has been doing something in his heart towards Israelis – especially as he teaches other Arabs to love their enemies.

Recently, Ahmed was given military permission to cross an Israeli checkpoint and went on a ministry trip to Beer Sheva with an Israeli friend and teammate of his. While eating at a restaurant, the waiter asked Ahmed where he was from and he responded that he was from Gaza. The waiter said he had been to Gaza as an IDF soldier in the last war and had lost a friend of his there. Ahmed then got up, hugged him, and with tears apologized for his friend’s death on behalf of his people. The waiter was so touched that he also was in tears.

This led to the young waiter bringing over two other Jewish Israeli waitresses to hear Ahmed’s testimony of what God had done in his heart through Yeshua. They were so open and hungry for the message of the Gospel because of the love they saw in Ahmed’s eyes towards them. The conversation continued until the manager reminded all the waiters/waitresses that they had a job to do! That night, the Holy Spirit moved in Ahmed’s heart as he wept and travailed for the salvation of the Jewish people.

“A” is a Muslim background believer who has recently come to know Yeshua. He is very passionate about sharing the gospel and making disciples of his fellow Muslims. Recently, his mother had to go to an Israeli hospital. While in the waiting area, “A” was sitting beside an Orthodox Jewish man who was in the same room as his mother. “A” then told the man his testimony and how he was once violent towards the Jewish people, but Yeshua changed his heart.

The Orthodox Jewish man, who probably wouldn’t listen

to any other person tell him about Yeshua, was very interested. “A” then shared from the Old Testament scriptures about Yeshua fulfilling the role of Messiah and how he can change hearts. He gave himself as an example. The Orthodox Jewish man left and said, “You have given me a lot to think about that I never would have considered” and promised to really examine Yeshua.

It all starts with “Love Your Enemies.”



◀ MINISTERING TO BEDOUIN IN THE SOUTH OF ISRAEL.

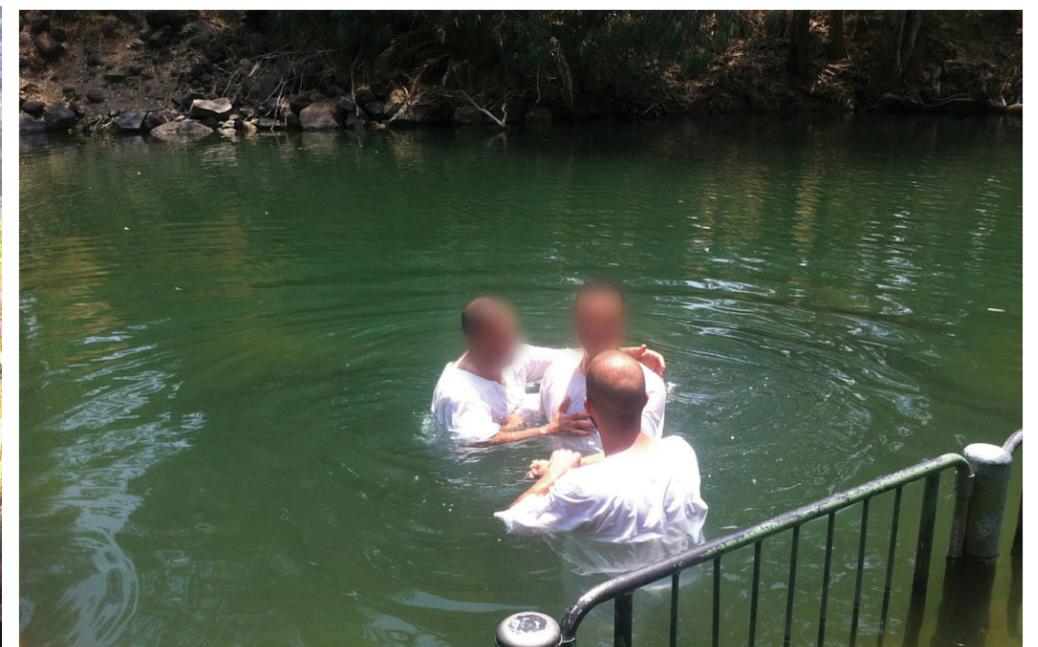
▲ SEAN STECKBECK (RIGHT) WITH ONE OF HIS YOUNG DISCIPLES.

A group of three new Palestinian Muslim-background disciples were driving within the West Bank when as usual they were stopped at a security checkpoint by the IDF. In the past, they would complain and be embittered by the lost time waiting at checkpoints and they thoroughly despised any interrogation.

However, this time the Lord was working in all their hearts. They noticed the Jewish soldier also spoke Arabic. They began to share the love of Yesua (Yeshua) with the Jewish soldier and encouraged him to learn more about Him until he reluctantly

had to get back to his guard duty. Ironically, the three Muslim-background believers in Yeshua pray to get stopped at checkpoints so they can share the love of Yeshua with Jewish soldiers – with whom they would usually never have access or contact. They are excited to love their enemies and God has given them a special love in their hearts for soldiers!

Ahmed (not his real name) is one of the team leaders and lived most of his life in Gaza until the overthrow of the Palestinian Authority by Hamas. He had never come



Maoz Israel Ministries participates in the evangelism and discipleship of five Arab ministries including the work of Sean Steckbeck through the gifts and prayers of Maoz Israel partners.



PARTIAL VIEW OF THE HANUKKAH MEETING.

In Tel Aviv:

TIFERET YESHUA CONGREGATION HOSTS HANUKKAH SERVICE

This weekend we had standing room only! I mean every time I turned around I saw about 15 people without chairs at our annual Hanukkah service. More than 200 people packed inside Tiferet Yeshua to see Tanya, one of our worship leaders, lead a group of Israeli children in traditional Hanukkah songs. Others had heard about the free concert and brought their children to see it.

Because many of these folks were attending for the first time and had no context for ‘worship’ they remained seated

as if our worship team was part of the concert, clapping eagerly after each song! Moti Cohen, our youth leader and a native-born Israeli, gave a great explanation about *who we are* as Messianic Jews. No one left or appeared concerned.

While many of the newcomers went upstairs with their children for the children’s Hanukkah party, others who stayed heard the powerful testimony of Sahar, an on-fire Israeli soccer player, and Bilel, an Arab believer and army officer from a Druze background. The Druze trace their roots back to

Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. There are only two known Druze-background families in all of Israel that have embraced Yeshua. Hearing how Bilel’s alcoholic father came to faith after seeing Yeshua the Messiah in a dream and then leading the rest of the family to Yeshua was amazing.

Asher Intrater then presented the timeline from 300 years before Yeshua was born (when the cleansing of the Temple took place – now commemorated as Hanukkah) and the coming of the Messiah when He cleansed the Temple of money changers



BOTTOM: LEFT, ISRAELI SOCCER PLAYER TELLS HIS STORY THAT BROUGHT HIM TO FAITH IN YESHUA. RIGHT, A DRUZE SOLDIER, FROM ONE OF ONLY TWO FAMILIES IN ISRAEL WHO ARE KNOWN CHRISTIANS AFTER YESHUA THE MESSIAH CAME TO HIS FATHER IN A DREAM.

and commerce. It was a wonderful history lesson that everyone could understand.

At the end of the service an Israeli woman professed faith in Yeshua; another asked me to pray for her saying, “I am close to believing but I just want God to show me that it is all real.”

After the service, we all went into our newly renovated fellowship hall and ate *sufganiot* (Hanukkah donuts), the primary Hanukkah treat!

I could not help but think how great it

would be to renovate our sanctuary as well. The building is old and the floor is black tile. Our passion is to reach young adults in this young city. Every other place they go to is renovated and modernly decorated. It would be only fitting that Tiferet Yeshua has the same standard of interior design—**with the Power of the Gospel of Yeshua!**

We want to replace the old black floor with modern white tiles, the watered stained ceiling with a brand new one, paint the walls, replace the blinds over the windows and more.

We are so grateful that Ari and Shira and Maoz supporters stand with us every month. I know that your passion, like mine is simply to reach more Israelis with the message of Yeshua. Please consider a generous gift to help us renovate our building.

By Ron Cantor

Asher Intrater and Ron Cantor lead Congregation Tiferet Yeshua in downtown Tel Aviv.

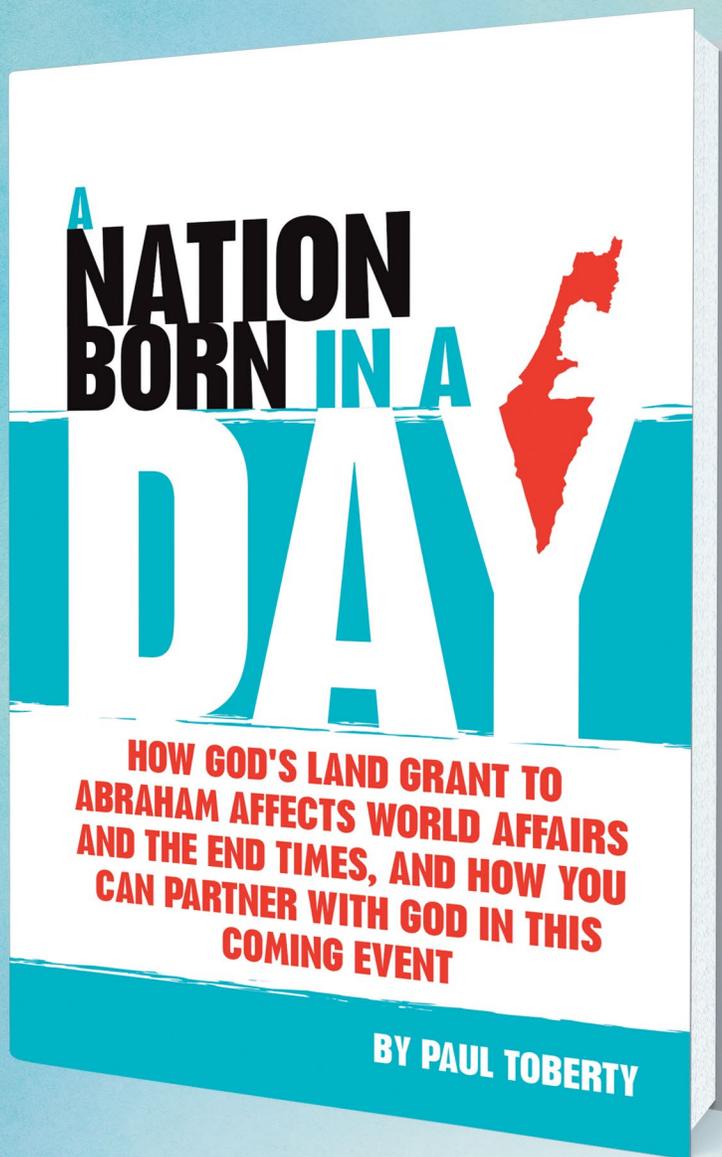
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AND THOSE
WHO
LOVE TO
PRAY FOR
ISRAEL!*

We are offering “**Nation Born in a Day**” – a book by Paul Toberty that will include a short synopsis of Israel’s history, as well as a 30-day devotional, including a prayer guide of how to pray for Israel and her people each day with authority and understanding. This is a great tool for you to start 2016 off by including Israel in your prayers. We want you to have it with your **donation of any amount**, while supplies last.

*Available in USA, UK, and Canada only. We are sorry we are not able to provide this book to any other global intercessors.