

Jewish and Muslim History of Love

1. Prophet Muhammad and the Jews
2. The Jewish Golden Age created by Muslims
3. Over 500 years of Jewish - Muslim Love in Turkey
4. Turkey's rescue of over 100,000 European Jews in the Holocaust
5. Albanian Muslims Protection of the Jews in the Holocaust
6. Morocco and the Jews
7. Jewish and Muslim kidney donation
8. Jews are the Genetic Brothers of Arabs
9. Arab saves Jewish bomb victim
10. Arab dies saving drowning Jew
11. Islam's removal of the Babylon Curse
12. Islam's removal of Jesus's blood from Jewish hands

(1) **PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S TREATY WITH JEWS (622)**

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) decided to leave Mecca because the Meccan chiefs had taken action to kill him at his home. It was the year **622 CE**. As far the choice of migrating to Medina (known as **Yathrib** at that time), the decision was made easier by the second '**Pledge of Aqaba**' made a year

before on the occasion of the annual rites of pilgrimage. The pledge was made by seventy three men and two women of Khazraj and Aws communities of Medina. They had accepted Islam and wanted to invite the Prophet to migrate to Medina. Their motivation for this move, apart from recognizing him as the Prophet, the trustworthy, and the best in conduct in Mecca, was to bring peace and security between the Khazraj and Aws. They were often at war with each other and the Battle of Bu'ath had shattered their strength completely. They desperately needed a leader who could be trusted by both communities and bring peace in Medina. As part of the pledge, they were to protect the Prophet as they would protect their women and children if he were attacked by the Meccans.

Among the people in Medina, there was [a small community \(three tribes\) of Jews](#) with Arab communities constituting the majority of the population. Because of wars going on for several generations, the resources of the Arabs were depleted and their influence in Medina was dwindling. The Jews were traders and many of them used to lend money at exorbitant interest. The continuing wars boosted their economy and personal wealth.

The immediate result of the Prophet's migration to Medina was peace and unity between the communities of Aws and Khazraj. The Prophet, motivated by the general welfare of citizens of Medina, decided to offer his services to the remaining communities including the Jews. He had already laid down the basis for relationship between the Emigrants from Mecca (known as Muhajirin) and Medinites (known as the Ansar, the helpers).

The **Treaty** between Muslims, non-Muslim Arabs and Jews of Medina was put in writing and ratified by all parties. It has been preserved by the historians. The document referred Muhammad (pbuh) as the Prophet and Messenger of God but it was understood that the Jews did not have to recognize him as such for their own religious reasons. The major parts of the document were:

“In the name of [Allah](#) (The One True God) the Compassionate, the Merciful. This is a document from Muhammad, the Prophet, governing the relation between the Believers from among the Qurayshites (i.e., Emigrants from Mecca) and Yathribites (i.e., the residents of Medina) and those who followed them and joined them and strived with them. They form one and the same community as against the rest of men.

“No Believer shall oppose the client of another Believer. Whosoever is rebellious, or seeks to spread injustice, enmity or sedition among the Believers, the hand of every man shall be against him, even if he be a son of one of them. A Believer shall not kill a Believer in retaliation of an unbeliever, nor shall he help an unbeliever against a Believer.

“Whosoever among the **Jews** follows us shall have help and equality; they shall not be injured nor shall any enemy be aided against them.... No separate peace will be made when the Believers are fighting in the way of Allah.... The Believers shall avenge the blood of one another shed in the way of Allah ...Whosoever kills a Believer wrongfully shall be liable to retaliation; all the Believers shall be against him as one man and they are bound to take action against him.

“The **Jews** shall contribute (to the cost of war) with the Believers so long as they are at war with a common enemy. The Jews of Banu Najjar, Banu al-Harith, Banu Sa'idah, Banu Jusham, Banu al-Aws, Banu Tha'labah, Jafnah, and Banu al-Shutaybah enjoy the same rights and privileges as the Jews of Banu Aws.

“The **Jews** shall maintain their own religion and the Muslims theirs. Loyalty is a protection against treachery. The close friends of Jews are as themselves. None of them shall go out on a military expedition except with the permission of Muhammad, but he shall not be prevented from taking revenge for a wound.

“The **Jews** shall be responsible for their expenses and the Believers for theirs. Each, if attacked, shall come to the assistance of the other.

“The valley of Yathrib (Medina) shall be sacred and inviolable for all that join this Treaty. Strangers, under protection, shall be treated on the same ground as their protectors; but no stranger shall be taken under protection except with consent of his tribe....No woman shall be taken under protection without the consent of her family.

Whatever difference or dispute between the parties to this covenant remains unsolved shall be referred to Allah and to Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah. Allah is the Guarantor of the piety and goodness that is embodied in this covenant. Neither the Quraysh nor their allies shall be given any protection.

“The contracting parties are bound to help one another against any attack on Yathrib. If they are called to cease hostilities and to enter into peace, they shall be bound to do so in the interest of peace; and if they make a similar demand on Muslims it must be carried out except when the war is against their religion.

“Allah approves the truth and goodwill of this covenant. This treaty shall not protect the unjust or the criminal. Whoever goes out to fight as well as whoever stays at home shall be safe and secure in this city unless he has perpetrated an injustice or committed a crime.... Allah is the protector of the good and God-fearing people.”

The first written constitution of a State ever promulgated by a sovereign in human history emanated from the Prophet of Islam. It was enacted from the first year of Hijrah (622 CE). The treaty stipulated a city state in Medina, allowing wide autonomy to communities. Private justice was to be banished. The head of the State had the prerogative to decide who should participate in an expedition, the war and peace being indivisible. Social insurance was to be instituted.

The name **Yathrib** was changed to Medinat-un-Nabawi, meaning the 'City of the Prophet' soon after he migrated there. The use of only the first word in that name (i.e., Medinah) became popular later.

History does not record much as to when first Jewish migration from north to Yathrib (Medina) began as their numbers remained small throughout their stay there. Among the major reasons for their settlements in Arabia were: the relative peace and security in north Arabia with orchards and gardens; the

Arab trade route linking Yemen, Arabia, Syria and Iraq; and continuing tensions resulting from wars between the Romans and Persians in the area around the Holy Land. Some of the learned men among the Christians and Jews had also moved to this area based on their conviction that the advent of the final Prophet of God was near, who was to settle in this area. **Bahira, the monk**, and **Salman, the Persian**, were some of the people who moved to the caravan route to or near this area. Salman was told by his last Christian sage:

“He will be sent with the religion of Abraham and will come forth in Arabia where he will emigrate from his home to a place between two lava tracts, a country of palms. His Signs are manifest: he will eat of a gift but not if it is given as alms, and between his shoulders is the seal of prophesy.”

Yathrib was the only city fitting this description.

Salman (ra) was born into a Zoroastrian family of Isfahan, Persia. He became a Christian as a young boy and traveled to Syria in search of truth about God and associated himself with the Bishop of Mosul and after the Bishop's death to several other Christian sages. On one of his travels to Gulf of 'Aqaba, north of Red Sea, he was sold to a Jew as a slave by his caravan leader. Salman (ra) was then sold again to a Jew of Banu Quraizah in Yathrib just before Prophet Muhammad's migration.

After confirming these signs, Salamn (ra) accepted Islam and, due to his sincerity and dedication to Islam, he was accepted by the Prophet as 'one of the Prophet's household.' It was on his advice a trench was dug around Medina. The **trench** (in the 'Battle of Ahzab,' also known as the 'Battle of Trench') took the Meccan army by surprise and they and their confederates (Arabs and Jews) could not accomplish the plan of wiping out Islam and Muslims of Medina.

(2) The Jewish Golden Age created by Muslims

QUESTION:

What is the 'Golden Age'? Did the Muslims really blossom together with Jews?

ANSWER:

- In fact, the years between 900 and 1200 in Spain and North Africa are known as the Hebrew "golden age," a sort of Jewish Renaissance that arose from the fusion of the Arab and Jewish intellectual worlds. Jews watched their Arab counterparts closely and learned to be astronomers, philosophers, scientists, and poets.
- "At its peak about one thousand years ago, the Muslim world made a remarkable contribution to science, notably mathematics and medicine. Baghdad in its heyday and southern Spain built universities to which thousands flocked. Rulers surrounded themselves with scientists and artists. A spirit of freedom allowed Jews, Christians, and Muslim to work side by side..."

- **Francis Ghiles**, "*What is Wrong With Muslim Science*" Nature, 24 March 1983.

(3) Over 500 years of Jewish - Muslim Love in Turkey

On the midnight of August 2nd 1492, when Columbus embarked on what would become

his most famous expedition to the New World, his fleet departed from the relatively unknown seaport of Palos because the shipping lanes of Cadiz and Seville were clogged with Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain by the Edict of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain.

The Jews forced either to convert to Christianity or to "leave" the country under the menace "they dare not return... not so much as to take a step on them not trespass upon them in any manner whatsoever" left their land, their property, their belongings all that was theirs and familiar to them rather than abandon their beliefs, their traditions, their heritage.

In the faraway Ottoman Empire, one ruler extended an immediate welcome to the persecuted Jews of Spain, the Sepharadim. He was the Sultan Bayazid II.

In 1992, the discovery year for all those connected to the American continents north, central and south world Jewry was concerned with commemorating not only the expulsion, but also seven centuries of the Jewish life in Spain, flourishing under Moslem rule, and the 500th anniversary of the official welcome extended by the Ottoman Empire in 1492.

This humanitarianism is consistent with the beneficence and goodwill traditionally displayed by the Turkish government and peoples towards those of different creeds, cultures and backgrounds. Indeed, Turkey serves as a model to be emulated by any nation that finds refugees from any of the four corners of the world standing at its doors.

In 1992, Turkish Jewry celebrated not only the anniversary of this gracious welcome, but also the remarkable spirit of tolerance and acceptance which has characterized the whole Jewish experience in Turkey. The events which were planned symposiums, conferences, concerts, exhibitions, films and books, restoration of ancient Synagogues etc. will commemorate the longevity and prosperity of the Jewish community. As a whole, the celebration aimed to demonstrate the richness and security of life Jews have found in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic over more than five centuries and show that indeed it is not impossible for people of different creeds to live together peacefully under one flag.

A History Predating 1492

The history of the Jews in Anatolia started many centuries before the migration of Sephardic Jews. Remnants of Jewish settlement from the 4th century BC have been uncovered in the Aegean region. The historian Josephus Flavius relates that Aristotle "met Jewish people with whom he had an exchange of views during his trip across Asia Minor."

Ancient synagogue ruins have been found in Sardis, near Izmir, dating from 220 BC and traces of other Jewish settlements have been discovered near Bursa, in the southeast and along the Aegean, Mediterranean and Black Sea coasts. A bronze column found in Ankara confirms the rights the Emperor Augustus accorded the Jews of Asia Minor.

Jewish communities in Anatolia flourished and continued to prosper through the Turkish conquest. When the Ottomans captured Bursa in 1324 and made it their capital, they found a Jewish community oppressed under Byzantine rule. The Jews welcomed the Ottomans as saviors. Sultan Orhan gave them permission to build the Etz ha-Hayyim (Tree of Life) synagogue which remained in service until 50 years ago.

Turkey and the Holocaust: Turkey's Role in Rescuing Turkish and European Jewry from Nazi Persecution, 1933-1945

By Stanford J. Shaw,

"While six million Jews were being exterminated by the Nazis, the rescue of some 15,000 Turkish Jews from France, and even of some 100,000 Jews from Eastern Europe might well be considered as relatively insignificant in comparison. It was, however, very significant to the people who were rescued, and above all it showed that, as had been the case for more than five centuries, Turks and Jews continued to help each other in times of great crises."

Turkish diplomats in France spent a good deal of time organizing 'train caravans' to take Turkish Jews back to Turkey. This actually was encouraged by the Vichy government as well as the French authorities in German-occupied France as the only way to make sure that Turkish Jews were not subjected to the anti Jewish laws applied to French Jews, because the Nazi occupation officials themselves were increasingly unhappy about the exemptions and were regularly demanding that they be brought to an end. Thus the French Foreign Ministry wrote to the Turkish Embassy at Vichy on 13 January 1943, after the French finally had accepted the Turkish argument that it was illegal for them to discriminate among Turkish citizens of different religions:

To avoid the application of these measures to Turkish citizens, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would be disposed to look favorably on the return of the interested parties to their countries of origin.

In the middle of 1943, the Nazi occupying authorities, inspired by Adolph Eichmann, finally issued an ultimatum to Turkey and other neutral countries that they would have to repatriate all their Jewish citizens in France, after which all those who remained would be treated the same as French Jews.

Most of the neutral countries agreed to this right away and evacuated their Jews quickly because they were able to send them home directly without having to send them through third countries. Turkey was unable to do the same because with the Mediterranean closed to shipping, the only way to send Turkish Jews back was by train through Southeastern Europe. The Nazis issued group visas for the Jews being evacuated, but the various countries located along the path of the trains were not at all anxious to help Jews escape extermination. The most notorious of these were Croatia, Serbia and Bulgaria, which caused many difficulties to prevent the trains from passing through their territory on their way to Turkey. Finally, however, the Turkish diplomats were able to organize some four train caravans during 1943 and eight more in 1944, which together transported some 2,000 Jews to Istanbul.

Other Jews were helped to flee to the areas of southern France under Italian occupation, where they were treated much better until Mussolini fell and Italy was occupied by the Germans in the middle of 1943. They also fled across the Pyrenees into Franco's Spain, where they were given refugee despite Spain's alliance with Germany, or across the

Mediterranean to North Africa. There they were interned but not persecuted, except in Algeria, where the French colons were even more anti-Semitic than were the Germans.

In 1944, when the Vichy government was thinking of deporting all 10,000 Turkish Jews living in its territory to the East for extermination, Turkish Foreign Minister Numan Menemencioglu intervened with the French government, on the direct orders of President Ismet İnönü, stating that such an act would be considered unfriendly by Turkey and would cause a major diplomatic incident, including perhaps a complete break in diplomatic relations. This convinced Vichy to abandon the plan and saved these Jews from almost certain death. The original correspondence on this matter has not yet been uncovered. Turkey's key roll in this matter is, however, well documented in other sources. The American Ambassador at Ankara, Laurence Steinhart, himself a Jew, wrote the head of the Jewish Agency office in Istanbul, Chaim (Charles) Barlas on 9 February 1944:

... It has been a great satisfaction to me personally to have been in a position to have intervened with at least some degree of success on behalf of former Turkish citizens in France of Jewish origin. As I explained to you yesterday, while the Vichy government has as yet given no commitment to the Turkish Government, there is every evidence that the intervention of the Turkish authorities has caused the Vichy authorities to at least postpone if altogether abandon their apparent intention to exile these unfortunates to almost certain death by turning them over to the Nazi authorities.

This is confirmed in the memoirs of Steinhart's German counterpart in Ankara, Ambassador Franz von papen, who, of course, emphasized his own role in the affair: *I learned through one of the German émigré professors that the Secretary of the Jewish Agency had asked me to intervene in the matter of the threatened deportation to camps in Poland of 10,000 Jews living in Southern France. Most of them were former Turkish citizens of Levantine origin. I promised my help and discussed the matter with m. Menemencioglu. There was no legal basis to warrant any official action on his part, but he authorized me to inform Hitler that the deportation of these former Turkish citizens would cause a sensation in Turkey and endanger friendly relations between the two countries. This demarche succeeded in quashing the whole affair.*

Finally, one of Barlas's associates at the Jewish Agency office in Istanbul, Dr. Chaim Pazner, stated to the Second Yad Vashem International Historical Conference on Rescue Attempts during the Holocaust, held in Jerusalem in April 1974:

In December 1943, Chaim Barlas notified me from Istanbul that he had received a cable from Isaac Wiesman, representative of the World Jewish Congress in Lisbon, that approximately ten thousand Jews who were Turkish citizens, but had been living in France for years and had neglected to register and renew their Turkish citizenship with the Turkish representation in France, were in danger of being deported to the death camps. Weismann requested that Barlas contact the competent Turkish authorities and attempt to save the above-mentioned Jews. Upon receiving the telegram, Barlas immediately turned to the Turkish Foreign Ministry in Ankara, submitted a detailed memorandum on the subject, and requested urgent action by the Turkish legation in Paris.... We later received word from Istanbul and Paris that, with the exception of several score, these ten thousand Jews were saved from extinction.

In addition to providing material assistance to Turkish Jews persecuted in France and other countries occupied by the Nazis in Western Europe, Turkey also helped East European Jews persecuted in countries such as Greece, Lithuania, Rumania, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Right from the start of the war, the Turkish government permitted the Jewish Agency to maintain a rescue office at the Pera Palas and other hotels in the Tepebasi section of Istanbul, overlooking the Golden Horn, under the direction of Chaim (Charles) Barlas, as we have seen. In addition, other Jewish organizations based in Palestine were allowed to maintain representative offices in Istanbul. Many were sent by kibbutzim wanting to rescue members from persecution or death in Eastern Europe. First, however, they had to learn what was going on in those countries. For this purpose they sent their agents from Istanbul to these countries to gather information. They used the Turkish post office to send letters to Jews in these countries and to receive responses. They sent packages of clothing and food to help out when needed. In all of these activities, the Turkish Ministry of Finance, despite Turkey's severe financial problems resulting from the war, provided them with the hard currency needed to meet their expenses, and the Turkish diplomats stationed in these countries allowed their facilities to be used when needed.

With this help, the Jewish rescue groups based in Istanbul were able to organize trains and steamships which carried to safety in Turkey and beyond as many refugees that could leave their homes. In this they were vigorously opposed, not only by the Nazis, but also by the British government, which correctly feared that most of the refugees arriving in Turkey would go on in Palestine. Turkey as a matter of fact made this a condition of its agreement to allow these refugees to enter its territory. It would not support large number of immigrants of this sort since people in Turkey were already starving as a result of wartime shortages and blockades in the Mediterranean. It did allow the Jewish Agency and other organizations to bring these refugees through Turkey on their way to Palestine, however, permitting the Mossad organization to send them in small boats across the Mediterranean from southern Turkey. When the British were successful in preventing some of these refugees from going to Palestine, instead interring them on Cyprus, the Turkish government allowed them to remain in Turkey far beyond the limits of their transit visas, in many cases right until the end of the war.

The Vatican's reluctance to help the persecuted Jews of Europe is well documented. This was not the case, however, with the Papal Nuncio in Istanbul from 1935 until 1944, Archbishop Angelo Roncalli, who later became Pope John XXIII. Roncalli was a very unusual person. When he first came to Turkey even before the war, he taught his parishioners, including many Greeks and Armenians, that they should forget their prejudices against Turks and Muslims, that they should follow the precepts of Christian charity and love in dealing with them, that they should forget the bigotries of the past and work together with their fellow Turkish citizens to build a new and modern Republic. Roncalli learned Turkish himself and recited the Christmas mass in Turkish at least one in Istanbul. This greatly pleased the Turkish people, who had become increasingly disgusted with the insistence of Christians in Turkey to continue using Greek, Italian, French or Armenian in preference to Turkish, unlike the Jews who had emphasized the use of Turkish instead of French and Ladino since the mid 1930's. During the war Roncalli went much further. He got the Sisters of Sion order of nuns to use their own communications network in Eastern Europe to help the Jewish Agency pass

communications, clothing and food to Jews in Hungary in particular. Other Vatican couriers going from Istanbul to Eastern Europe did the same thing as the result of Roncalli's orders. He even got them to carry false Certificates of Conversion to Hungarian Jews to help save them from the Nazis. A remarkable person indeed, early in the year 2000 was recognized as a Saint by the Catholic Church.

Turkey also acted to help the Jews of Greece during the Holocaust. Just as was the case in the areas of southern France occupied by Italy, so also in Greece, during the time it was under Italian occupation early in the war, Greek Jews did reasonably well, despite pressure from Greeks themselves, whose long tradition of anti-Semitism led them to hope that the foreign occupation would at least enable them to get rid of their Jewish fellow-citizens. Even after German troops entered Greece to help the Italians against Greek guerilla resistance. The Italian troops protected Greek Jews from persecution at the hands of the Germans and the Greeks. Once Italy fell out of the war in 1943 and the Germans took over, however, the situation of Jews in Greece became worse than anywhere else in Europe, since while many Frenchmen and Dutchmen, and even Germans had helped the Jews to escape the Nazi persecution, most Greeks did none of this due to their long history of pervasive anti-Semitism. The only Greeks who helped Jews were the partisans fighting against the Nazis, who did help Jewish groups spiriting Jews out of Greece, either across the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean to Turkey or Palestine, or by land across the Maritza river into Turkey. Most Greek Jews were in fact exterminated by the Nazis. Jewish synagogues and schools were systematically destroyed. Even the great Jewish cemetery at Salonica was wiped out. After the war, instead of restoring it, Greece built the new Aristotle University of Salonica on the cemetery lands. The Turkish consuls in Greece, at Athens, Salonica and Gümülcine as well as on the islands of Midilli and Rhodes provided the same sort of assistance that the Turkish consuls did in France, also organizing boats to carry Jews to safety in Turkey and intervening with the Germans to exempt Turkish Jews from persecution and extermination. The most outstanding example of this came with the activities of Consul Selahattin Ülkümen in Rhodes, who got the Nazis to spare the Turkish Jews on the island, and who as a result was subsequently imprisoned by the Nazis after his consulate was bombed and his pregnant wife killed by the Germans. The Turkish guards on the Greek-Turkish border allowed Jews coming from Greece as well as Bulgaria to enter Turkey even though most of them had no papers at all. Camps were set up for them near Edirne, and ultimately they were allowed to pass on to Istanbul, and, for most of them, to join the other refugees doing by small boats from the Mediterranean coast of southern Turkey to Palestine. Turkey thus provided major assistance to Jews being persecuted by the Nazis, despite pressure from the British, who wanted to stop Jewish immigration to Palestine, and by the Nazis, who demanded not only that this rescue work be stopped, but also that all Turkish Jews, as well as the refugees, be sent to Germany for extermination. Turkey steadfastly refused these demands and continued to assist European Jewry to escape from the Holocaust and in most cases go to Palestine. Only after it was assured of an Allied victory, and the impossibility of a German invasion, by late 1943, was it ready to enter the war. Even then, however, it reacted to appeals for delay from the Jewish Agency, which understood that immediate Turkish entry would cut off the escape routes through Turkey which were enabling thousand of Jews to escape the Nazis throughout Europe, postponing its entry for almost a year. While six million Jews were being exterminated by the Nazis, the

rescue of some 15,000 Turkish Jews from France, and even of some 100,000 Jews from Eastern Europe might well be considered as relatively insignificant in comparison. It was, however, very significant to the people who were rescued, and above all it showed that, as had been the case for more than five centuries, Turks and Jews continued to help each other in times of great crises.

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Stanford J. Shaw, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic. Both books were published both by the New York University Press and by MacMillian publishers in England (now called Palgrave Publishers).*

Unfortunately the American editions, which were in paperback, are out of print, but I understand that the British editions (only in hardcover) are still available.

(5) Albanian Muslims Protection of the Jews in the Holocaust

(Speech at the 1997 Yom Hashoah Commemoration (Holocaust Memorial) Honoring Albanian Righteous Gentiles and Jewish Survivors, New York City Council Chamber, May 2, 1997)

Remembering Albania's Protection of the Jews During the Holocaust
by Dr. Anna Kohen

Dear Friends:

I'm honored to be here today commemorating the biggest tragedy of our nation, the Holocaust. We are also here to celebrate one of the aspects of human behavior -- that of helping each other in time of need. We look back on these dark times of civilization with tearful eyes and broken hearts trying to find lighter moments to ease the pain.

Every tragedy has its own good side. It brings people together regardless of race, color, or religion. It tries to restore hope in their victim's soul and attempts to heal the wounds inflicted on them by their fellow humans. The Holocaust is not only going to be remembered for the millions of lives that perished into the flames of hatred, it will also be remembered for the humanity of others helping the Jews.

There is a small country in the heartland of Europe called Albania where I was fortunately born, where hospitality to foreigners is part of their tradition. During the

Second World War, not only did the Albanians save all the Jews who were living among them but they dared to share their homes, their food and their lives with them. Albania has its share of Oscar Shindlers, and, indeed, so many that we could never have thanked each glorious one of them.

Let us be reminded that not one - not one - of the Jews living in Albania, or those who sought refuge there were turned over to the fascists -- all found a safe haven at great danger to their protectors.

My family was one of many who were saved. I'm not a survivor but a child of survivors, born in Vlora in southern Albania. My parents, Nina and David Kohen, came from Janina, Greece. They were living in Vlora when the Nazis invaded Albania. They fled to the mountains and hid in a small Muslim village called Trevlazer. They took Muslim names, my father David became Daut, my mother Nina became Bule, and my brother Elio became Ali. Everyone in the village knew they were Jews but not one person betrayed them.

I had a very interesting experience that I would like to share with you: when I was about 5 or 6 years old, I was walking down the street with my mother, and I heard someone shouting, "Bule, Bule!!!" I turned my head to see what was going on, and this woman was running towards us. She ran to my mother and started to kiss and hug her with tears streaming down her face. Later on, my mother told me that she was one of the women from the Muslim village that had saved her life. Other Jews were hiding in people's houses. As you can see, the Albanian people risked their lives for the Jews. I would not be here today delivering this speech if it were not for the courage and generosity of those Albanians.

Until the year 1990, little was known about Albania and the Albanian Jews but when things began to change in the country, an Israeli photographer, Gavra Mandil, remembered the Veseli family who saved his life. Gavra Mandil had taken refuge in Albania after the Nazis invaded Yugoslavia, and the Veseli family saved him. He invited Refik Veseli to Israel, and, for the first time, an Albanian Muslim was honored with the title Righteous Gentile. As a matter of fact, if you look at the calendar in the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, on the second page in the month of February, is a picture of Gavra Mandil and Refik Veseli. Since then, more and more Righteous Albanians were discovered and honored in Israel. A list of all of their names is posted in the museum.

On behalf of the Albanian Jews living in Albania, Israel, and America, I would like to give a message to the Albanian people and the Righteous Gentiles: thank you for saving us, we will never forget you.

As Apostol Kotani says in his recent book, *The Hebrews of Albania During Centuries*, "Sikur te kisha krahe e te fluteroja do te veja te puthja token Shqipetare qe me shpetoj jeten. / If I could have wings to fly, I would come to kiss the holy Albanian land which saved my life." Thank you.

(6) Morocco and the Jews

The New York Jewish Museum's "Morocco: Jews and Art in a Muslim Land" explores the multicultural art and traditions of Morocco and 2,000 years of Jewish life there. It is the first time an exhibit at the Jewish Museum has had an Arab leader - the king of Morocco - as patron.

"These close intergroup relations are reflected in the art of the Kingdom," King Mohammed VI writes in the show's catalog. "The architecture of mosques and synagogues, the music of Muslims and Jews, the patterns and designs of textiles, stucco and tiles all reflect this commonly held artistic tradition."

The peoples were long unified to such an extent that, asked by a Nazi commander for a list of all the Jews in the North African nation, King Mohammed V, grandfather of the current king, responded: "We have no Jews in Morocco, only Moroccan citizens."

More than 180 objects--including paintings, jewelry, ceremonial items, textiles, costumes, photos and two short films--offer a rare glimpse of Jewish life in Morocco and the spaces and sites there, some of which are holy to both Jews and Muslims. About 250,000 Jews once lived in the North African nation.

A painting of a Jewish marriage in Tangiers that brings together the main themes of the show serves as a prelude to the exhibit.

"Jews and Muslims are joined. The musicians are Muslim. There's an emphasis on jewelry and textiles, and there's the hand print on the wall, which was an important amulet for both Muslims and Jews," said Vivian B. Mann, the show's organizer and the museum's curator of Judaica. Also featured as a prelude to the show is a 1521 edition of a Moroccan book in Hebrew that, when first published in 1516, became the first book known to have been printed in Africa.

With beautiful Moroccan music as an accompaniment, the exhibit is entered through an arched doorway that seems shadowed by palms. Two side-by-side film screens give a feel for the countryside and its holy places of both faiths.

The show is organized in a rough chronology, with the first gallery devoted to paintings and photographs of Moroccan life by outsiders. Among the highlights are five works by French artist Eugene Delacroix, perhaps the first European artist to spend time in Morocco depicting scenes of life there. Because Jews were generally more willing to pose as models than their Muslim compatriots, many of the paintings are of Jewish life.

Another gallery focuses on the two arts most dominated by the Moroccan Jews: the making of textiles and jewelry. The works, divided into cities influenced by Spain and those more influenced by Berber culture, are among the most stunning in the show. Included are dramatic headpieces made of silver, with bright beads and long braids of false hair, and Jewish wedding dresses embroidered in gold. Artistic influences can be traced east to Byzantium and north into Europe.

There are also religious objects, such as ornate lamps and Torah finials that feature some of the artistic touches also seen in Islamic art.

The last section of the show is devoted to the Alliance Israelite Universelle, a French philanthropic organization that educated Moroccan Jews in Hebrew and in French. A classroom from one of the schools has been brought from Morocco and reconstructed for the show--complete with a prominently placed photo of the king and writings in Arabic. With the schools' introduction, Moroccan Jews began looking outward, and many later left for Europe or the new state of Israel.

Today, only about 5,000 or 6,000 Jews still live in Morocco, although those who have emigrated still retain their Moroccan citizenship and many return to visit sites in Morocco they still consider sacred.

The show runs through Feb. 11, 2001.

Source: Los Angeles Times, Saturday, November 4, 2000

(7) Jewish and Muslim kidney donation

An Israeli and an Arab showing the way

Regional, People, 5/13/1998

from ArabicNews.Com

It was the first multiple kidneys transplant ever done in Israel. But that was not the only important thing. The political implication of the surgery was more important where an Arab and a Jew found a way to help each other and give a lesson of co-existence between these two war-shattered nations.

Yousef Tzileg, a 64 year old Jew from West Jerusalem, had suffered of a kidney malfunction. His wife, Vicky, would not donate her kidney for him because it did not match his body. And his Jewish doctors started looking for the matching kidney through a list of potential donators. On the other side of the trench, Yousef Ammash, the 53 year old Arab man from the village of Jisr Al Zarqa south of Haifa, wanted to help his wife, Siham, whose kidney had stopped functioning some time ago. Yet he too could not help her because his kidney did not match hers.

However, doctors who checked the medical files of these four people found out that Arab Yousef's kidney matches Jewish Yousef's while the kidney of Vicky matched Siham's. Contacts were conducted with the two families and the decision was reached: swapping kidneys would not only save two lives but it would also open new horizons for co-existence between Arabs and Jews.

The four people, the two Yousefs and their wives, were admitted on Monday morning to Rabin's Medical Center, formerly Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv where assassinated prime minister of Israel was hospitalized right after he was shot to death by a lone assassin in November 1995. They underwent all medical checks they needed for the transplant, which started on Tuesday morning at around 08:00 and ended by 15:00 hrs. in the afternoon. "We waited outside in the corridor along with relatives of the Jewish family. It was very interesting for all of us to talk about this unique multiple transplant," said Khalil, a relative of Yousef Ammash in a telephone interview from the hospital. He said the whole affair seemed like a puzzle but noted that no major political outcome should be expected. "We have done what we thought was fit to save human lives. I personally did not think of the political implication of the surgery because what we cared for was basically to save the live of Siham. Nothing more. Nothing Less."

Ammash has five children. They all went to the hospital to be close to their parents. All five children wished the best of luck to all patients in the hospital. "Foremost of all, we are all human beings and the most important thing is that this surgery proves to be a success and that co-existence survives between the two peoples," the elderly son told the Hebrew press on Wednesday. A relative who spoke on the phone and presented himself as Ali said the transplant is not likely to change their view of the political process because they see intransigent Benjamin Netanyahu as being the sole responsible for the collapse of the peace process. The timing of the operations which falls as Palestinians mark the 50th anniversary of their exodus and of the creation of Israel was merely coincidental to the Ammash family. "We never thought of this anniversary within the context of the surgery. For us, every day can a little Nakba for us because of the discrimination we face by the Israeli authorities against us," said Ali.

"This is a very special day not only from a medical point of view but also because of the atmosphere of cooperation that existed between the two families and through them between the two peoples. This is the best sample that peace starts between peoples," said Youval, son of Yousef and Vicky. The way he has seen the surgery differs a lot from that relatives of the Arab Yousef saw. For many of them, the transplant would not change much of the political situation. The family lives in Jisr Al Zarqa, a small Arab village on the main Tel Aviv-Haifa road. Like most of the Arab residents of Israel, they feel being discriminated against by the government. Their second class citizens feeling has not changed over the past fifty years and they think that friendly relations between Arabs and Jews never managed to replace the official policy of the government.

Professor Zaki Shapira, director of transplant department, who supervised the four operations, said kidney transplants are held at an average of 60 per year. The new thing in this case, he said, is in the multiple aspect of the operation where four people were operated on at the same time. "The enthusiasm is great when you see the two families helping each other.

(8) Jews are the Genetic Brothers of Arabs

New York, NY - According to a new scientific study, Jews are the genetic brothers of Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese, and they all share a common genetic lineage that stretches back thousands of years. This genetic brotherhood does not include non-Jewish Europeans.

This finding differs from the Anglo-Israelism teachings of the [British Israel World Federation](#), and a number of off-beat American televangelists including [Arnold Murray](#) of the Shepherd's Chapel in Gravette, Arkansas; and the WGN Sunday morning Church of God duo [Roderick C. Meredith](#) and [Gerald Flurry](#). It also runs counter to the notions of Steven M. Collins in his dizzying speculative *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of*

Israel...Found! ([Collins 1995](#)), the teachings of Israeli author Yair Davidy in his three books *The Tribes: The Israelite Origins of Western Peoples* ([Davidy 1993](#)), *Ephraim* ([Davidy 1994](#)), and *Lost Israelite Identity* ([Davidy 1996](#)), and the United Church of God's curious new booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy* ([Foster 2001](#)).

"Jews and Arabs are all really children of Abraham," says Harry Ostrer, M.D., Director of the Human Genetics Program at [New York University School of Medicine](#), an author of the new study by an international team of researchers^{FI} in the United States, Europe, and Israel. "And all have preserved their Middle Eastern genetic roots over 4,000 years," he says.

The researchers analyzed the Y chromosome, which is usually passed unchanged from father to son, of more than 1,000 men worldwide. Throughout human history, alterations have occurred in the sequence of chemical bases that make up the DNA in this so-called male chromosome, leaving variations that can be pinpointed with modern genetic techniques. Related populations carry the same specific variations. In this way, scientists can track descendants of large populations and determine their common ancestors. Specific regions of the Y chromosome were analyzed in 1,371 men from 29 worldwide populations, including Jews and non-Jews from the Middle East, North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, and Europe.

The study, published in the [June 6, 2000, issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#) (on-line May 9, 2000), found that Jewish men shared a common set of genetic signatures with non-Jews from the Middle East, including Palestinians, Syrians, and Lebanese, and these signatures diverged significantly from non-Jewish men outside of this region. Consequently, Jews and Arabs share a common ancestor and are more closely related to one another than to non-Jews from other areas of the world ([see study](#) or obtain [PDF Download](#)).

The study also revealed that despite the complex history of Jewish migration in the Diaspora (the time since BCE 556 when Jews migrated out of Palestine), Jewish communities have generally not intermixed with non-Jewish populations. If they had, then Jewish men from different regions of the world would not share the same genetic signatures in their Y chromosome.

"Because ancient Jewish law states that Jewish religious affiliation is assigned maternally, our study afforded the opportunity to assess the contribution of non-Jewish men to present-day Jewish genetic diversity," says Michael Hammer, Ph.D., from the University of Arizona, Tucson, who is the lead author of the new study. "It was surprising", he says, "to see how significant the Middle Eastern genetic signal was in Jewish men from different communities in the Diaspora."

In 1998 BibArch called for a scientific approach to study of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ([see *Who Are the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel from the Nov./Dec. 1998 issue of Perspectives*](#)). Why? The heated debate as to whether or not the

Lost Ten Tribes of Israel compose the biblical and therefore the prophetic identity of the United States, Britain, and several European countries, continues to seethe. While the findings of historians, linguists and archeologists are of great import they have not established with any certainty that Americans of northern European descent, the British, and northern European peoples are indeed the descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of the House of Israel. While the study is not conclusive in explaining the fate of the Ten Lost Tribes it is a giant step in the direction of bringing scientific evidence to bear.

(9) Arab saves Jewish bomb victim

<http://www.newsday.com/ap/international/ap892.htm>

AP International - 04/23/2001

Arab Visits Jewish Boy He Saved

| AP-NY-04-23-01 2045EDT by KEVIN WACK, Associated Press Writer KFAR SABA, Israel (AP) --

Michael Milman, a Jewish 14-year-old, lay bleeding on the street after an Arab suicide bomber blew himself up in a crowd of Israelis. Moawiya Kabha, an Arab ambulance driver on duty nearby, rushed to the scene, gathered the unconscious bleeding boy in his arms and delivered him to the hospital emergency room Sunday -- just in the nick of time. "The doctors said one more minute and he would have lost all his blood," said Kabha, 24. It wasn't even the first time he has saved a Jewish child.

Three weeks ago, he rescued a badly injured Israeli youngster after another Palestinian suicide bombing. On Monday, Milman's parents welcomed Kabha at the hospital where their son was recovering in the intensive care unit. "We are all human and we have to treat each other with respect," Kabha said. "There is no Jewish and Muslim. There are only people." An Israeli doctor, Mario Goldin, 53, was killed in the blast and 50 others wounded. Milman, who was nearest to the suicide attacker, was the only one seriously wounded. The Islamic extremist group Hamas took responsibility for the attack, identifying the bomber as an 18-year-old from the West Bank city of Nablus. Kabha, an Israeli Arab, lives in a village north of Tel Aviv. Arabs make up about one-sixth of Israel's population.

(10) Arab dies saving drowning Jew

August 12, 2000, 02:53 AM

TIBERIAS (IPS)

- When Omri Jada, a 25-year old Palestinian drove off last Friday to the Sea of Galilee for a break from the August heat, no one here realised it would be the last they would see of the likeable, hard-working young man.

Instead of having Omri back in their midst day, his relatives were kissing and hugging Giorgy Labtif, the six year old Jewish child whom Omri had saved from drowning, sacrificing his life in the process.

Omri died early Monday, last week, in a hospital in the northern city of Tiberias, where he was taken after washing up on the beach unconscious Saturday.

The trading of places in death comes at a time of heightened sensitivity in Palestinian-Jewish relations due, in part, to anti-Arab racist remarks made Saturday by Israel's most powerful rabbi, Ovadia Yosef. The rabbi said, among other things, that all Palestinians are "snakes" and that God regretted creating Arabs.

Sipping watery coffee from tiny cups, many of the dozens of mourners in Omri's village of Habla, 20 kilometers northeast of Tel Aviv, interpreted Omri's death as a rejoinder to the rabbi.

"This is an answer to Yosef," said Omri's father, Abdel-Halim. "A snake kills a human being. My son saved a human being."

Grieved family

Omri, who left behind a pregnant wife and two small children, was not a very good swimmer, his relatives recalled. But when he heard Giorgy Labtif crying for help, he decided anyway to try to save him.

"The small child entered the water and went far away," said Mohammed, a cousin who cannot swim and witnessed the tragedy unfold from the beach.

"The child tried to come back, but couldn't. He began to cry, Omri went to rescue him. He took the child in his arms and tried to return (to shore) but couldn't. The current took him away. Omri cried out 'I can't come back, can anyone rescue me?' A man swam over and took the child from Omri. Omri gave him the child. We could see Omri bobbing up and down. We thought he was swimming. But at one point, he disappeared."

An Israeli woman swam around searching for Omri, but could not find him, Mohammed said. After about 20 minutes, he washed up on the beach, unconscious. An ambulance arrived about 35 minutes later, Mohammed said.

While the Israeli woman was searching for Omri, she found Giorgy's four-year old sister Dima, also in the water and also in trouble. She rescued her, according to Tanya Labtif, Giorgy's mother.

"Omri gave life not only to Giorgy but also to Dima," said Tanya Labtif, who immigrated to Israel from Vladivostock four years ago.

An Arab “died for my child”

"What feeling can I have when someone has died for my child? I feel guilty that Omri died," she said. She went to Habla Monday to thank the Jada family-and console them.

Ironically, hours after Omri drowned, rabbi Yosef declared in Jerusalem that all Arabs are "snakes" and "despicable scoundrels" and that God "regrets" ever creating them.

The anti-Arab remarks went largely uncondemned by Israeli politicians, who instead took issue with other comments by the Rabbi which appeared to blame the Holocaust on its victims, by saying they were reincarnations of sinners.

While rabbi Yosef is reviled by many secular Israelis, his views are significant because he is a political kingmaker, using the popularity of the Shas party which he founded to help determine the rise and fall of prime ministers and presidents.

Referring to Arabs as the descendants of the biblical Ishmael, the half-brother of Isaac, rabbi Yosef said: "The Ishmaelites are all despicable scoundrels. All of them are haters of Israel. The Holy One, blessed be he, regrets that he created these Ishmaelites."

Anti-Arab remarks

His words evoked applause from Shas stalwarts. Prime Minister Ehud Barak's office declined to comment on them. Nor was there any reaction from president Moshe Katzav, who was elected last week due in part to the support of rabbi Yosef.

But among Palestinians the comments registered strongly as a blatant example of anti-Arab racism.

"I don't think Omri was a snake," said Ahmed Tibi, an Arab member of the Knesset. "He was a human being and a fine one at that. The real venom of snakes can be found in the words of rabbi Yosef."

"I look at this first of all as a courageous act of a human being who exchanged his life for that of another," added Avraham Paritzky, a liberal Jewish legislator who came to console the Jada family. "He did not ask about Jewish or Arab, he simply did the right thing. And I am honored to be here in memory of such a person."

(11) Islam's removal of the Babylon Curse

While reading the Bible, I came upon a story which Strengthened my faith in Islam even more.

According to the Bible, { Genesis 11:1 } humans all spoke one language at one time. These humans were trying to build a tower to see God. God Warned them to cease building the tower, yet they disobeyed God and continued to build the Tower.

As a punishment for their disobedience, God cursed them by making them all speak a different language. This tower is now called the "Tower of Babylon." {Genesis 11:19} and that is where we get the word "Babel"

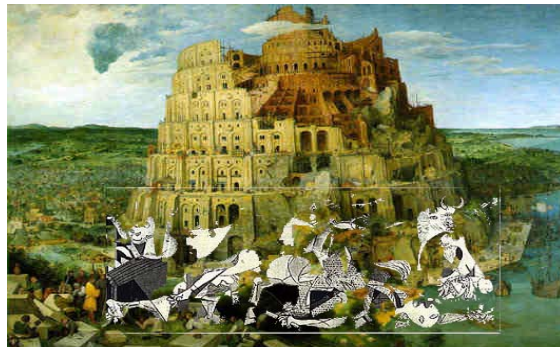
The Holy Qur'an is their forgiveness, if the humans return to obeying God, then they are again united in a brotherhood and sisterhood of one Semitic language, Arabic.

This is astonishing since only 27% of the Muslims are Arabs and there are almost 1.5 Billion Muslims world wide, all united with one language, praying in unison, re-united, this is also predicted in the Bible;

*"For then will I **turn** to the people a pure **language**, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." {Zephaniah 3:9}*

In the Strong's Bible Dictionary, the word "language (saphah)" in this verse can also mean [side, edge, border]

Therefore, Zephaniah 3:9 can also be translated to read "I will TURN people to ONE direction" which we witness with Muslims all facing -East- to pray and also speaking one language in prayer, a language which non-Arabs describe as a "pure language"



Above we see the Tower of Babylon which provoked God to curse the builders to speak different Languages.

Below we now see the Humans re-united speaking one language, shoulder to shoulder.

These are pictures of the Kabba built by [Prophet Abraham](#), at different distances:

Above we now see that God forgave humans and lifted the curse exclusively for those who submit to God's will (Islam).

World wide, over a billion people gather worshipping with one language, one direction, one book, one God.

Re-united as brothers and sisters in towards the Kabba which is believed to be directly under the Throne of God in Heaven.

The rich with the poor, the educated with the un-educated, people from all parts of the world re-united Obeying One God, Submitting their will to God which is the meaning of Islam.

""And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favour on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren; and ye were on the brink of the pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus doth Allah make His Signs clear to you: That ye may be guided." {Translation of the Holy Qur'an 3:103}

(12) Islam's removal of Jesus's blood from Jewish hands

How to Unite a Jew and a Christian

The Jews do not believe in Jesus's prophethood because he did not save himself from the cross {Deuteronomy 21:22-23}.

This belief has caused the split between the children of Abraham to this day.

The Christians believe Jesus died for our sins, and is a 1/3 of God. Also, abolishment of the Law of Moses (Acts 13:39).

This has caused a major difference between the Jews and Christians for centuries, escalating conflicts have occurred between the 2 (ie. Catholic Hitler).

What would it take to bring them together (ie. Peace)? What if a Book told the Jews, Jesus was the "word" of God, and was saved from the cross?

"That they said (in boast), "We killed Christ Jesus The son of Mary, The Messenger of Allah" But they killed him not, Nor crucified him. Only a likeness of that Was shown to them.

And those who differ Therein are full of doubts, With no (certain) knowledge. But only conjecture to follow, For surety They killed him not." (Koran 4:157)

[Click Here](#) for Biblical Conjectures on the Crucifixion

What if a Book told the Christians that God is 1 without partners, we are all responsible for our Own sins, and that the Law of Moses is not to be Abolished.

What if That Book is verified by both Jews and Christians to be from God. [Click Here](#) for Verification of the Qur'an One of two things would happen.

1. They would unite in Submission to God as all the previous prophets (ie. Islam)
2. They would not want to be told they are wrong (ie. Jews, Christians)

"Humankind was one single nation. And Allah sent Messengers With glad tidings and warnings; And with them Allah sent The Book in truth, to judge between people In matters wherein They differed" (Qur'an 2:213)

Below is a Picture of Adolf Hitler, He had over 100,000 Christian Nazi Followers and still has many admirers today.



Let us Open our Eyes and Realize that the Christians and Muslims and Jews are all from One Creator, those who do not create mis-chief will be the Great Winners.

"The Evil One has got the better of them: so he has made them lose the remembrance of Allah. They are the Party of the Evil One. Truly, it is the Party of the Evil One that will perish!" {Qur'an 58:19 }

The Qur'an is Here, Peace upon All .