

# Jihadi Who Turned to Jesus' Testimony So Powerful, 'The New York Times' Picked It Up

Nothing is so beautiful as the moment when you turn your life over to God, when you surrender your heart's desires and ask for His will to be done.

In the Middle East, staggering numbers reveal just how many Muslims are falling in love with their savior. Among them, former jihadist Bashir Mohammad.

His conversion is so powerful, *The New York Times* reported how Mohammad is a new creation in Christ.

Mohammad was a member of an al-Qaeda off-shoot on the front lines of the Syrian civil war.

*NYT* reports:

*Mr. Mohammad flirted with extremism in his teens. His cousin took him to hear jihadist preachers as a 15-year-old, and he adhered to some of the most extreme interpretations of Islam, "even the ones you haven't heard of." But when war broke out in Syria, after the country's 2011 uprising, Mr. Mohammad initially joined the secular Kurdish forces in their fight for autonomy.*

*Mr. Mohammad's subsequent ideological journey rarely made complete sense. But by his account, he became traumatized by the deaths he witnessed on the front line, which in turn reenergized his interest in the extremist versions of Islam that he had learned about as a teenager.*

*"When I saw all these dead bodies," he said, "it made me*

*believe all these things they said in the lectures. It made me seek the greatness of religion." Or, at least, his violent interpretations of that religion.*

But when Mohammad saw Muslims killing Muslims, he drew the line. The cousin who first introduced Mohammad to radical Islam had found Jesus.

Mohammad picked up a Bible and was overwhelmed by the peace of God. So did his wife.

*For Mr. Mohammad and Ms. Rashid (his wife), perhaps it was their dreams that sealed their conversion. As the couple began to consider leaving Islam, Ms. Rashid said she dreamed of a biblical figure who used heavenly powers to divide the waters of the sea, which Mr. Mohammad interpreted as a sign of encouragement from Jesus. Then, Mr. Mohammad himself dreamed Jesus had given him some chickpeas. The pair felt loved.*

Now, the couple leads a prayer meeting among fellow refugees.

"There's a big gap between the god I used to worship and the one I worship now," Mohammad said. "We used to worship in fear. Now everything has changed."

The couple is not alone in finding Christ in the midst of chaos.

Muslim refugees fleeing the increasing violence in their home countries and cities are shedding their Islamic religion for Christianity, *Charisma News* previously reported.

"They have to leave their context and their families. They know that whoever leaves Islam should be killed. These wonderful new believers will become preachers all over the Middle East. God is waking up a sleeping church; a new nation of new believers is being born," an unnamed pastor tells Open

# Report: Mitt Romney Is Exploring Another Run

You haven't seen nor heard the last of Mitt Romney.

The former governor of Massachusetts and two-time Republican presidential candidate is looking at making another political run. No, he's not looking to challenge President Donald Trump in 2020; rather, he's looking for a job a little closer to home.

According to *The Atlantic*:

According to six sources familiar with the situation, Romney has spent recent weeks actively discussing a potential 2018 Senate bid with a range of high-level Republicans in both Utah and Washington and has privately signaled a growing interest in the idea. Romney, though, has made clear he would not pursue the seat without Hatch's blessing.

That blessing came this week in the form of an interview with *National Journal* in which Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) said:

If I could get a really outstanding person to run for my position, I might very well consider [retiring]. Mitt Romney would be perfect.

Indeed, in Utah—where membership in the Republican Party is almost secondary to one's status within the LDS Church to gauge likely political success—the former governor might very well be perfect. And, no, he wouldn't have to take on a “carpetbagger” label in order to run: he's already a resident

of the state, owning a home outside Salt Lake City.

One of the problems for Republicans with the intense focus on Senate proceedings in the early days of the Trump administration so far has been that it has exposed just how elderly their senior leadership has become.

Frailty is seen as weakness, which is to politics as blood in the water is to a pack of sharks.

Among the seemingly most frail is the GOP's most senior senator, Hatch, who is the current Senate President pro tempore. During key votes earlier this week over the confirmation of soon-to-be Associate Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch, he struggled to keep up with basic parliamentary procedure, prompting his colleagues to frequently take over the role of presiding officer in his stead.

Even before the Gorsuch nomination dominated the Senate's activities, there was word that Hatch—who faces re-election in 2018—would face a primary challenge from former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr. Now that the governor is likely to be the next ambassador to Russia, however, there is the danger that a “young upstart” might attempt to primary Hatch.

That opened the door for Romney, a favorite son of a favorite son in the heavily Mormon state.

And while the governor is hardly a spring chicken himself, he's always exuded a sense of vitality that made him seem at least half a generation younger than his actual age. And with a personal wealth that allows himself to immediately start out with a large campaign war chest, it's easy to see why GOP bigwigs desperately want him to take the job. {eoa}

---

# Terrorist Attack in Sweden: 4 Dead, Over a Dozen More Wounded

A truck plowed into a crowd on a shopping street and crashed into a department store in central Stockholm on Friday, killing four people and wounding 15 in what the prime minister said appeared to be a terrorist attack.

Swedish police said they had arrested one person after earlier circulating a picture of a man wearing a grey hoodie. They did not rule out the possibility other attackers were involved.

“We have a person who is arrested who may have connections to the event in Stockholm earlier today,” police spokesperson Towe Hagg said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

“I turned around and saw a big truck coming toward me. It swerved from side to side. It didn’t look out of control, it was trying to hit people,” Glen Foran, an Australian tourist in his 40s, told Reuters.

“It hit people; it was terrible. It hit a pram with a kid in it, demolished it,” he said.

“It took a long time for police to get here. I suppose from their view it was quick, but it felt like forever.”

Part of central Stockholm was cordoned off and the area was evacuated, including the main train station. All subway traffic was halted on police orders. Government offices were closed. (Map of attack location – )

“Sweden has been attacked. Everything points to the fact that this is a terrorist attack,” Prime Minister Stefan Lofven told

reporters during a visit to western Sweden. He was immediately returning to the capital.

Many police and emergency services personnel were at the scene, said a Reuters witness who saw policemen put what appeared to be two bodies into body bags. Bloody tire tracks on Drottninggatan (Queen Street) showed where the truck had passed.

The truck had been stolen while making a beer delivery to a tapas bar further up Drottninggatan, Spendrups Brewery spokesman Marten Lyth said. A masked person jumped into the cab, started the truck and drove away.

"We were standing by the traffic lights at Drottninggatan and then we heard some screaming and saw a truck coming," a witness who declined to be named told Reuters.

"Then it drove into a pillar at Ahlens City (department store) where the hood started burning. When it stopped we saw a man lying under the tire. It was terrible to see," said the man, who saw the incident from his car.

Police said four people had died and 15 were injured. National news agency TT said those hurt included the delivery driver, who had tried to stop the hijack.

Several attacks in which trucks or cars have driven into crowds have taken place in Europe in the past year. Al Qaeda in 2010 urged its followers to use trucks as a weapon.

Islamic State claimed responsibility for an attack in Nice, France, last July, when a truck killed 86 people celebrating Bastille Day, and one in Berlin in December, when a truck smashed through a Christmas market, killing 12 people.

Magnus Ranstorp, head of terrorism research at the Swedish Defence University, told Reuters the attacker's approach was similar to those in Berlin and Nice: "Hijacking a truck, that

has happened before.”

“And this is a pretty cunning *modus operandi*,” he said. “To drive to Ahlens (department store) and stop ... There is a way down to the subway just a few meters away from there, and then you ... can jump on any train you want and quickly disappear.”

Sweden’s King Carl Gustaf said in a statement: “Our thoughts are going out to those that were affected, and to their families.”

“An attack on any of our member states is an attack on us all,” said European Union chief executive Jean-Claude Juncker.

Stockholmers opened up their homes and offered lifts to people who were unable to get home or needed a place to stay.

The attack was the latest to hit the Nordic region after shootings in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2015 that killed three people and the 2011 bombing and shooting by far right extremist Anders Behring Breivik that killed 77 people in Norway.

Sweden has not been hit by a large-scale attack, although in December 2010, a man blew himself up only a few hundred yards from the site of the latest incident in a failed suicide attack.

In February U.S. President Donald Trump falsely suggested there had been an immigration-related security incident in Sweden, to the bafflement of Swedes.

Swedish authorities raised the national security threat level to four on a scale of five in October 2010 but lowered the level to three, indicating a “raised threat,” in March 2016.

Police in Norway’s largest cities and at Oslo’s airport will carry weapons until further notice following the attack. Denmark has been on high alert since the February 2015 shootings.

Neutral Sweden has not fought a war in more than 200 years, but its military has taken part in U.N peacekeeping missions in a number of conflict zones in recent years, including Iraq, Mali and Afghanistan.

The Sapó security police said in its annual report it was impossible to say how big a risk there was that Sweden would be targeted like other European cities, but that, if so “it is most likely that it would be undertaken by a lone attacker”.

{eoa}

© 2017 Thomson Reuters. All rights reserved.

---

## **Prophecy: The Josephs Are Being Placed in New Positions of Prominence**

Prophetic author Jermaine Francis has written in a new article published by Elijah List on Friday that God is awakening and mobilizing a global army of Josephs to take up their intended governmental positions at local, state and federal levels.

Some will even have the ability to make an international impact for the kingdom, he said.

“It is a time for the Josephs to arise into their places of prominence,” he wrote. “Josephs are those with a call from God to preserve a nation through divine strategies. Joseph, by divine revelation, interpreted the dream of the king which brought answers for a nation ...

“They are empowered with divine strategies to preserve nations and bring forth God’s purpose and plan. They will be key in

setting up laws and policy structures to facilitate God's heart. It may be as small as creating a neighborhood watch and safety in local communities to something like establishing international agreements between nations."

Francis said that three movements will occur with regard to these Josephs:

1. They will be remembered.
2. They will receive authority.
3. Mysteries will be revealed to them.

"The Josephs are being called out of their seasons of frustration and feeling stuck into a place of prominence," he wrote. "To move into this new season of prominence, Josephs need to let go of the pain of the past and not take on a victim mentality. They must have a mindset of victory.

"The past season that Josephs have gone through was preparation for this moment of advancement and position in new authority. The Josephs are coming onto the scene. It's time for the Josephs to arise." {eoa}

*Click here to read the entire article at the Elijah List website.*

---

## **Why Today's Passover Is a Powerful Intercessory Prophetic Act**

The biblical feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread are just days away, falling this year on April 10-17. Here in Jerusalem, holiday excitement is in the air. Meticulous pre-

Passover housecleaning is dwindling to its final sweep of leaven from homes and businesses. Shoppers scurry through streets in last minute preparation for the upcoming, ceremonial meal (*seder*). Jerusalemites are in a happy mood—despite the high terror alert currently in effect. Refreshed by the vibrant colors and fragrance of spring, we sense, consciously or unconsciously, God’s breath on us.

You may not live in Jerusalem, but you can nonetheless profoundly encounter the Lord through the Passover. This unique feast is a joyful celebration, somber commemoration and expectant supplication, all rolled into one annual event. Its message of redemption is universal. The holiday is so significant that Yeshua (Jesus) told His disciples he had “earnestly desired” (Luke 22:15) to celebrate it with them.

At Passover we recount and personally engage with the bittersweet story of the biblical exodus. We re-live the event, especially through the *seder*. For a week we eat unleavened bread, as did our ancestors when freed from bondage. We rejoice over our redemption, but at the same time await its even greater fulfillment in the age to come. We partake of communion in its original context of intimate table fellowship with Yeshua. We celebrate His death and resurrection. At its essence, Passover is about kingdom conflict and triumphant love.

Today, kingdom conflict rages around the world. Whole populations are oppressed by anti-God forces similar to those that drove Egypt’s pharaoh to enslave the Israelites. Observance of Passover can, therefore, sustain and empower you for today’s kingdom conflict—as it has for the Jews for 3,500 years. It can also serve as a powerful intercessory prophetic act, releasing triumphant love.

Prophetic intercession can be defined as the combined ministry of the priest, pleading the needs of the people to the Lord; and prophet, pleading the desires, purposes or commands of God

before the people. Sometimes, prophetic intercession is expressed through specific acts as well as words, as in Ezekiel 4 and 5:1-4 or more commonly, through blowing a shofar or anointing with oil when the Holy Spirit leads.

Here are five reasons why and how Passover can serve as a powerful intercessory prophetic act.

1. Followers of Yeshua are called to stand in the gap in prophetic intercession for Israel. When you engage in the feasts God gave to Israel, you can be spiritually strengthened and greatly blessed. Out of that blessing, you can be better positioned for prophetic intercession, releasing greater blessing on Israel.

2. God designed the observance of Passover as a type of intercessory watch. "It is a night to be observed to the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. This is that night for the Lord to be observed by all the children of Israel in their generations" (Ex. 12:42). The Hebrew word for "keep vigil" means "to watch, guard, hedge about, protect, keep, preserve." It comes from the same root used in Isaiah 62:6-7: "I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem, who shall never hold their peace day or night. You who remind the Lord, do not keep silent; give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a glory in the earth." It is the watchmen's role to petition God concerning what they watch. Because Passover is a vigil or watch, it is an occasion for intercession.

3. The Passover seder is rich with prophetic symbolism beautifully pointing to Yeshua. As a result, the liturgy of the holiday meal can easily escort us into His presence. In this context praise, worship and intercessory prayer often naturally flow.

Each of the food elements at the seder can be partaken as intercessory or prophetic acts for the full redemption,

salvation and restoration of God's covenant people. (Exodus 12:8, Numbers 9:11) So it was quite appropriate, in the intimacy of table fellowship with His disciples, for Yeshua to identify His body and blood with Passover's unleavened bread and wine. First Corinthians 11:26 says the act of communion declares Messiah's death until He comes. Communion itself is, among other things, a prophetic act.

Because Yeshua identified His blood with the Passover wine, we have felt led at times to apply drops of wine to the door posts of our home as an intercessory prophetic act. We have even applied a few drops to a map of Israel, petitioning God to keep watch, protect and save our country by the blood of the Lamb. We are not superstitious about the inherent properties of wine, but we do believe God responds to our faith and heart cries.

4. The prophet Ezekiel says that Passover will be observed during the Messianic Age after Yeshua returns. He describes sacrificial offerings in a glorious, holy temple so large it could not possibly fit in present day West and East Jerusalem (Ezek. 45:21-24). Our observance of the feast in this age can be seen, therefore, as a prophetic act toward that glory which is to come.

5. Events that underlie Passover foreshadow some of the events that will unfold during the end times. The harsh Egyptian pharaoh, for example, was a type of anti-Christ who brings trial and tribulation to God's people. God eventually judges the pharaoh and all Egypt. At the same time He protects His own, completely sparing them from the outpouring of His wrath. In the end, all who take shelter under the blood of a lamb are saved. For them, new life in a new, promised land lies ahead.

When you and I celebrate the Passover, we are strengthened for kingdom conflict and victory. We may or may not personally experience the period of time some call the Great Tribulation. But as we actively identify, generation to generation, with

God's exodus redemption of the past, we can position ourselves—and others—for love's triumph in the present and future. {eoa}

**Sandra Teplinsky** *has been in Messianic Jewish ministry since 1979. She is president and founder of Light of Zion, a Messianic outreach to Israel and the church based in Jerusalem.*

---

## **4 Biblical Imperatives After the Missile Strike in Syria**

Last night, forces launched 59 precision-guided missiles at the Shayrat Airfield in Syria. The base houses the two squadrons of Syria's Su-22 ground attack aircraft used to carry out the April 4 chemical attack that killed at least eighty-eight civilians.

U.S. President Donald Trump explained: "It is in this vital national security interest of the United States to prevent and deter the spread and use of deadly chemical weapons." Syria called the U.S. strikes an act of aggression. Russian President Vladimir Putin defended the Syrian government and said that the strikes "have dealt a serious blow to Russian-U.S. relations."

This is the first direct military action the U.S. has taken against the al-Assad regime. Syria's six-year civil war has claimed more than 400,000 lives, displaced six million people internally and caused five million Syrians to flee the country. It appears that the attack was a warning rather than the beginning of a major intervention since the US targeted only one base. Also, U.S. missiles did not target Syrian

surface-to-air missile sites, indicating that the strikes were not preparation for larger fixed-wing airstrikes.

What is a biblical response to this news? Consider four imperatives.

One: Defend those who cannot defend themselves. Sen. Ben Sasse: "The use of chemical weapons cannot become normal—civilized people cannot grow indifferent to such suffering." God's Word agrees: "Defend the poor and fatherless; vindicate the afflicted and needy. Grant escape to the abused and the destitute, pluck them out of the hand of the false" (Ps. 82:3-4).

Two: Seek justice for those who oppress the innocent. The images of the Syrian gas attack have horrified the world. Sen. Marco Rubio tweeted last night, "Though be assured, the wicked will not go unpunished" (Prov. 11:21). God's Word instructs us to "seek justice, relieve the oppressed; judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Is. 1:17).

Three: Pray for our leaders and military. We are told to intercede for "all who are in authority" (1 Tim. 2:2). Our political leaders need divine wisdom; those who serve in our military deserve our intercession and support.

Four: Ask God how he wants you to respond personally. In Matthew 9, Jesus asked his disciples to "pray to the Lord of the harvest, that He will send out laborers into His harvest" (v. 38). The next verse shows how they helped answer their prayer: "He called His twelve disciples to Him and gave them authority over unclean spirits ... These twelve Jesus sent out" (Matt. 10:1, 5).

One ministry on the ground in Syria that has been highly recommended to me is the Preemptive Love Coalition. This Christian organization provides heart surgeries for children, emergency relief for families victimized by ISIS, and educational and financial assistance for Syrian families. They

need financial support as they serve victims of the horrific violence in this war-torn country.

God loves the Syrian people. The church at Antioch of Syria was Paul's home base for his missionary ministry to the world. The Syrian church is one of the oldest in the world. And our Father always sides with innocent victims of oppression (Jer. 22:3).

What we do for the people of Syria, we do for Jesus (Matt. 25:40). {eoa}

---

## **President Trump: 'Progress Has Been Made'**

After a busy 24-hour period of meetings and negotiations, both President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping emerged with smiles on their faces.

Then, Trump shared the good news: "tremendous progress" had been made in the bilateral relationship between the two of the world's leading nations. Although they didn't give any specifics about these developments, it seems there will soon be some major announcements coming on the major areas of focus from the meetings at Mar-a-Lago.

The following are the president's complete comments:

I just want to say that President Xi and all of his representatives have been really interesting to be with. I think we have made tremendous progress in our relationship with China. My representatives have been meeting one-on-one with their counterparts from China. And I think, truly,

progress has been made. We'll be making a lot of additional progress.

The relationship developed by President Xi and myself I think is outstanding. We look forward to being together many times in the future. And I believe lots of very potentially bad problems will be going away.

So I just want to thank President Xi for being with us in the United States. It's a tremendous honor for me and all of my representatives to host the President and his representatives. And again, progress has been made.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

[After Xi speaks briefly in Chinese] ...

Well, I agree 100 percent, Mr. President. And thank you very much. And again, a tremendous honor to have you in the United States and in Mar-a-Lago. Thank you very much. {eoa}

---

# Reignite the Love in Your Marriage With These 5 Healing Tips

Spring has sprung, and although cleaning the house is the normal protocol of the season, why not also take some inventory of your relationship with the one you love? If you feel your relationship has become stale or you've been too busy to give it the time it deserves, try these five tips, and watch your relationship bloom.

## 1. Prune Away the Assumptions

Before a garden can bloom, one must prepare the soil and make sure there is nothing that will choke the blossoms to come. According to Nathan Feiles, LCSW, couples often struggle with having false assumptions about the other person. Feiles tells us assumptions are toxic to a relationship, and they can “cascade into a snowball of unrealities.” Now is the time to clear the air and remove the assumptions that are keeping you and your partner from truly understanding one another.

## **2. Plant Some Seeds of Bonding**

If you want to see flowers, you have to plant the seeds. Intentionally plan to spend more time with the one you love with a standing weekly date that you never miss. Also, start praying together, even if it’s just a short prayer in the morning or evening. These moments of friendship and prayer are the most important part of tending your garden.

## **3. Get Out and Get Sun**

Further cultivate your relationship by being active together. A great way to spend time together is during exercise. According to Theresa DiDonato, Ph.D., “a growing body of evidence suggests that couples who sweat together really do stay together.” Start running together, join a class at your gym, or find a dance class nearby.

## **4. Water the Garden With Fellowship**

Shared social identity is integral to a relationship, so let your relationship bask in the company of a community. Make strides towards making friends with other couples, or if you live in an area that lacks community, one study suggests that watching movies together can actually help you create a shared social identity. At there is always something good to watch. Get involved in a series such as *The Encounter* or *Ties that Bind*.

## **5. Have Patience**

Flowers don't bloom overnight. Have patience with your relationship and treasure the moments you spend with the one you love. Continue to listen and share. When you lose hope, let the words of Paul be your guide: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with gratitude, make your requests known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will protect your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:6-7).

*Reprinted with permission from Pure Flix.*

---

## **Judicial Watch: IRS May be Sharing Your Health Insurance Status in Violation of Federal Law**

Judicial Watch announced Friday morning that it has filed yet another Freedom of Information Act lawsuit against the federal government.

This time, the government watchdog group is suing the Internal Revenue Service and the Department of Health & Human Services for records relating to the sharing of private taxpayer information under Obamacare. The lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia after the agencies refused to comply with its Nov. 15 FOIA requests for records concerning their efforts to reach out to individuals claiming an exemption or paying a penalty for failing to purchase the mandatory Obamacare health insurance.

Judicial Watch also sought records where protected taxpayer

information was shared between the IRS and HHS or any other state or federal government entity in violation of the Internal Revenue Act. The group cited a letter from members of the House of Representatives to IRS Commissioner John Koskinen and a *Washington Times* report that state Obama administration officials wanted to use IRS files to identify and contact the millions of Americans who have refused to sign up for insurance.

The group's president, Tom Fitton, said this is further evidence the Obama administration "misused the IRS." He said it was used this time to promote the "ill-fated health care scheme" of Obamacare.

"As the Trump administration and the Congress wrestle over Obamacare, it's important to understand the full extent of the Obamacare ongoing assault on taxpayers and the rule of law," he said. "And it would be nice if the Trump agencies would stop the stalling and finally begin obeying the freedom of information law." {eoa}

---

## **5 Incredible Clues Revelation 4 Gives Us About the Rapture**

Everything you need to know about the "catching away of the church" is in Revelation 4:1-5, *End Time Headlines* founder Ricky Scaparo says.

According to John's vision:

*After this I looked. And there was an open door in heaven. The first voice I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must*

*take place after this.” Immediately I was in the Spirit. And there was a throne set in heaven with One sitting on the throne! And He who sat there appeared like a jasper and a sardius stone. There was a rainbow around the throne, appearing like an emerald. Twenty-four thrones were around the throne. And I saw 24 elders sitting on the thrones, clothed in white garments. They had crowns of gold on their heads. Lightnings and thunderings and voices proceeded from the throne. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

While most believers may call this the rapture, Scaparo refuses.

“For whatever reason, it entices devils, it stirs up demonic powers, it stirs up all kinds of religious demons,” Scaparo says.

Instead, he calls it the catching away of the church, and it’s a vital part of the end times.

Watch the video to see more.

{eoa}