

# Excerpts: Said The Judean

by [Yehuda Hausman](#) (August 2025)



Judean Desert (Michael Kovner, 1979-80)

*The following excerpts come from my new book, [Said the Judean: A Prophetic Manifesto for a People Who Refuse to Die](#)—a prophetic, polemical work voiced by a returned Judean who speaks across time, from the fires of ancient exile to the aftermath of October 7th.*

*Neither memoir nor fiction, the book blends lament and vision, parable and polemic. Historical and scriptural figures reappear uninvited to address modern crises: Isaiah lectures outside the UN, Josephus broods in Jerusalem, Judah Maccabee scorns our rules of war, and Muhammad plots*

*the conquest of Manhattan. Their words are not meant to comfort, but to disturb.*

*The book asks whether Jewish survival—after so much sacrifice—can be called a virtue if it does not include victory. And whether the West, in its moral exhaustion, still remembers how to defend the civilization it inherited.*

### **Survival is Not Enough**

**At twilight, I walked Jerusalem**—between the Valley of Hinnom and the Valley of Giants, called Refa'im. The air was sweet, like the breeze blown by the Lord when the hem of His mantle still trailed the Garden of Eden. But there was sadness in the wind.



We—the sons of Jacob and daughters of Zion—forged the law: brilliant, intricate, eternal. We built the book—layer upon layer, commentary upon commentary, turning history into ritual, ritual into law, and endless woe into soul-shattering liturgy. We raised the prophets like olive trees—rooted in fire and rain—and then ignored them when they warned of doom. We mocked Jeremiah. We cut down Isaiah like a tree. We silenced the voices that thundered too loudly in our comfortable decline.

And then—after the fire, after the exile, after the sword—we sat day and night over the scrolls they left behind, as if what was done by madness might be undone by piety. As if mourning were enough. As if study alone could build walls. We

spiritualized catastrophe because we had no armies. We found holiness in helplessness—and dared to call it survival.

Well, it is night again. And I am done.

The young and the old still sing *Am Yisrael Chai*—"the people of Israel live"—to show that our blood flows through every tragedy. The heart swells, the eye tears, the song rises, defiant. But I am through with mere survival. *Am Yisrael Chai* is not enough. Surviving another war—another pogrom—is not enough.

I do not want to endure. I want to win.

I want to defeat the enemies who hate us with the iron in their blood. I want them gone, so I may step onto a bus without trepidation, so I may walk the streets without fear. I am tired of children falling asleep wondering if their fathers will return from the field. I am tired of young men dying before they've ever ploughed the bedroom with a bride. I am tired of not losing wars—yet never truly winning them either. I want no more ceasefires that merely bid us continue dying politely. I want to flourish. And I want our enemies to dissolve into defeat—never again to lift a hand against *me*.

O brothers and sisters, ever loyal to the Rock of Israel, I ask you:

If God can part seas and shatter Pharaoh's will—if He can lead us through the furnace of exile and deliver us to the gates of the Promised Land—why do we settle for saying only *Am Yisrael Chai*? Is life alone the measure of divine favor? Do we imagine that the God who redeemed us from Egypt meant only for us to endure, not to thrive?

If He has the power to preserve us, does He not also have the power to exalt us?

To bless not just our breath, but our stature?

Survival is a starting point—not a destiny. To rejoice in mere existence is to thank the midwife and forget the promise. The covenant was never written in ash alone—it was carved in the joy of vineyards, the strength of cities, and the peace of unbroken generations.

If God can keep us alive through the fire, then surely He expects us to rise from the embers—not crawling, but crowned.

### **Masada, Josephus, and the Eagle**

I came at first light, with bread still warm and water drawn from Gihon Spring at the foot of Mount Zion. He was waiting.

“I was once Yosef ben Matityahu—priest and general,” he said, before I had even sat. “I saw Jerusalem fall. Only later did I become Josephus—Rome’s historian of the Jews. Listen closely, Seer of Israel, to this tale of woe:

I stood in the shadow of Masada, and the wind carried a voice not from heaven—but from Rome. The exiled Jew remembers Masada as martyrdom. The sovereign Jew must remember it as warning.

Elazar ben Yair spoke like a prophet and acted like a general—but he was neither. His last sermon, aflame with defiance, urged his followers to collective suicide: Better, he said, to die by their own hands than to live in Roman chains. Perhaps he was right. Perhaps the only choice was between martyrdom and martyrdom—one swift, the other slow. But I do not judge the man. I judge the consequences.

The sovereign Jew does not build myth. He builds statecraft. He studies outcomes. He counts the cost.

So turn the tablet—read Masada not in Hebrew, but in Latin.



See what the Eagle saw.

The rebels were few. The fortress? Isolated, irrelevant. Jerusalem had already fallen. The Temple lay in ash. The war was over.

Rome could have left Masada to the vultures. They could have posted guards in Ein Gedi and penned a lazy report: *If rebels descend, kill them. Otherwise, let the sun and sand do the work.*

But Rome did not walk away. Rome made a decision. They sent Legio X Fretensis—ten thousand men, engineers, slaves, masons—not to crush a threat, but to perform a message.

It was not a siege. It was theater.

Masada held no military value. It guarded no city, no road, no gate. The desert below offered no pasture, no farmland. It loomed above the Dead Sea—but one cannot fish in brine. And that was the point.

The Romans understood what many still forget: symbols are more dangerous than swords. So they built the siege ramp to scale the fortress—three years of sweat and stone. There was no need for it, yet it rose up like a giant banner. Deliberate. Patient. Inevitable.

A mountain of effort for no tactical gain. But strategically? It was genius. Because Rome's effort wasn't for Masada. It was for the world watching.

For the cities of the East. For the scattered tribes. For the provinces still weighing rebellion. Masada was a warning carved in stone: *This is what happens to those who resist the Eagle.*

Think on this, O Seer of Israel, and one question more: What is the grand strategy of the Jewish State?

Rome had one. Byzantium had one. Even the Crescent terrorists have one—cruel, apocalyptic, calculated. But it is a strategy.

Do we? The lesson of Masada is not how Jews died. It's how Rome ruled. We honor the fallen. But we must study the builder of the ramp."

## **Muhammad in Manhattan**

Said the Judean:

I saw the Messenger rise from the F train at 14th Street, like a camel cresting a dune in the quivering heat. No minaret announced him. No crescent marked the sky. Just the sour breath of subway wind and a haze of bending light.

He wore a flax tunic and shoeless tennis shoes. No socks. His hair was raven-dark, parted into four oiled braids that hung midway between ear and shoulder—like tassels from a vanished tribe.

His eyes were large, dark, and wild—filled with the City's strange gods and stranger sounds. He seemed a preacher, for he walked as one stalked. Or a lunatic, for his eyes raved. The difference is a knife's edge. He looked at everything as if he had never seen anything before, and intoned a prayer.

"To Allah belongs the East and the West; wherever you turn, there is the Face of God." (Quran 2:115)

Though the people saw him and made way, it was some time before he truly saw the people.

He passed a man in drag. *Mukhannathūn*, he thought sourly—stay

*far from a woman's abode.* He stepped aside for a black-hatted Hasid reciting Psalms in an ancient Hebrew with a lilting chant. "*Banu Israel,*" Muhammad said aloud. The Jew nodded politely.

In Union Square Park, he saw countless young women with bare arms and much leg. For the day was sun and warmth. They walked singly or with their sisters. Paradise, he thought. Or a harem. *No*, he decided. For they seemed to belong to no man, and when men and women sat on the grass, they did not make love.

The Messenger walked across the City. He was jostled by men in wool suits. *Rude merchants without wares.* Then a woman in a track-suit and hijab sprinted past, earbuds blinking like signals from another world. *Sister, this place is strange.*

Then a scent found him—familiar, ancient. Smoke, cumin, char. His stomach growled. He turned to see a halal cart steaming on the corner. The grill hissed with chicken and lamb, drawing the Prophet like a bear to honeycomb.

"Zabihah?" Muhammad asked.

"Slaughtered," said the Egyptian-born vendor. "Fourteen dollars for a skewer in a wrap."

Muhammad blinked. The Arabic was clipped, unrefined. Did he say fourteen *dinars*? That much gold could buy three milch camels, a flock of white sheep, and two brides. *The bargaining will go on all day*, he sighed.

"Dirhams?" he offered politely, holding out a Sassanian silver—slightly warped, and stamped with a fire temple.

The vendor squinted at it, weighing its uselessness in a city of cashless currency and sales tax. Then he smiled faintly, pressed the coin back into the Prophet's palm, and handed him the lamb gyro wrapped in foil like an offering.



"Pay me next time, brother. Welcome to New York."

Muhammad took the gyro reverently. He bit into it as if it were sacred meat. Sauce dripped onto his thumb. He raised his eyes to the skyline.

*A day will come, he thought, when all this City shall be mine. Perhaps by persuasion. Perhaps by the sword. But either way—it shall be known as the Prophet's City. Madinat an-Nabi.*

The Messenger walked east, toward the district of diamonds, where the Sabbath People traded in stones more ancient than kings. "We favored the Children of Israel above all nations," he recalled, and quoted aloud—"Wa laqad ātainā Banī Isrā'īla al-kitāba wal-ḥukma wal-nubuwwah." (Quran 45:16)

Among them, he found a Syrian Jew who spoke a passable Arabic. The Messenger placed gold dinars upon a cloth mat.

"I'll give you dollars," said the man.

"Green ones?" asked the Messenger.

"What other color would they be?"

The Messenger examined the bills. *In God We Trust*, they read. "One would have to," he murmured, "to trade gold for paper."

Thus, he began to conquer the City—from within its gates.

He preached first along the streetcorners, where the Chainbreakers gathered—men dark of skin, whose ancestors once knew chains. The Messenger marveled that they walked free, and a few knew his words already. Others learned them. So in Harlem, many spoke the *Shahada*.

He journeyed from Spanish Harlem to Washington Heights and learned the language of the Isla Folk—their rhythms of joy and sorrow. *Dulce y amargo*. They listened, but did not follow. Still, he took an Isla woman by marriage ... and others as

companions for an hour. Or a night. In time, the Isla Folk welcomed him as one of their own.

At Coney Island and Little Odessa, he preached in the streets, preached in the fairs, preached along the salt-touched shore. In the end, some Bearsons—slow to trust—warmed to him in winter.

In the Lower East Side, he found the Riceborn and the Silk-Kin, bound by family and memory of distant lands. They had no interest in his Message. But he admired their discipline, took to their food, and made fast friends, though suspicion lingered like heavy incense.

In Midtown, he found their supposed cousins—but they were not. These were Sunday People. They opened their doors, but not their churches. “You are welcome,” they said. “But preach elsewhere.”

Last—and reluctantly—he went to the Sabbath People.

“We have our God, and our Prophets,” they told him. “We bid you go.”

And the Messenger broiled in anger. Yet he said nothing.

Instead, he built.

He raised Community Centers. Brotherhoods for men. Sisterhoods for good works. He trained others to teach his Message. He sent them out to every borough.

In the streets, he faced questions:

“What of liberty?”

“True liberty is submission.”

“What of song?”

“There is song in obedience.”

"Will you protect us?"

"So long as you do not resist."

And the Sabbath People? They asked nothing at all. So he marked them most carefully.

He counted his numbers. And said, "I see a way to conquer without the sword."

Then came the Election.

The Messenger ran. The Messenger won. And there was never another election again.

### **The *Shahid* is No Martyr**

Said the Judean:

The jihadist who dies waging war against the *kufar* is no martyr.

No tyrant condemned him for praying in a Mosque.

No emperor threatened his life for uttering Allah's name.

His death is not sacrifice—it is ambition fulfilled.

He was not hunted. Yet he sought war.

And not war for home, but war for expansion.

*Dar al-Islam* must grow, he believes,  
not by persuasion, but by blood.

He travels far from the land of his birth,  
to kill strangers he's never met,  
in tongues he does not speak,  
in places that never wronged him.  
And we do not ask why.

Americans joined Al-Qaeda.

Britons joined ISIS.

Students from Boston and Madrid wave the flags of Hezbollah.

Not in protest, but in pride.

Copts are murdered. Churches are burned.

Jew, Christian, Hindu—slaughtered not for what they've done, but for what they are. This is not martyrdom. This is mission.

The *shahid* dies not to save. He dies to kill.

He dies in the act of destruction—and calls it holy.

He quotes the hadith:

“No one who enters Paradise would wish to return—except the martyr, who longs to die again ten times over.”  
(Sahih al-Bukhari 2795)

But what virtue is this? To return to earth not to heal, not to serve, but to detonate again? This is not resurrection. This is not holiness. It is a fixation—a sanctified compulsion.

He worships not God, but the moment of death. He craves the blast, the scream, the ruin—and a paradise of his own invention. The *shahid* is no martyr. He is like a priest of Moloch—offering young and old, women and men—to the most hateful of gods: himself.

## **Wrestling Judah**

Said the Judean: I saw him—my namesake. Judah Maccabee. The Hasmonean Hammer. Hero of Hanukkah. Shatterer of Syrian-Greeks. He materialized in the dust-slick courtyard of a forward base in Gaza, where our soldiers lay collapsed beside their rifles. Boots laced, belts cinched, breath spent from a night raid. A tiny menorah flickered nearby—eight gentle oil

wicks in the hush before dawn.

Judah moved among them, eyes appraising every face. Some were bachelors. Some newly wed. Each one—somebody's boy. He grinned, like a warlord amused by the cunning of his fiercest sons. Then he beckoned me outside.

There, a strange sight: blindfolded captives being loaded into trucks—terrorists, men of October 7th.

He faced me. "What is this?"

"Prisoners of war," I replied.

He squinted. "What for? Interrogation? You hardly need so many. They're just mouths to feed. Kill them and be done."

"Some of these men will stand trial." I tried to explain.

He blinked, baffled. "Trial? What law survives war?"

I opened my mouth to answer—but he waved me to silence.

"You speak of laws. I once did too. My brothers and I trained in Law before we trained in arms. We debated purity. We weighed halakha. We were an innocent, pious, family of scholar-priests. But then Antiochus came. He outlawed our Sabbath. He defiled our Temple. He slaughtered our children in their cradles and hanged our mothers with their sons still swaddled.

At first, our people argued: 'Shall we fight on the Sabbath?' What is the point of preserving the Law if we must violate it to survive? So we refused. We fled. And the Greeks learned—attack on the Sabbath, and the Jews will lay down their swords. And so they hunted us like beasts through caves and gullies. And we—pious and principled—died praying.

My father, Mattathias, saw this. And he made a judgment. He said: If the enemy chooses the battlefield, then we choose to fight. Even on the Sabbath. Especially then.

We learned to answer desecration with desecration. They defiled our Temple—we burned their altars. They took no prisoners, and neither did we. War was no teacher. No classroom. No test. It was all of those—and a furnace. And we chose to become iron.

You want to explain yourself to the world? Do you think your enemies will admire your restraint? That Gaza will grow a conscience watching you deliver food to men who butchered your own? Do you imagine the Nations will inscribe your virtue on tablets?

Let me tell you what the world admires: power. Decisive. Unapologetic. Victorious. They admired me—the Hammer—not because I was just, but because I won.

Know this: Beat them in Beirut. Best them in Damascus. Lay waste to Rafah and Gaza. Crush the monsters of Persia like grasshoppers beneath iron sandals. We fought twenty-five years until the Seleucids understood: *Israel wins*. Always. Save every other lesson for the lecture hall.”

He paused as a distant convoy approached—massive armored tractors, brute Merkavah tanks. The earth shuddered, ground her teeth as if straining to give birth to the giants of old.

“At least,” he said, almost smiling, “you’ve learned to use your elephants.”

Then Judah turned to the menorah behind us—its flames small, stubborn, defiant.



“Do you intend to rebuild the Temple? Or are you content to light candles and sing while the enemy sharpens his knives?”

He didn't wait for an answer.

He vanished like an avenging angel.

And I—

I wrestled my own heart as the morning star rose.

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He has lectured in Hebrew Bible, Jewish philosophy, and Talmud at institutions including the American Jewish University and the Academy for Jewish Religion, while also contributing to ethics, genomics, and healthcare policy discourse at a leading law firm. Hausman is also the author of *Against History: Literary Commentary on Genesis 1–22* and the poetry collection *Love Poems of Unknown Name*.

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