



DISCOVERING THE **HEART** OF

**GOD** FOR  
**ISRAEL**

AND THE **NATIONS**

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M I C H A E L   N A T T

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## **Notes**

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## **About the Author**

Michael grew up in a Conservative Jewish home in New York City. He came to faith in the Messiah in Eugene, Oregon, in 1970 during the time of the Jesus Movement. He worked in business for 40 years, including 28 years as a systems engineer and project manager with IBM.

During this time, Michael served as an elder and teaching leader in Minnesota, Arizona, and New York. He earned a B.A. from Bethel University, and an M.A. in Human Resource Development from the University of St. Thomas.

He is the author of five books and is a National Board-Certified Health and Wellness Coach (NBC-HWC). He has also completed 15 marathons and 60 half-marathons.

His passions are prayer and sharing God's word. He engages in global prayer for Israel and serves on the leadership team of Five Stones Impact, an international church planting and development network. He lives in Eden Prairie, Minnesota with his wife Cheryl. They have been married for 51 years and have two adult daughters and a granddaughter.

## Introduction

*Declare His glory among the nations,  
His wonders among all peoples. (Psalm 96:3)*

We are all on a journey to discover God's heart, and God's heart is for Israel and the nations.

After their fall in the Garden of Eden, God's heart was moved to devise a plan that would redeem mankind and restore them to a relationship with him. He started with Abraham and made a covenant with him and his offspring that would become the nation of Israel. They were to be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6) and a light to the nations. It was through this nation, and through the lineage of King David, that God would bring forth the Messiah, the Son of God, the King of Israel, and the Savior of the world.

*"I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness,  
And will hold Your hand;  
I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people,  
As a light to the Gentiles (Isaiah 42:6).*

As a Jewish teenager growing up in the 1960's, I had no idea that I was part of God's redemptive plan as a descendant of Abraham, and I had no idea that God had a redemptive plan for my life. That realization grew after I became a believer in Yeshua in 1970, and when I began my journey to discover God's heart for Israel and the nations for which he came to redeem.

Other than spending five weeks in Israel in 1976, I did not travel extensively outside of the United States. That was going to begin to change after I moved to Phoenix in 2003. I became part of All

Nations Church, which was founded by a former mission's pastor and a group of other seasoned mission leaders. Although I hadn't had much experience in missions, I was drawn to this church based on the quality of people that I met during my first visit to the church. I became part of the fabric of the church and learned a lot about how people were motivated to reach the unreached people in the world.

The vision of the church was to adopt an unreached people group within the 10/40 Window. The 10/40 Window is the area between 10 and 40 degrees north of the equator, stretching from western Africa to just east of Japan. It includes parts of North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. The 10/40 Window is home to many of the world's least-evangelized countries and the majority of the world's Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and Sikhs, and it's considered a key area for global missions.

An unreached people group (UPG) is a group of people distinguished by language or culture that are generally less than 2% Christian and lacks the resources to evangelize that people group. Our church adopted the high-caste Hindus of Uttar Pradesh in Northern India. I eventually accompanied our mission's leader on a trip to this area.

It was also during this time that God began to rekindle my connection to my own people Israel, which prompted me to take my second trip to Israel as part of an intercessory team for the Messianic community.

About ten years later, after I retired from the workplace, I had a dream about visiting Hamburg, Germany. So, I obeyed the Lord's call and went there. Shortly after that trip the Lord put it on my



heart to reconnect with a friend who lived in Israel, who then connected me with the Global Watch, an international network of watchman and intercessors. One of their main focus areas is to join together across the nations in building up the spiritual walls of Jerusalem:

*I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem;  
They shall never hold their peace day or night.  
You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent,  
And give Him no rest till He establishes  
And till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth (Isaiah 62:6,7).*

During the past three years, I have met many people and built bonds across the world through our regular interaction over Zoom and by meeting some at our annual summit in Herrnhut Germany. I attended my first summit in August 2023. That year I met a group of 12 Messianic Jews who were part of Congregation Kehilat HaCarmel in Northern Israel. My prayers for Israel intensified through these relationships because I was now praying for my friends.

My relationships took on more intensity as we joined together several times a week to support our friends and the people of Israel after the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023. This motivated me to take another five-week trip to Israel to support my friends and my nation.

I have learned a lot about the heart of God during the past three years, and I would like to share some of that with you. This book is a collection of stories about my journey, what I have learned,

and about some of the people I have met along the way who have discovered God's heart for Israel and the nations.

## **God's Heart and Vision for the Middle East**

By Ariel Hyde of Tree of Life Ministries

When people mention Israel and the Middle East, most people immediately start thinking about political and military issues. But there's something far more important we should be focused on: "What is God's heart and vision for the Middle East? You might be surprised to hear what he says about it and what he's already doing right now.

In Hosea 11 God declares that his people Israel were backsliding against him, serving other gods, and deserving fierce wrath and judgement. But then he says,

*"How can I give you up, Ephraim?  
How can I hand you over, Israel? ...  
My heart churns within Me;  
My sympathy is stirred" (Hosea 11:8).*

When we see the people of Israel acting in a sinful way, is our heart churning for them? Is our compassion stirred? Does it bring us to a place of passionate intercession for their salvation? The Apostle Paul expressed God's heart this way,

*"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved" (Romans 10:1).*

As important as it is to pray for good military and political decisions, the Jewish people repenting of their sins, receiving their Messiah – Jesus, Yeshua – and receiving eternal salvation is more important! That's what God's heart is for them, and that's what our heart should be, too!

But our God is so great that his love isn't limited to one people group. As I was reading through the end of Jeremiah recently, I was blown away to see God's heart for all the peoples of the Middle East. God, through the prophet Jeremiah, was warning the nations around Israel of the judgement they deserved, but in the midst of it, he expresses an incredible heart of compassion. He says of modern-day Jordan,

*"Therefore my heart shall wail like flutes for Moab,  
And like flutes My heart shall wail for the men of Kir Heres"  
(Jeremiah 48:36).*

*"Therefore I will wail for Moab,  
And I will cry out for all Moab;  
I will mourn for the men of Kir Heres" (Jeremiah 48:31).*

God invites us to join with his heart in weeping for all the people of the Middle East. And he promised that,

*"Those who sow in tears  
Shall reap in joy" (Psalm 126:5).*

There will be a great harvest! God calls Damascus, capital of Syria,

*"The city of praise not deserted, the city of My joy" (Jeremiah 49:25).*

Do we realize how much God cherishes these people? He says of Elam, modern-day Iran,

*"Behold, I will break the bow of Elam,*

*For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies”  
(Jeremiah 49:35,37).*

But then he says,

*“I will set My throne in Elam” (Jeremiah 49:38).*

Then he promises mercy and restoration in the later days for Elam, just as he also did for Moab and Amon (Jeremiah 48:47, 49:6, 39). Are we praying for mercy and restoration and salvation for the people of Iran and others in this region?

God said this of Gaza through the prophet Zechariah,

*“But he who remains, even he shall be for our God,  
and shall be like a leader in Judah” (Zechariah 9:7)*

God promised that people in Gaza would turn to the God of Israel! God also gave this incredible vision to the prophet Isaiah,

*“In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria,  
and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into  
Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians. In  
that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a  
blessing in the midst of the land, whom the Lord of hosts  
shall bless, saying, ‘Blessed is Egypt My people, and  
Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance’”  
(Isaiah 19:23-25).*

Israel, Egypt, and Assyria in modern terms are a huge portion of the Middle East. God’s vision is to see revival in the Middle East where all the children of Abraham will come to know the Prince

of Peace, Jesus, and they will be serving God together in unity, bringing a blessing to the entire world.

So, how will this vision come to pass? Well, probably not through us watching a lot of news or talking a lot about politics and wars. This will come to pass when we, the Body of Messiah, cry out together in unity for revival, and also reach out to the people of Israel and the Middle East with the love and Gospel of Messiah!

God is already moving in incredible ways here. Did you know that during this war, Jesus appeared in dreams to over 200 people in Gaa in one night, and they received him as Lord?! As a ministry we've had the privilege of sharing the Gospel with people across the Middle East and seeing God do wonders.

A Muslim woman from Egypt, in spite of beatings and death threats, decided to follow Jesus and be baptized after we shared the gospel with her. A Gazan man whose family member was a senior Hamas official, spoke with our team member and decided to give his life to Jesus! A Jordanian man spoke with our team member about the Gospel, and the love of Jesus captured his heart, and he surrendered to him as Lord, even though he had to flee his home as a result.

An Israeli woman watched our evangelistic video, then prayed together with the presenters at the end to receive Jesus. Later, as wartime sirens went off in Tel Aviv, another woman asked her where the nearest bomb shelter was. She responded, "Can I tell you something unusual? I believe in Yeshua and He is my shelter." The lady responded, "I believe in Yeshua, too!" After talking awhile, they figured out that she was the presenter in our video who had led this lady to the Lord!

God is transforming hearts across Israel and the Middle East, and he's inviting all of us to get his heart for these people and join in fulfilling his vision for them.

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tBHvb9XZzk>

## **A Young Woman from Albania**

In September 1946, a young woman from Albania riding on a train in India received a personal call from the Lord. She was to leave her convent school to live and work in the slums of Calcutta's sickest and poorest residents. Her name was Mother Teresa.

I met Nikol, a young woman from Albania, at a prayer summit in Herrnhut, Germany in August 2024. We were both attending a gathering of 150 people representing 20 nations who were drawn to this event to experience an individual and collective encounter with the living God of Israel.

We broke up into groups of 10-12 people several times during the event in order to process together what the Lord was saying to us. Nikol and I were in the same group, and she was the youngest in our group.

During our initial meeting, we introduced ourselves to one another. During her time of sharing, Nikol broke into tears and said that her heart's desire is to be wholly devoted to the Lord. She was warmly embraced by all, especially the mothers in our group. Nikol shared very little during our subsequent meetings. It appeared that she had a lot to take in and process on her own.

On Monday morning, Mary Faus, a leader among First Nations people, shared about Elijah. At the end of her message, she proclaimed "that the spirit of Elijah that is resting on this place would go to the 20 plus nations that are here. We call you to life, nations of the earth, Israel at the head. Dry bones are coming to life. We thank you God for the wind of your spirit, the Ruach



HaKodesh, blowing on every nation in this hour. As the worship team begins to worship, would you enter in as a prophetic declaration over your nation.”

I saw Nikol standing alone as the sole representative of her nation, so I asked her if it was Ok if I stood with her for her nation, and she welcomed me.

I knew a little about Albania’s history. After the communist regime seized power, they began to publicly humiliate, persecute, and execute clergy of all faiths. Albania began to curtail religion in 1946, and in 1967, the government outlawed public religious practice and declared Albania the world's first constitutional atheist state.

So, I started with what I knew and declared Isaiah 9:2 over Albania.

*“The people who walked in darkness  
Have seen a great light;  
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,  
Upon them a light has shined.”*

Then I felt the Lord saying, “You will be part of a light brigade, and the light of the gospel will spread from Albania into Greece.” Afterwards, I saw a picture of a lily-like flower springing up from the earth with broad white petals. I knew that this was a picture of Nikol, so I prayed over her.

We know in part and we prophecy in part. After I had spoken what the Lord gave me, I felt that I had done my part, so I went back to my place. However, I had a sense that the Spirit of the

Lord was continuing to minister to Nikol, and that she was responding with a pure heart like Mary of Nazareth,

*“Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 2:38).*

Later that day during our small group session, I asked Nikol how she felt about what I shared with her. She said that she was really blessed, especially the part about Greece. I learned afterwards that for the last three years Nikol's father had been leading a prayer walk on an ancient road called: “Via Egnatia.” Nikol and several other young people have been part of it. The vision is to open up the ancient wells of the gospel, to prepare the land for revival, and to call the people of the land to wake up and rise up for the Lord is coming soon!

It is believed that this road was the one the apostle Paul and other apostles walked when they came from Jerusalem to our region to preach the gospel of Christ (Romans 15:19). They have been prayer walking it backwards. The end of the road is in Albania, which is their start. They’ve covered all the territory that goes through Albania and North Macedonia, and last year they landed in Greece!

The following week they were planning to go back to Greece to continue the prayer walk. So far, they have covered around 800 km (497 miles). On this upcoming trip they hoped to cover another 160 km (100 miles). "We feel the Father's heart for the nation of Greece and the Greek people. So, when you said “Greece,” my eyes lit up, my heart was comforted, this was confirmation from the Lord!"

As a young woman from Albania embraced what the Lord spoke to her on a train in September 1946, I pray that Nikol keeps all these things in her heart as the seed planted within her continues to grow (Luke 2:51-52).

## A Citizen of Myanmar

*Though the fig tree may not blossom,  
Nor fruit be on the vines;  
Though the labor of the olive may fail,  
And the fields yield no food;  
Though the flock may be cut off from the fold,  
And there be no herd in the stalls—  
Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,  
I will joy in the God of my salvation.  
The Lord God is my strength;  
He will make my feet like deer's feet,  
And He will make me walk on my high hills (Habakkuk 3:17-19).*

As I was putting together a summary of the Book of Habakkuk for a Bible Literacy Course I came across the Bible Project <sup>[1]</sup> YouTube recording, <sup>[2]</sup> and I was touched by the comments made by a citizen of Myanmar.

“As a citizen of Myanmar, I literally feel depressed and even doubt in God because of the ongoing situations of crime against humanity and brutal massacres committed by the illegitimate military junta.

More than 1,000 people have reportedly been murdered. Right now, I'm like, "God, are you real? Are you there? Where are you? It has been nearly 8 months since we lost hope, our future; some even lost their lives and loved ones.

Why is God still watching? But I found this video. This gives me courage, hope, and faith that God is with us, and HE will definitely

help us. And may I request all of you to pray for Myanmar to be peaceful and to be a democratic nation. May God bless you all.”

The main theme of the Book of Habakkuk is Trust the Lord, no matter what. Believers can, and must, trust in God no matter how tumultuous outward circumstances may become. God’s word to the Hebrew Prophet, recorded in Scripture in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century BC, is applicable to every situation in every nation of the earth today.

*For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope (Romans 15:4).*

Myanmar is a nation that has few friends. May God’s heavenly rule and justice prevail over Mandalay. May God comfort, protect, and provide for the people in Myanmar during war, displacement, hunger, and economic hardship.

A believer from Myanmar wrote the following song about praising God in the middle of the storm and through brokenness:

*“We must praise him in every situation.  
In the middle of storms, I will praise him.  
In the middle of temptation, I will praise him.  
In the middle of epidemics, I will praise him.  
I will praise him in any situation.  
In my weeping and crying out, I will praise him.  
In my brokenness, I will praise him.  
When there is no hope, I will praise him.  
In the depth of the belly of the dead, I will praise him.  
When his time comes, he will do great things.*

*So, I believe, I believe, I will praise him” [3]*

So, we declare Psalm 11 over Myanmar.

*In the Lord I put my trust;  
How can you say to my soul,  
“Flee as a bird to your mountain”?  
For look! The wicked bend their bow,  
They make ready their arrow on the string,  
That they may shoot secretly at the upright in heart.  
If the foundations are destroyed,  
What can the righteous do?*

*The Lord is in His holy temple,  
The Lord’s throne is in heaven;  
His eyes behold,  
His eyelids test the sons of men.  
The Lord tests the righteous,  
But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul  
hates.  
Upon the wicked He will rain coals;  
Fire and brimstone and a burning wind  
Shall be the portion of their cup.*

*For the Lord is righteous,  
He loves righteousness;  
His countenance beholds the upright (Psalm 11).*

May the Prince of Peace bring peace to Mandalay. May the  
God of hope fill the people with all joy and hope in believing.  
May the people of Myanmar put their trust in you.

1. The Bible Project is a non-profit organization that creates free resources to help people understand the Bible. Their mission is to make the Bible accessible to everyone by presenting it as a unified story that leads to Jesus. (<https://bibleproject.com/>)
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPMaRqGJPUU>
3. From a song written by All Rain.

## **A Prayer Meeting Outside of Sodom**

A Message by Carter Conlon, General Overseer of Times Square Church in New York City, October 30, 2019  
Used by Permission

*Men always ought to pray and not lose heart (Luke 18:1b).*

*Go, stand ... and speak to the people all the words of this life (Acts 5:20).*

I want to talk to you about a prayer meeting outside of Sodom.

Father, I want to thank you with all my heart for your presence here. I want to thank you Lord God for your word which is a lamp for our feet and a light for our path. But it is even more than that; it is the place of promise that You have said you were going to take us into this place as our inheritance in Christ. So, God, thank you for bringing us to this juncture in our day. Thank you for bringing us to a place of knowing we need you. We need you every moment. We need you every day, every week, every month. Lord, we need you. Holy Spirit of the Living God, I am asking you to enable this frail vessel to speak your word today. Take the thoughts of my mind far beyond the limitations of my own understanding. God speak to every heart that you have gathered here at this time, at this season, for this purpose. So, God, I thank You with everything in my heart that you would be glorified today in Jesus' name.

A prayer meeting outside of Sodom.

*Then the Lord appeared to him (Abraham) by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three*



*men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant" (Genesis 18:1-3).*

It's been a long, long journey that Abraham had taken to get to this place called Mamre. If you go back to Genesis chapter 12, it had been almost 25 years since the Lord first called him to leave his home, and leave his place of familiarity to travel to a place where God said, "I'm gonna make you a blessing, so powerfully that all the families of the earth are going to be blessed through you."

*Now the Lord had said to Abram:*

*"Get out of your country,  
From your family  
And from your father's house,  
To a land that I will show you.*

*I will make you a great nation;  
I will bless you  
And make your name great;  
And you shall be a blessing.*

*I will bless those who bless you,  
And I will curse him who curses you;  
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed"*  
*(Genesis 12:1-3).*

Everyone who is a believer in Christ has already also experienced the same calling. When God called you, He called you to

something bigger than what you have known. He called you to something larger than where you had lived. He called you and I to leave behind that which we had become familiar with to go to a place that can only be achieved in God. That with which we are not familiar, and which we can't obtain in our own strength.

Now we know from the New Testament that Abraham in a sense was the father of faith. He believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. In other words, he was brought into a right relationship with God because he believed the words that he spoke to him. And God gave him a promise that through him was going to come a blessing that was going to bless the whole known world. Now he could have no way of knowing how that was going to be fulfilled, and neither can you know what God has destined for your life, although the Bible says he's determined to take you to an end that he has always desired for you.

Now, we don't always understand the journey on the way there. Abraham made mistakes along the way. Scripture tells us that after getting this incredible promise, the first thing that happens in his life is a famine that comes over the area where he was living, and he must head down to Egypt for a season. It speaks to me, it's a picture of the new believer in Christ. We have been given this incredible promise that God says, "I'm going to be a blessing to you. I'm going to make you bigger than you are. I'm going to do more with you than you can do for yourself, and I'm going to bless people through you. We're so excited in the beginning. We start reading:

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17).*

We're so excited as we read these promises, and we recognize the Spirit of God now lives inside these earthen vessels, and He's going to transform us by his presence inside of us. And the next thing you know, there's a famine and he heads down into Egypt. And it speaks of how every new believer is going to have to fight this; this drawing of the world to draw you back into its way of provision; its way of doing things. It's hard to make a break. It's hard to make that complete break from everything that we have become familiar with, things that once offered us comfort. And the world does offer sustenance, and it does offer comfort, albeit the comfort it offers is so far short of that which only God can give, that it's not even worth the comparison.

Then there came a point after Abraham was in Egypt that he ran into a lot of trouble, but God delivered him. And some of you are like that, you've run into a lot of trouble since you've become a Christian. Come on, be honest with me now; it's not been an easy journey. You have been found in places you shouldn't be. You don't know how you got there, and you wish you hadn't gone there, and you're wondering if God's gonna ever get you out. Is he going to be faithful to you?

Abraham ended up with his wife being taken captive in a foreign king's court just because of the fear in his heart, but the Lord released him. The Lord will stay faithful to you even when you struggle, even when you're in a trial, even when you find yourself in difficulty. When he said, "I will never leave you or forsake you," he meant what he said. "I'm not going to let you go. I know you're going to struggle. I know that Egypt, this world, is going to pull back on you again, and try to get you inside the comfort of its arms."

Abraham left Egypt, and he began to pray as he had prayed once before.

*And he went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the Lord (Genesis 13:3-4).*

It's like you and I, that we finally realize, "Oh God, if I'm going to become anything, it's going to be you that does it. Lord, lead me; Lord, guide me." We start to pray prayers like that. "Lord, take my life. I can't get to where I need to go in my own strength. You're gonna have to take me there." In the midst of that place of prayer, the Lord speaks to him:

*And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you" (Genesis 13:14-17).*

Phenomenal! It's a very real type of God saying, "Get in the book my brother, my sister, and walk its length! Go from the north to the south, from the east to the west, through every page, through every chapter and everything that's in this book. I'm gonna give it to you. I died to give it to you. I rose from the dead to take your captivity captive, and give you gifts that you can't get

by yourself; to make you a blessing everywhere you go, and everywhere you travel. I'm going to make your life this incredible blessing that was promised through your father Abraham.” And then the Scripture says:

*Then Abram moved his tent and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the Lord (Genesis 13:18).*

So, that's where we started. One day when he was in that place, the Lord told him:

*Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be” (Genesis 15:5).*

Now, what he was looking at was you and I, the Church of Jesus Christ who himself said, “You are the light of the world. You are like the star set in the heavens for light, for the ability for people to navigate this world and find the place that God has destined them to go. You are the city set upon a hill that cannot be hidden.” Thank God, for that. He could have no way of knowing what he was looking at, but he was looking at the faithfulness of God.

In the next season, the Lord makes a covenant with Abraham, but Abraham couldn't have understood that covenant. If you take the time to read the covenant in Genesis from where we started in chapter 18, you'll see that God himself came down and made a covenant to fulfill this through Abraham. All Abraham had to do was chase the birds away; that was his whole job to keep away

those vultures that would try to come down and devour this promise that I'm making to you. And you and I have to do that too; we have to chase the birds off of our heads that come down and try to say, "You really trust in God. You really believe in God. You really believe that God will do this for you. You really believe that God will make you a blessing." Our job is to chase the birds away. Chase them all away. Say "No," I choose to believe God no matter what my eyes see, no matter what my ears hear. God is faithful. He can't be anything other than what he is, and every promise he's ever made to me, he's going to fulfill now."

This brings us to where we opened today, this place called Mamre. It's been almost 25 years since God initially made this promise to him that He was going to increase him and that he was going to be a blessing. And in those 25 years, nothing really had happened that Abraham could see, and Abraham even tried to give God a hand in fulfilling the promise. Remember, he took his wife's servant girl and had a son by her called Ishmael. It was Abraham's attempt. He got a little impatient with God. Have you ever tried to give God a hand to make you what you're supposed to be? He's not moving fast enough for you and me, so we're trying to just push it along a little bit. We try to push ourselves into ministries and push ourselves into places where we're not supposed to be yet, and we wind up with this son that should never have been that's become just an albatross. It can be a ministry that's just an albatross around your neck, and you say, "God, how did I ever get to this place."

And so now he's sitting at this tent door in Mamre, 25 years after the promise was originally made in the heat of the day. And so, he's gotten to a place where he's just dealing with day-to-day

stuff, and it's hot, and it's difficult, and he's dealing with family issues with the son Ishmael, and his two wives are fighting.

And so, in the heat of the day, where he's just dealing with the day-to-day activities, the day-to-day stuff like you and I are. The day is hot. The day is difficult. It's a hot day in our society right now. It's a hot day, the heat of anger seems to be everywhere, when the heat of passion seems to be the chords that once restricted it seems to be broken, and it's everywhere, and there's just this heat everywhere. And it's just so hard for so many of us to deal with it. We come home and we have to live in the heat of the day. And you know what that's like. It's hot on the job. You're not even allowed a biblical worldview anymore. Your job is threatened, and you're a hater if you happen to believe in traditional marriage, for example.

So, in the midst of being there 25 years after the promise was initially made to him, he's kind of made peace with where he is. He's just dealing with the heat of the day, and suddenly the Son of God appears to him. It is generally understood that this was Christ himself, a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ, with two angels walking with him. And suddenly the Lord appears, and he knows it's the Lord because of the way he addresses him.

And the Bible tells us the Lord speaks back to him again, as only the Lord could, and he lifted up his eyes and three men were standing by him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, and he said, "My Lord, if I've not found favor in your sight, do not pass me by." Praise be to God. I don't know how many are saying that even on this day. So, you suddenly feel his presence again. It's been a long haul since He first promised to make you into a

blessing. You feel in your heart that you've been everything but a blessing. You're struggling like everyone else is in society. You're struggling to rise above the crowd, and to be a testimony of the reality of God in your life, and suddenly just in the midst of the worship today, for example, you just feel him passing by you again. And that something comes into your heart that you say, "If I've found favor in your sight, don't pass me by. Have mercy on me." You find yourself like the blind man on the side of the road, and cry out, "Son of David have mercy on me. I'm part of your family, but I can't see my way forward. I don't feel like my life is a blessing. You said it was supposed to be a blessing, but I don't feel my life is a blessing."

And then suddenly, the Lord starts to speak to Abraham. This is 25 years later. God waits. His timetable is not our timetable. I remember one time I was a young pastor, and a young Christian actually, and God started speaking to me about living to see a spiritual awakening. I didn't even know what it was when he started to speak to me about it, that I would live to see a significant turning to God in a time of hardship. I couldn't understand it other than he had spoken it to me. I was just so excited about it, and full of youth, and full of strength, and ready to go out and try to make it happen.

I was talking in the kitchen of our old farmhouse one day, and I remember Pastor Teresa turned to me, and pointed at me, and she said, "God will never give the mantle of revival to a man till he no longer wants it." Isn't it amazing! Until we've come to a place where we've exhausted our own ambitions; we've exhausted our own strength; we're just dealing with the heat of the day. The promise seems to have been made many, many years ago. It's not been fulfilled, and we've made peace in



measure, at least, that I may never live to see what God spoke to my heart. May it just happen, even though I may never live to see it happen. I don't know what was in Abraham's heart at this point, but when he felt the Lord passing by, he said, "If I've found favor." If after all these years, he had nothing to point to. There was no litany of great faithfulness in his life. He'd made some terrible mistakes along the way. He'd let his wife be taken captive in a foreign king's court. He had married a person he shouldn't have. He had a child that God never ordained him to have. And he had really made a mess of the promise in many regards, but he felt the Lord passing by again, and he says, "Oh God, if I found favor in your sight, please don't pass me by." And suddenly the Lord sits down, and he tries to serve God. The Son of God just patiently waits for him to get through all of his stuff he feels he needs to do, and when he gets through it all, the Lord speaks:

*And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son."*

*(Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.) Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" And the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?' Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son" (Genesis 18:10-14).*

The same word 'hard' is used in Isaiah chapter 9 and verse 6, describing the Lord, it says:

*For unto us a Child is born,  
Unto us a Son is given;  
And the government will be upon His shoulder.  
And His name will be called  
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

It's the exact same words. In other words, you could translate this clearly as, "Is anything too wonderful for the Lord?" At the appointed time, I will return to you according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Phenomenal! God waits until we can't do something, and then he does it, because if he did it before we got to the place of knowing that only God can do this, we will touch the glory. As surely as we live; as surely as we sit or stand here and breathe, it would be "look what Jesus and I did," and then Jesus would get really small, and I'd get really big. We'd be writing books telling everybody else how we did this thing. If God has determined to do something through your life and through my life, he's going to wait until we know it can't be done apart from him. It's not going to happen, God, unless you do it.

What may be an issue of character, may be a promise that he made to you. Whatever it is, you finally get to the place where you're just trying to get through the heat of the day. That's it! You've given up in a sense of trying to be a blessing in the world. You've given up trying to help God make you a blessing in the world, and suddenly God comes to you again, and says, "Okay, now you're ready. Now you're ready for me to do through you; through you, not in spite of you, through you what I promise. When Abraham was too old, Sarah was beyond childbearing.

These folks are almost 100 years old, and God says, "I'm going to now give you a child."

So, after this incredible promise to Abraham, it says the men arose, that's Christ and the two angels arose, and Abraham rose with them, and they began to walk towards Sodom. Sodom is a city that's about to be judged. Perversion, homosexual perversion had arisen in that city to the point where the report of it had reached heaven, and Christ himself had come down with two messengers and said, "We're going to go. We're sending our messengers into the city to see if it is as bad as the reports are."

They went into that city. It's a city that's about to burn. You understand it's about to burn, and it did burn. The judgment of God came down on it. The flash point of God's judgment was when the men and boys of that city knew that two angels had come into town. They were staying in Lots' house. The men of the city surrounded the house, and began to beat on the door so that they could have sexual relations with the two strangers that had come in.

Don't ever underestimate how depraved humanity can become without God. Once you take away the foundation stone of Christ and the Word of God, there's no limit to the depth of depravity. I've seen this. I was a police officer for 12 years. I know what I'm talking about. There is no depth to the depravity of humanity when you take God out of the equation. It is only the power of the Holy Spirit that restrains evil in this world. You have to understand that. The flash point of God's judgement was when they surrounded the house and attempted to break in and make the messengers of God partakers of their sin.

I challenge you with this one thought: We are not far from that today. There is a concerted effort now to push into the house of God and force the ministers of God to acquiesce to this immoral lifestyle, and immoral lifestyles in our generation, and to agree with definitions of things that God does not agree with. We are very close to the moment that they were in in this particular chapter of Scripture, that Sodom had no idea that they were going to come under the judgment of God. They had no idea that the fire of God was going to come down and consume them. They had no idea the people in Sodom that within a very, very short time were going to find themselves in an eternity without God. If they could speak to us today, they'd be crying out to you and to me to do something that perhaps Abraham could have done but failed to do in his time.

*And the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him" (Genesis 18:17-19).*

God says, "I'm not going to hide from Abraham what I'm about to do because he's determined to do right. He's determined to believe me. He's determined to follow me. He's determined to instruct his house in the ways of God." And when you and I make that determination, one of the things that starts to happen is God starts to open our understanding of the times that we're now living in. The Apostle Paul states:

*But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness (1 Thessalonians 5:4-5).*

We are people of the light, and as such God can speak to our hearts, not just the sweet promises, as wonderful as they are in the Word of God, but He can speak to our hearts about those things that He's determined to do that are coming on this world for a reason that we've not maybe yet fully understood.

So now the Lord says:

*And the Lord said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know" (Genesis 18:20-21).*

Then the men turned away from there and went towards Sodom. So, now it's just Abraham and the pre-incarnate Jesus standing there. Sodom is probably, at least the area of it that's visible from where they're standing. Abraham's just been told judgment is coming.

This church was founded in 1987, and when it was founded, God told Pastor David Wilkerson, "Warn the city of New York of an impending judgment that is coming. Warn!" It's been 31 years now that this pulpit has warned of a difficult day. And not being in the darkness, you remember in 9/11 in 2001, how the Lord started speaking to this congregation in about May or June that a time of great calamity was coming to the city, and we were to

prepare and, we were to pray. And by the grace of God we heard, we listened to the voice of God. He told us of something to come, and as a congregation, we were ready when the towers were hit. This church was ready because we had been in prayer. We had been interceding for the city for probably two months at that particular point.

Now Abraham is standing face to face with God, and it's a type of prayer. You and I have incredible power with God in prayer. Abraham is not a perfect man. You see there's great hope in these Scriptures. It's not that he's lived a flawless life. He's made mistakes along the way. He's doubted God. He's trying to help God. He's gone down into Egypt. He's done a lot of things, but yet God is still with him, and he's standing face to face with Christ, the pre-incarnate Christ, outside of a society, a city that's about to come under the judgment of God.

Now Abraham came nearer, and the following dialog ensued between him and God:

*And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it? Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"*

*So the Lord said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes."*

Here's a man having a face-to-face honest encounter with Christ, the Word of God who was there in the beginning. All things were created by him, and the Son of God is not offended by his prayer. I love the reality of that. He's not offended when we're honest with him. We only see through a glass darkly, as the Scripture says, in comparison to Christ we have no sight at all, but yet Jesus is not offended by this man's prayer. He's not offended when we pray honestly, when we stand before Him.

*Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?"*

*So He said, "If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it."*

*And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?"*

*So He said, "I will not do it for the sake of forty."*

*Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?"*

*So He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."*

*And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?"*

*So He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty."*

*Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?"*

*And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten."*

*So the Lord went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place (Genesis 18:23-33).*

So, Abraham went back home to the tent where he was in this place called Mamre. There are two things I want to talk about in this interaction. The first is why did he stop at ten? He knew his nephew Lot was there. We know from the testimony of Scripture that there were four righteous in the city because the angels took four out. They were iffy righteous, but they were righteous. It was an imputed righteousness given to him by God.

*And delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (2 Peter 2:7).*

Abraham was six short of a victory, and there's no indication that the Lord said, "That's enough now! Stop! Don't ask for anymore." Abraham could have gone down to five; he could have gone down to four. You see, sometimes we stop in our prayers just short of the victory. We feel that our assessment of the situation was reasonable, and he got God to lower the total destruction to 50 to 10, and walked away saying, "Okay, wow what a prayer meeting that was!" And he was six souls short of victory!

I want you to really think about that just for a moment. There's nothing in the Scripture that says he couldn't have said, "Perhaps there's five, and let me speak but once more. Perhaps there's



four.” And you see, if he had just kept going in his prayer, history would have recorded perhaps something different, perhaps similar to when Jonah went to Nineveh. Nineveh was an extremely wicked city, but it turned at the preaching of Jonah. From the king down to the lowest of the land put on sackcloth and ashes, and in turn a whole generation was spared because one man went into the city.

This brings me to point two: we know that Jesus Christ is omniscient. We teach that, which means he knows everything. He already knows how many righteous people are in the city, so why is he playing this game with Abraham? Or is he playing a game with Abraham? Is he perhaps looking for something that Abraham was not fully aware of, or maybe when we read it, we're not aware of? I mean right away when Abraham said, “Will you destroy it for fifty righteous, he could have just said, “There's not 50 righteous in the city. There's not 40. There's not 30. There's not even 10.” Why did he allow Abraham to continue to pray? Was he really looking for something? My opinion is that he was looking for something because Abraham is a type of the church. Don't forget, it was the church that was going to come through Abraham and be the blessing.

We are the blessing that was promised by God through Abraham. Through Abraham came the patriarchs of Israel; through the patriarchs came the Savior; through the Savior came the church; through the church came you and me. We are the blessing that was promised by God to Abraham. Here's what I feel in my heart that Jesus Christ was looking for, and Abraham fell short in his prayer. it was this one prayer: “God spare the city, and I'll go. Send me. Give me 30 days; give me 60 days to open my mouth.” You see, Lot couldn't win the city because he was too intermixed

in it. His own family didn't even believe him. He had no authority in his own home, but Abraham could have walked in and said, "Listen folks, I have just had a face-to-face encounter with God, and God told me, God told me this city is going to burn if you don't turn."

Who's to say he couldn't have won 6 or 10 people back to the knowledge of God in that city? Who's to say he couldn't have done that? I really believe in my heart that that's what the Lord was after. You see what he did is, he got it down to 10, then it says the Lord walked away, and Abraham returned to his place. And a lot of our prayer meetings are like that. We come to prayer meetings, and we pray, and we get it down to what we think is a reasonable level according to our understanding. So, in a sense we go home, and the Lord goes back to the work that he's doing. We thought that victory had been won, but we stopped not six short, but one short of victory. One! Me! That's what the Lord's always been looking for.

It's the Isaiah moment when we see our own unworthiness at the altar of God, and we understand how far short we fall of the glory of God. He knows his own weakness, but it's then we're touched by the mercy, and because he's been touched by mercy, he knows that God is willing to be merciful. And he takes that mercy with him into that present society and suddenly Isaiah hears the voice of God:

*Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying:*

*"Whom shall I send,  
And who will go for Us?"*

*Then I said, "Here am I! Send me" (Isaiah 6:8).*

I can talk to them about mercy. I can talk to them about judgment, but I can talk to them about mercy, and my message will be balanced. Their behavior deserves judgment, but God is willing to be merciful and has proven it on the cross.

Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God. Abraham, having come to this place of personal bankruptcy, may I call it that, now knows the mercy of God. This same scenario repeats itself all the way through the Bible. In the Gospels, the prodigal son comes home. He understands the mercy of God, but only through his own bankruptcy, in his own failure. And when you and I come to the point where we recognize that we stand by mercy. We stand by grace, all of us. The psalmist David said it the best:

*He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities (Psalm 103:10).*

*If You, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand (Psalm 130:3)?*

How would you like all your thoughts of this week put up on the screen right now Thank God. Thank God. Jesus forgets all of that except for his own name, and his own covering in our life. I thank God for that with all my heart. When you get down to the place where you know you're not going to change apart from him, and it begins to change you, then he starts speaking to you about the city. Then suddenly a prayer turns:

"God, you've been merciful to me. You've been so good to me God, in all my failures, and all my struggles, and all my trials, in

the things that only you and I know. You've been merciful to me. So, God, would you give me a chance? Would you give me a chance to extend that mercy to these people, in spite of their behavior, in spite of what they do or don't do, or live or don't live. Lest they come under judgment, Lord, would you send me?"

It's a type of the Christian that just says, "I'm gonna start speaking by the grace of God. I'm going to start speaking, and I'm going to speak about mercy, about kindness, the goodness of God, his willingness to forgive." There are standards of righteousness, but I'm not going to go with a pointed finger and a closed fist. I'm gonna go with an open hand and represent the one whose hands have scars in them, and I'm gonna tell this generation, "There's mercy for you if you choose to want it. God is willing to be merciful. He is a judge, and one day He will judge, and one day cities in this world are going to burn." The Scripture tells us:

*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat (2 Peter 3:10-12)?*

But, until that day comes, I'm not just going to go home. I want to go where the people are and start to speak to them. That is the cry of my heart, and I trust and believe that it's the cry of the heart of this church. It's good to come to pray. Thank God so many of you do. Thank God you pray. Thank God you fill this

house on Tuesday night. I bless God for it, but it's not enough just to come and pray, and then go home. We have to go into the city, and so that's my altar call this morning. Here am I send me.

God give me the courage to open my mouth when it looks like people are not going to listen. There are a lot of places we'd like to go as an evangelist, but I suggest Sodom and Gomorrah might not have been one of them. But who knows if some would have listened? Who knows that enough would have listened to spare the city for a season? Who knows if God wouldn't have raised up preachers among those who turn from their sin? Who knows? The truth is we never will because it didn't happen because nobody went. But by God's grace, that's not going to be our testimony in this generation. We will be the blessing to this world by turning them from their sin. We will be the blessing by leading them to Christ. We will be the blessing by opening our hearts and being an open display of the love of God to people who may have never known it. And because they've never known it, they've looked in perverted places to find love. But we will be that testimony of the presence and the power of God.

Father, I thank you with all my heart this morning, Lord. You are coming again soon. The world is unraveling quickly. Society is turning dark all around us. Hostility to truth and morality are growing by the day. But Lord, you have a church, and you promised that your people would be a blessing to this world. You said it. As a matter of fact, you said "all the families of the earth will be blessed in you."

Lord, if we're living less, in a lower place than our inheritance, give us the grace, my God, to start to believe you. Give us the grace to get up and go forward. Give us the grace Jesus Christ,

Son of God, to be the people that you've called us to be. We admit our fault. We admit our failure, Lord. We recognize that we often don't speak when we should, and we don't go where you call us, but as you were merciful to Abraham, you will be merciful to us. And even though he went home, you still fulfilled the promise that you made to him, and through his life Christ came and the church was born. Help us Lord Jesus Christ to not go out of this world as dull stars. Help us to shine brightly, Lord. For the sake of those who live in darkness, that they may find their way home. Give us hearts of compassion to care for those that are lost in their sin.

Help us, my God, not to condemn those that you died for, but to tell them there's forgiveness and liberty, a joy and a future, and a heaven that can be theirs. Give us reasons that can't be stood against. Give us power, Lord, that this world knows nothing about. Raise us up, oh God, out of self-consumption, and give us the grace Lord to live our lives for their sakes. Help us Lord Jesus Christ to gather the harvest in this generation. I pray for my own poor heart, oh God. I pray for the strength and the grace Lord to do whatever you ask me to do, and to say whatever you ask me to say, and to go wherever you ask me to go.

I pray God with all my heart that you would open our mouths and give us the courage to speak about your willingness to be merciful. Thank you, Lord. All I can say is, "Not in strength, but in weakness, here am I, send me." Father, I thank you for this, and I praise you in Jesus' name.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cob1ssM08dU>

## An Apology

A delegation from Norway made the following apology to Israel at the Day of Support and Prayer at the Knesset, sponsored by the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast on November 26, 2024.

### Declaration

Forgive us, Israel. It took several days before Norway finally called Hamas a terrorist organization following the terrorist attack on October the 7<sup>th</sup>. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs advised the King not to extend condolences to Israel; advice which the king followed. Such a lack of empathy and malicious attitudes from a country like Norway is alarming. On March the 7<sup>th</sup> 2024 the Norwegian government issued a press release advising against trade and commercial activity with Israeli settlements, depicting Judea and Samaria as occupied territory. We distance ourselves from this.

Judea and Samaria are the original lands of the Jews, and encouraging a boycott of companies that have many of their employees in a painful war makes life more difficult for many already hard-pressed Israelis. We acknowledge with sadness that Norway did not support the WHO declaration calling for the immediate release of all hostages held in Gaza and condemning the use of hospitals and ambulances for war purposes.

In the aftermath of October the 7<sup>th</sup> the political leadership in Norway has appeared halfhearted in distancing itself from Jew hatred. Now the demonization of Jews, anti-Israel news, and harassment of Jews is at a new height as before World War II. During demonstrations against Israel's defense campaign against

Hamas, slogans calling for the eradication of Israel from the map have been shouted, such as, “From the river to the Sea Palestine will be free.” The same kind of slogans were also spread on social media and in other ways. This is an incitement to genocide. Such statements have not been punished or curbed by the Norwegian state and police.

The Norwegian government continues to support UNRHH, which employs terrorists among its staff and teaches children in schools in the Palestinian territory’s hatred of Israel and the Jews. Norway as a nation has not yet recognized Jerusalem as the country’s capital, although Jerusalem has been chosen by Israel as its capital, and since the time of King David about 3000 years ago, has not been the capital of any other country than Israel. Forgive us as a nation Israel.

### Norway’s International Work for Peace in Israel

Norway took the initiative for the Oslo Accords in 1993 which called for the division of Israel. The Oslo Accords led to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. Together they and Israel were to achieve a coexistence where they could live peacefully together. The leaders of the Palestinian Authority have for these 30 years supported terror and taught the young generation to hate Jews and Israel.

We acknowledge with sorrow the Norwegian government’s recognition of Palestine on May the 28<sup>th</sup> 2024, where Israel’s borders are set according to the 1949 armistice lines. We regret Norway’s official lack of support for Israel in the challenging and defensive war they are engaged in, while on the other hand they



support the creation of a nation that engages in terror. Hamas thanked Norway for this. Forgive us as a nation Israel.

### The War and its Victims

Israel has endured indescribable suffering through the terror and the hostage taking in October the 7<sup>th</sup>, and the subsequent war. Many soldiers also have been killed. Families have been evacuated, and there is pressure to live under the threats from Hamas and other terrorist organizations. The people of Gaza are also suffering from the war. Hamas terrorists wear civilian clothes, use civilians as shields, and fire rockets from populated areas and public buildings. Hezbollah in Lebanon is also doing the same.

Israel makes a commendable effort to avoid harming civilians, but it is impossible in such densely populated area. Gaza has a border with Egypt, with a coastline towards the Mediterranean Sea. If other countries had wanted to, and had followed the UN's refugee charter, they would have taken in civilians; women and children. A lack of open borders and hearts in other countries means that children and civilians are suffering in Gaza. Forgive us Israel for Norway not doing enough for those who are suffering in Israel, Gaza, and other countries, because of war against Israel.

### The Church of Norway and Congregations in Norway

Replacement theology has provided fertile ground for antisemitism, and we ask for forgiveness for all antisemitic attitudes and anti-Zionist attitudes that have been in the church from the beginning until today. We ask for forgiveness for priests and bishops who have condemned Israel's defense fight, and for

those who have called for a boycott of Israel. Too many churches and Christian leaders have not sufficiently preached nor clearly enough about Israel in our circles and stood up the truth in the public space. Forgive us as a church and congregations Israel.

### Education and Media

We acknowledge with sorrow that several educational institutions in Norway have broken off academic cooperation with Israel. We regret that many different media throughout Norwegian society, including Norwegian school books and encyclopedias have provided incomplete and biased portrayals of the conflict in the Middle East, presenting Israel in a poor light. Forgive us as a nation Israel.

### Jews in Norway

In a survey 81.6% of all Jews say that experiences after October the 7<sup>th</sup> have made them consider whether Norway is a safe country for Jews. This has resulted in already one Jewish family in Norway feeling forced to leave the country and travel to Israel. Forgive us as a nation Israel.

### Proclamation

We confirm that Israel has the right to defend itself against attacking forces and against terrorists, and the right to have secure borders. We proclaim that with Norway's approval of Palestine, the Oslo accords are dead. Israel is a nation that has blessed the world with advances in technology, research, and agriculture, among other things. Norway has a calling to cooperate with Israel. It leads to blessing for both parties.

We recognize that Norway has been blessed because we have built our nation on the Bible and our Judeo-Christian heritage. Norway has a calling to bless, cooperate with, and support Israel and the Jews. As Christians, we acknowledge God's promises to Israel also regarding the land. We distance ourselves from all forms of replacement theology. We recognize that the Messiah is a Jew, and that salvation comes from the Jews.

There are many who love Israel in Norway, and who support the Jews in Norway. We want to stand up and speak the truth about Israel and the Jews. Our friendship with the Jewish people and the State of Israel is unchanged, and stronger than ever.

(<https://www.youtube.com/live/T4sScq6Oj7s>)

## **Arabia in Scripture**

The nation of Saudi Arabia is a key nation in this season as it relates to the conflict going on in Israel today. Arabia also plays a significant role in the Biblical narrative. It is mentioned many times in Scripture as the land of Midian.

The first time it is mentioned as a land in Scripture is Exodus 3:1. It references the place where Moses fled to after he killed the Egyptian. He went and lived in the land of Midian and married Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, the priest of Midian. It was here where God appeared to Moses while he was shepherding the flock of his father-in-law on the far side of the wilderness. Moses came to Horeb, the Mountain of God. Another name for Mt. Horeb is Mt. Sinai.

This is where God met Moses for the first time and spoke to him from the burning bush. The Exodus Covenant was released in Saudi Arabia as God revealed himself to Moses as the “I Am that I Am.” It was on that mountain that God's told Moses that the sign that I am speaking to you right now is that you will lead the people out of Egypt, and you will worship me on this mountain. God gave Moses many physical signs and wonders to display before Pharoah, but the main sign was the fact that the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob was speaking to him and commissioning to lead the people of Israel to worship God on this mountain.

So, current day Saudi Arabia was the first place where the nation of Israel worshipped when they came out of Egypt. At the base of this mountain is also where the tabernacle of worship was erected for the first time. God could have encountered Moses

anyway and anywhere after he fled Egypt, but God chose to encounter him by this mountain in Midian. Horeb was also the place where Elijah fled from Jezebel in 1 Kings 19 after he confronted the priest of Baal.

Arabia also plays a significant role in revealing God's new covenant revelation. Paul, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, came to know the Lord on his way to Damascus. After he had this encounter with Jesus, Paul states:

*"I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia" (Galatians 1:16-17).*

Then Paul states that, "Mount Sinai is in Arabia" (Galatians 4:25).

So, Paul who knew the law so well, went to encounter Jesus in that mountain. He stayed there for three years and did not meet any of the disciples until after he came back from Arabia. It was in present day Saudi Arabia that Jesus himself taught Paul the revelation of the gospel.

Mount Sinai is the very place where God's presence was revealed in "a blazing fire" (Hebrews 12:18), where Elijah fled to and heard the "still small" voice of God, and it is also likely the place where Paul the apostle traveled to shortly after his conversion experience to receive a fuller revelation of his gospel from heaven. So, this mountain in Arabia is literally drenched with divine history and revelation.

The Romans divided the Arabian Peninsula into three distinct areas: Arabia Deserta (or Arabia Magna), Arabia Felix, and Arabia

Petraea. The debate over where the true Mount Sinai is located goes back thousands of years. Joel Richardson explains the many reasons why Jebel al-Lawz in current day Saudi Arabia is by far the best candidate to be the true “Mountain of God.” [1]

Then 600 years later, Islam, the religion that denies the sonship of Jesus also comes out of Saudi Arabia. So, Saudi Arabia plays a significant role in the development of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. No wonder there is such spiritual contention for this area!

In 2018, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Muhammad Bin Salman announced plans to build a futuristic “city-state” called, “Neom.” It is slated to become an international city 33 times larger than New York City that will encompass a large quadrant of northwest Saudi Arabia. In the center of this futuristic city is an ancient mountain range called Jebel al-Lawz (“The Mountain of Almonds”). So, the significance of Saudi Arabia to God’s redemptive plan is being revealed in a greater way in our time.

When you study who Midian was in the first place, you will find other interesting connections to God’s redemptive plan. Midian was a son of Abraham through his third wife Keturah (Genesis 25:1-2). When you recall the story of Joseph, he was sold by his brothers to traders from Midian (Genesis 37:28), who then sold him in Egypt (Genesis 37:36). So, you have Midian the son of Keturah, Ishmael, whose mother was Egyptian, carrying Joseph who is also the descendant of Abraham through Isaac into Egypt. You have the three sons of Abraham cooperating in the redemptive story line of God.

Then after 400 years of slavery in Egypt, God takes the Israelites back to the land of Midian, the land of the family of Abraham, the land of his distant cousins. God is a god of family, and he is about

restoring the family, especially the family of Abraham. You see this in the story of Joseph, and again in the story of Abraham. This is so much on God's heart to bring this family together.

When you look at what is happening today in Saudi Arabia and Egypt and Israel, they are primarily cooperating to bring peace to this conflict. Egypt has had a peace treaty with Israel for many years, and Saudi Arabia was about to normalize relationships with Israel before the October 7th incident. The Lord has something on his heart as it relates to the nation of Saudi Arabia, and as it relates to Israel now in bringing God's purpose once again to Israel.

The main purpose of God for Israel is for Israel to become a nation of worship. This is their primary calling and their identity, and that is why he called them out of Egypt. He says, "You will worship me on this mountain."

We need to pray for Saudi Arabia to align with God's purposes today, just like the people who were living there centuries ago aligned with God's purposes to release the nation of Israel into her inheritance - that Israel will be provoked to jealousy through the Gentile nations around them. When the hearts of Israel's enemies are completely changed and transformed through Christ, this will bring the true witness of their Messiah to them.

We get tripped up sometimes by the land situation, who gets this and who gets that, but it is God's land – He owns it all. In Psalm 2:6, it says, "I have set my king on my Holy Hill of Zion." So, it is the Lord's hill, it is the Lord's earth.

*The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness,  
The world and those who dwell therein (Psalm 24:1).*

That is why the battle is so fierce in Israel today. It is certainly against the Jewish people, but beyond that it is a satanic battle against the Lord, and against his coming back to rule and reign from his Holy Hill in Jerusalem. Jesus said that He will not come back until the Jewish people say, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” (Matthew 23:39). So, we must pray for them to receive the Lord and pray for the Palestinians also to identify with the Messiah and the King of Glory Jesus.

(Some content in this chapter is based on ideas present by Shadi. Shadi was born and raised in the Middle East. Having carried a strong conviction since childhood to serve the Lord through his life, he left his career as a medical doctor to pursue this passion. He has worked in international ministry contexts for more than twenty-five years, mobilizing prayer within and for the nations and people of the Middle East.)

1. Richardson, Joel. *Mount Sinai in Arabia*. Leawood, Kansas: Winepress Media, 2019.



## **Armenia and Israel, A Journey of Suffering and Glory**

Armenia and Israel share much in common. Israel is the first-born nation of God in the Old and New Covenants, and Armenia was the first Gentile nation to embrace Christianity. Armenia was previously a pagan nation that hated Christians until a miraculous event took place in 301 A.D.

### **How Armenia Came to Faith**

“In 287, young St. Gregory had fallen out of favor with the king and had been exiled from the country, but in exile he heard the Christian message. In spite of the risk, he decided to come back to share the gospel with his countrymen.

The king soon learns of his return, has him seized and thrown into the deepest dungeon of the castle to die of starvation. But not before the king’s sister had listened to Gregory’s preaching and become a believer. For 14 years she manages to keep Gregory alive.

At that point, a dreadful malady seizes the king, a strange insanity that hurls him to the floor grunting like an animal. During his lucid moments he beseeches his physicians to heal him, but no one can. His sister suggests, “The man named Gregory could help you.” “His bones are rotting beneath this very castle.”

So, Gregory is brought from the dungeon, his hair as white as the snow on Mt. Ararat, but sound in mind and spirit. In the name of Jesus Christ, he rebukes the demon tormenting the king, and in that instant the king is healed. Together, in the year 301, he and St. Gregory set out to achieve the conversion of all Armenia.” [1]

Throughout the generations, there has been a strong faith community in Armenia.

### The Flight to America and the Genocide

Demos Shakarian, founder of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International, shares the story of how the Boy Prophet warned the people of his Armenian village to come to America to avoid the soon coming genocide.

“When he had finished, the manuscript was taken to people in the village who could read. It turned out that this illiterate child had written out in Russian characters a series of instructions and warnings. At some unspecified time in the future, the boy wrote, every Christian in Kara Kala would be in terrible danger. He foretold a time of unspeakable tragedy for the entire area, when hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children would be brutally murdered. The time would come, he warned, when everyone in the region must flee. They must go to a land across the sea. Although he had never seen a geography book, the Boy Prophet drew a map showing exactly where fleeing Christians were to go. To the amazement of the adults, the body of water depicted accurately in the drawing was not the nearby Black Sea, or the Caspian Sea, or even the farther-off Mediterranean Sea, but the distant Atlantic Ocean! There was no doubt about it, nor the identity of the land on the other side: the map plainly pointed to the east coast of the United States of America.

But the refugees were not to settle down there, the prophecy continued. They were to continue traveling until they reached the west coast of the new land. There, the boy wrote, God would

bless them, prosper them, and cause their seed to be a blessing to the nations.” [2]

“The instructions proved correct. In 1914 a period of unimaginable horror arrived for Armenia. With remorseless efficiency the Turks began the bloody business of driving two-thirds of the population out into the Mesopotamian desert. Over a million men, women and children died in these death marches including every inhabitant of Kara Kala. Another half a million were massacred in their villages, in a pogrom that was later to provide Hitler his blueprint for the extermination of the Jews. ‘The world did not intervene when Turkey wiped out the Armenians,’ he reminded his followers. ‘It will not intervene now.’” [3]

### The Relationship Between Armenia and Israel

The Armenian presence in Jerusalem dates back to the 4th century AD, when Armenia adopted Christianity as a national religion, and Armenian monks settled in Jerusalem. The Armenian Quarter is considered the oldest living diaspora community outside of Armenia.

The relationship between Armenians and Israelis today is complex, and there are wounds that are pretty deep. Armenians living in the diaspora, who are genocide survivors, resent the fact that Israel would not recognize Turkey's atrocities as genocide. The relationship between Armenia and Israel deteriorated during the Artsakh Wars because a significant percentage of the young Armenian population were killed by drones that Azerbaijan purchased from Israel.

However, among believers in Yeshua, there is a growing bond between Armenians and Israelis, as they share a common history of suffering. The Israeli contingent of the Watchmen for the Nations and a few Armenian pastors and other Armenian leaders are building covenantal relationship that we hope will strengthen and increase in the years to come.

Armenia is the home of Mt. Ararat where Noah erected the first altar of intercession. This became the seed of the calling of the nation. Armenia, like Israel is a chosen nation, weak and foolish in the eyes of many nations, but chosen of God for a unique purpose.

“This keeps us in our place. We would be nothing without the Lord and His hand holding us. It is by his grace and mercy that we exist today,” says Peter Telian, a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Armenian that escaped the genocide. Peter’s vision is to rebuild the altar of intercession around Mt. Ararat. His prayer is that the Armenian people would rediscover the love of Christ, untarnished and unhindered.

“We are a simple people. We left the ark, and never went anywhere. We have a strong connection to the land.” Like Israel, Armenia used to be a larger nation, but their land has been taken from them by force, and their people have been slaughtered over the years. The enemy’s tactic has been to steal the simple love of Jesus from the people. Armenia as a nation needs to be restored to simple devotion and pure worship, despite the enemy’s tactic to steal everything that they have.

Demos Shakarian 60 years ago reflected this sentiment. “I pictured Armenia down through the ages, that small, embattled

country clinging to the lonely truth through conquest and massacre, surrounded always by bigger, stronger, unbelieving nations, finding its strength by turning inward.” [4]

There are many parallels between Armenia and the suffering Job of the Bible. It is like the enemy said to God, “Have you considered Armenia?” Through loss, incalculable grief, and all that was taken from them, they are realizing several common experiences in the course of their journey:

*Naked I came from my mother’s womb,  
And naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and  
The Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord”  
(Job 1:21).*

*Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him (Job 1:15).*

*I know that You can do everything,  
And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You (Job  
42:2).*

*I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear,  
But now my eye sees You.  
Therefore I abhor myself (Job 42:5-6).*

In the end, Job received from the Lord twice the blessings that he had before his ordeal of suffering. That is the hope of the people of Armenia today.

Armenian Christian Sona Hagopian has received several visions since 2004 about the destiny of Armenia and Israel. In one vision, she saw herself flying over Mt. Ararat and the surrounding

nations. The whole region was hearing God's voice, and the Lord said, "Worship is our only weapon to heal both of our hearts." It was a song of deliverance.

In 2018 she received a vision of the heavenly realm over Armenia where Gomidas, the Armenian priest, musicologist, composer, and choirmaster, the Hebrew Prophet Samuel, and Sona were worshipping together, as an army marched together in peace. Gomidas was a key player in development of the Armenian church. He was among the first to be taken prisoner along with the intellectuals when the genocide started in 1915. Samuel is the Hebrew prophet who restored the purity of the altar in Israel, and Sona is a current Armenia follower of Jesus.

As Messianic Jews and the Armenian body of believers worshipped and worked together, they became a powerful force in the region. According to Sona, "We were meant to walk together, Armenians and Jews. God has a plan of unity between our tribes." Although both people groups have offenses toward one another, their hearts can be united in worship and intercession to bring God's presence in the region. The strength of the unity will bring his presence, as we come before the altar of God together as one, Armenians and Messianic Jews.

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is  
For brethren to dwell together in unity!  
It is like the precious oil upon the head,  
Running down on the beard,  
The beard of Aaron,  
Running down on the edge of his garments.  
It is like the dew of Hermon,  
Descending upon the mountains of Zion;*

*For there the Lord commanded the blessing—  
Life forevermore (Psalm 133).*

1. Sherril, John, and Elizabeth. *The Happiest People on Earth*. Washington Depot, Conn.: Chosen Books, 1975. 32.
2. Ibid, 20.
3. Ibid, 21-22.
4. Ibid, 58.

## **Back to Jerusalem**

*Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life (Revelation 2:10).*

Napoleon once said, “When China is moved it will change the face of the globe.” These words are being fulfilled through the vision of the Chinese church to send 100,000 workers west across China through predominant Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic nations to complete the Great Commission and take the gospel back to Jerusalem, where it all began.

Many Christians believe that the 70 years of persecution and suffering instigated by the atheistic Communist regime has uniquely prepared the underground church of China, estimated to be greater than 100 million strong, to pay the ultimate price to take the message back to Jerusalem.

The seeds of the Back to Jerusalem movement go back to the Northwest Spiritual Movement in the 1920's. Groups from the Northwest led by Simon Zhao began to take the gospel west to Xinjiang and the regions beyond, but they were met with heavy resistance when the Communists took control of China in 1949.

Simon was imprisoned for 31 years enduring constant beatings and deprivation. The Back to Jerusalem vision went underground, but the seed did not die, though it lay dormant for nearly 40 years. Simon often prayed, “Lord, I will never be able to go back



to Jerusalem, but I pray you will raise up a new generation of Chinese believers who will complete the vision.” [1]

The vision took shape in Central-Eastern China in 1943 after Mark Ma, a Chinese Christian from the Henan Province, had several encounters with the Lord in which the Lord said to him:

*“I want you to bring to completion to preach the gospel to all the world... Since the beginning at Pentecost, the pathway of the gospel has spread, for the greater part in a westward direction; from Jerusalem to Antioch to all Europe; from Europe to America and then to the East... You may go Westward from Gansu, preaching the gospel all the way back to Jerusalem, causing the light of the gospel to complete the circle around this dark world. I want to manifest My power through those who of themselves have no power.”*

To which Mark responded, “That section of territory is under the power of Islam, and the Muslims are the hardest of all peoples to reach with the gospel.”

And the Lord replied, “The most rebellious people are the Israelites, the hardest field of labor is my own people the Jews. Even you Chinese are hard enough, but you have been conquered by the gospel.” [2]

Mark became an early leader of the Back to Jerusalem movement, traveling throughout China calling the church to prayer and warfare on behalf of the movement, and calling volunteers for service in this great work.

Simon Zhou was released from prison in 1981 and lived another 20 years where he encouraged the next generation of Chinese believers to take up the Back to Jerusalem mantle. One of those believers he influenced was Brother Yun, an exiled evangelist and house church leader, and present leader of the Back to Jerusalem movement, who met Simon in 1995. Brother Yun recalls Simon exhorting the Chinese church, “You must recognize the way of the cross is the call to shed blood. You must take the gospel to the Muslim countries, then all the way back to Jerusalem.”

Brother Yun describes how this affected him. “That meeting was a pivotal point in my life. I came to understand clearly that the destiny of the house churches of China is to pull down the world’s last remaining spiritual strongholds – the house of Buddha, the house of Mohammed, and the house of Hinduism – to proclaim the glorious gospel to all nations before the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!” [3]

Furthermore, Brother Yun exhorts the Western church, “Don’t pray for the persecution to stop! We shouldn’t pray for a lighter load to carry, but a stronger back to endure! Then the world will see that God is with us, empowering us to live in a way that reflects his love and power.” [4]

When asked, “How will you know if the Back to Jerusalem movement has been successful? How will you know when you have achieved your goals?” Brother Yun responded:

“We have come to realize we are called to nothing less than the evangelization of all the remaining unreached peoples – more than five thousand of them! According to the Bible, the blood of Jesus has *‘purchased men for God from every*

*tribe and language and people and nation (Revelation 5:9).'*  
When the Lord helps us to achieve our goals, what will have been accomplished is nothing less than the fulfillment of the Great Commission.” [5]

The Back to Jerusalem movement has faced many setbacks over the years, but the hope remains that the current generation of Chinese believers will be better prepared to fulfil their calling. The following words of Mark Ma ring true for the present generation of Chinese believers who are now pressing forward with consecrated hearts to fulfil this great call:

*“My hope is that our Chinese church will with the determination and courage hold fast this great responsibility and, depending upon our all-victorious Savior, complete this mighty task, and taking the gospel back to Jerusalem. There we shall stand on the top of Mount Zion and welcome our Lord Jesus Christ descending with clouds in great glory!”* [6]

1. Hattaway, Paul et al. *Back to Jerusalem*. Waynesboro, Georgia: Authentic Media, 2003. 45.
2. Ibid, 25-26.
3. Ibid, 57.
4. Ibid, 58.
5. Ibid, 108.
6. Ibid, 28.

# **Bringing God's Word to the Kumyk People**

By Paul Humnick

*"The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple" (Psalm 119:130).*

My understanding of God's heart for the lost comes, primarily, from reading His word, and from contemplating the great price Jesus paid for my salvation through His suffering, death on the cross, and resurrection. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son."* I cannot say that God moved on my heart with a strong desire to reach the lost, or for any particular people or nation. For me, and later my wife, it was a long process of submitting ourselves to God, taking one step of obedience at a time, and watching as He gradually revealed His love and practical intentions for a specific Bibleless people group called the Kumyk.

I believe that God has a plan for our lives. But often it is not until we look back at our experiences that we can see more clearly how God was at work preparing us for His future purposes. It was not until after we began working on the translation project that I reflected on my past and gained a deeper appreciation of the part the Bible played in my own conversion.

I was raised in the Catholic Church by good and loving parents. In my early teens I told them I was ready to be done with church, and they reluctantly accepted my decision. I spent the following ten years or so wandering in the desert, looking for a deeper meaning to life. As far as I can recall, I never heard a presentation of the gospel, and can't remember meeting anyone who openly professed to be a follower of Jesus. And I had never read the

Bible. One day when I was visiting my parents, I saw a Bible on a shelf in the basement. I'm not exactly sure how it got there, and I don't know why I picked it up and brought it home. I can only credit God's mercy and the power of the Holy Spirit somehow stirring me into action. I started to read the Gospels. Over the next several months I found, as someone else has stated, "my heart was strangely warmed." God had put me on the path that led to faith in Jesus, and to discover and experience His forgiveness and unconditional love.

I couldn't tell you the hour, day, or month that I made a "decision." And for quite a while I didn't know there were any other like-minded people out there. Then one day, my sister invited me to visit the church she had recently started attending. It was a spirit-filled church and, although it struck me as downright strange, I immediately felt like that was where I belonged. For the next few years I attended every meeting I could and soaked it all in. There were many visiting missionaries who taught and spoke about the need to reach the lost and help the poor and needy in many parts of the world. I began to pray and ask God if that was something He wanted me to do.

At that point in my life, God had provided me with a good job in the computer field that I thoroughly enjoyed. I had bought a house and was trying to serve God in various capacities in my "Jerusalem." I wanted to be married, but hadn't met the right woman yet. I was content, but was still asking God for clear direction on how I could best serve Him.

I had made a couple of short-term mission trips and came away thinking that I wouldn't last long doing any kind of cross-cultural ministry without a clear call from God. At that point, I was self-

employed and decided to take some time off to fast and pray and see if God would give me any kind of clear direction for my future. If He wanted me to serve somewhere in a full-time capacity, I needed to be sure He was calling me. If He wanted me to be a Sunday school teacher or a Bible study leader, I wanted to study and work hard at it so I could be a really good one! If He wanted me to pursue my computer career and be a generous giver, I wanted to pour myself into my work.

I won't go into specifics, but during that time I believe God "spoke" to me (with multiple confirmations) about serving in the field of Bible translation. That took me completely by surprise! I knew a little bit about what a pastor or a church-planter did, but I knew next to nothing about what a Bible translator did or how to become one. I probably would have been scared off if I had known what I was undertaking. But I was convinced it was His will for me and that settled it. I did some research and decided to apply to Wycliffe Bible Translators. Over the next few years I went back to college to finish my bachelor's degree, took several semesters of linguistics courses, studied Bible translation principles, and eventually completed a master's degree in Linguistics. It was toward the end of that process that God answered my prayers for a true soulmate, and blessed me with my wonderful wife, Linda. That is a really fun story in itself, but I'll just say God used some miraculous "events," that included having almost identical dreams on the same night, to convince us both that He was bringing us together.

Shortly after starting my training, I learned that Wycliffe had three options for assigning translators to projects. You could say, "Send me wherever you want to," or something like, "I want to serve in a French speaking country in Africa," or "I feel called to a

specific people group.” I started asking God if He would lead me to a specific group. One day I was visiting my aunt and cousin. I briefly shared how God had called me into Bible translation and that I was praying for Him to show me where I should serve. My cousin said, “Let’s pray about that.” He prayed some simple prayer asking God to give me direction and at that moment I heard the Holy Spirit say, “Turkey.” It sounds funny, but my first reaction was, “God why are you speaking to me about food right now?” Then I thought, “Wait. Turkey is a country!” Was that you, God?

I wasn’t exactly sure where Turkey was, so I went to a bookstore to buy an atlas. I took one off the shelf and the thought came to me, “Do the random Bible point thing.” Do you know the one where you ask God to speak to you, close your eyes, open the Bible and put your finger down? (You’ve done that, right?) So I closed my eyes, opened the atlas, put my finger down, and opened my eyes. Yes, I was looking right at Turkey!

I called my Wycliffe administrator and asked him if there were any translation assignments available in Turkey. He checked and said there weren’t, but went on to explain that there were many other Bibleless Turkic people groups in that part of the world. Unfortunately, almost all of them were located in the Soviet Union and virtually inaccessible. I was disappointed, but was convinced that God was guiding me and Linda to serve a Turkic group and I wanted to keep walking down that path. We had asked Wycliffe to give us permission to spend some time in Turkey to study Turkish as a bridge to learning another Turkic language. (There are dozens of Turkic languages, and they are one of the most closely related groups of languages in the world.)

That request was approved, but we still didn't have an assignment to a translation project.

We were tentatively planning to leave for Istanbul in the fall. In the spring, Linda and I attended Wycliffe's three-month field training course. It's more or less the final step before launching out. It was right around that time the unimaginable was happening: the Iron Curtain was coming down and the Soviet Union was beginning to break up. What were once isolated, restricted regions were now starting to open their doors to outsiders. And a good number of them contained Turkic people groups.

A new administrative group within Wycliffe had just been formed with the hopes of sending people to work on translation projects in what was then referred to as the "FSU" (former Soviet Union). Shortly after completing the field training course, Linda and I attended their very first conference in England. We met the new director and also a number of people like ourselves who were exploring opportunities to serve in the FSU. The situation was very fluid and was changing nearly every day. There was lots of enthusiasm and optimism, but still no concrete opportunities. We left with high hopes and feeling encouraged, but without a clear idea of what came next.

Right after we returned to Minnesota we got a phone call with a very excited voice on the other end saying there were suddenly many open doors. He said there was an immediate need for workers to serve in ten translation projects in the FSU in partnership with another Bible translation agency called the Institute for Bible Translation. Linda and I asked if any of them were Turkic groups. He listed a few and told us to get back to him



in 24 hours with our top three choices. Linda and I decided to pray separately and each produce our top three picks and then compare them. Kumyk was at the top of both our lists. Our choice was approved by Wycliffe and we were soon officially assigned to the Kumyk Bible translation project.

We had already been approved to spend some time in Turkey, so we decided to stick with that plan. We spent about four months in Istanbul studying Turkish, and then relocated to St. Petersburg, Russia to spend six months studying Russian. (At that time, Russian was the language of wider communication and a necessary requirement for day-to-day life and any official business in the FSU.)

At the end of our time in St. Petersburg, we would be relocating to the Russian Republic of Dagestan (which is a 99% Muslim region) to join the translation project. Apart from our official connection to the local university, we didn't have any contacts or know anyone else there, so we were a little anxious about how things would go. Just before our move, we decided to return to the U.S. for a couple of weeks of vacation.

After arriving in Minnesota we attended City Hill Church on Sunday morning (called New Testament church back then). One of our friends welcomed us back, and said she had just greeted a woman from Russia who was visiting that morning and that we should try to meet her. When the service was over, we turned around and found that she was sitting right behind us. (Her name was Evelyn.) After introducing ourselves and chatting briefly, we learned that she had emigrated to the U.S. from Russia many years ago. We told her we just came from Russia and that we were about to head back. She was more than a little surprised

and asked us why we were going there. We explained that we were moving to a remote region of Russia called Dagestan to work on a Bible translation project with one of the minority languages. She looked stunned. “I grew up in Dagestan,” she said. Now it was Linda’s and my turn to be stunned!

I immediately recognized this as a divine appointment. (I should point out that Kumyk is just one of over 35 ethnic groups in the relatively small Republic of Dagestan, with each group speaking their own, unique language.) I asked Evelyn what ethnic group she belonged to. She said she was a Russian Jew. I was a little disappointed by her answer, but then she asked us if we would be willing to visit her close childhood friend, Zuchra, who still lived there. Even though they had not seen each other since they were children, the two of them wrote to each other regularly. We said of course and asked her if she was also a Russian Jew. “No, she’s Kumyk,” she answered. In my heart I shouted, “Glory to God!” A woman who grew up in Dagestan, who immigrated to Minnesota decades earlier, who was visiting our church (the first and only time) on the exact same day we were there—and who stayed in touch with her childhood friend who happened to be Kumyk. Only an all-knowing and all-powerful God could do something like that! I couldn’t wait to see where all of this was headed.

A few days after arriving in Dagestan, we appeared at Zuchra’s door to introduce ourselves. Within an hour, she and her husband invited us to live with them! We moved in the next day and stayed there for a year and a half before moving into our own apartment. God provided us a place to live with people who genuinely watched out for us and helped us in so many ways. And as a result of living with that family, we were able to have a

smooth and culturally appropriate entrance into the lives of many more Kumyk people. It was a miraculous beginning, and one that helped sustain us through many of the challenges we would face in the years ahead.

*“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:10-11).*

As a postscript to this story, I want to report that in 2007 the Kumyk New Testament was published. Lord willing, within the next few years the translation of the entire Bible will be completed. We are so thankful that God allowed us to be part of the translation team. It has been, and continues to be, a source of joy and wonder to watch God demonstrate His faithfulness in countless ways throughout the entire journey. It has deepened our understanding of His love and mercy, not just for the Kumyk, but for all people everywhere. All the glory belongs to Him!

## The Carmel Shelter

*For He will deliver the needy when he cries,  
The poor also, and him who has no helper.  
He will spare the poor and needy,  
And will save the souls of the needy.  
He will redeem their life from oppression and violence;  
And precious shall be their blood in His sight.  
(Psalm 72:12-14)*

Carmel Shelter was a home where God's love and mercy was extended to women who were going through difficult circumstances—domestic abuse, crisis pregnancies, and severe economic situations. During the years it was in operation, from 2003 through 2023, their doors were open to refugees from Darfur and other parts of Sudan, as well as the country of Eritrea, who had suffered the horrors of war and genocide. Later, they received women who were victims of human trafficking by smugglers in the Sinai desert.

Many of the women came to them pregnant, as their husbands had been imprisoned; some had been deserted or raped enroute. They also took in children who were separated from their parents under tragic circumstances. Their desire was to provide a place where these women and children could receive the warmth and love of a family, to know they were safe and could find the “refuge” they so desperately needed.

The Carmel Shelter was unique in that it was run by Messianic Jews who received women across the spectrum of the Israeli population—Jews, Arabs, immigrants, asylum seekers, and

foreign workers. Their mandate was to fulfill the scriptural command given to the nation of Israel in the Torah:

*“The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 19:34).*

When they opened their doors in January 2003, they had no idea who would come. The first resident was from Colombia. She was under police protection and needed to testify at the trial of her Muslim boyfriend who had attempted to kill her. Then came an immigrant from Ukraine, a pregnant mother of three whose husband was beating her to the point that she had become suicidal; then an Arab drug addict and prostitute; a woman from the former Soviet Union, who had also turned to prostitution and was seeking to build a new life; an Israeli Jewish mother of five whose Bedouin common-law husband was mercilessly beating her; an Ethiopian immigrant who had turned to alcohol for comfort when her husband deserted her and her daughters; a household worker from India who was kept as a slave in her employer’s home; and a woman from an Arab village in the Galilee who fled from her family who were threatening to kill her for the ‘dishonor’ she had brought to their home as a divorced woman. These women presented a ‘face’ of Israel that was seldom seen in the media.

In March 2006, the direction of the shelter took a new turn as they were contacted by the immigration police and the army to take in a Sudanese woman and her 6-year-old daughter who had crossed the dangerous border with Egypt. They were told that if she weren’t received by the shelter, she would be sent to prison,

and her daughter would be put in an institution for children. This began their journey into the world of refugees and their attempt to help them through the complexities of Israeli society and deal with a future that was unknown.

A week later, they received a 19-year-old Muslim girl, who gave birth soon after crossing the border, and was suffering greatly after being beaten in prison in Sudan for her activism against the government. Then another Muslim woman arrived whose husband was from a politically well-connected family, but they were forced to flee when he refused to cooperate with the government in Khartoum. Two more Sudanese women from the Nuer tribe arrived who had fled with their small children, crossing the desert at night—not knowing what awaited them. These first women came in the aftermath of a non-violent demonstration by the Sudanese refugees in Cairo that had been crushed by the Egyptian authorities. Dozens had been killed and they began looking to Israel for freedom and hope.

The women and children kept coming. Carmel Shelter continued to be the only place that was receiving them. The army would call from the border and immediately bring them to the shelter. They experienced the Katyusha bombs falling, and the frequent alarms during the war with the Hezbollah forces in Lebanon. They waited – Christians and Muslims together – week after week, month after month, for their husbands to be freed from prison.

In May 2007, a new flood of refugees began pouring across the Egyptian border. The nation watched as they arrived in desperate need of places to go. Some were able to find work in hotels in Eilat, and some found homes on kibbutzim. Many ended up in Tel Aviv in hastily constructed and overcrowded shelters. The

conditions were terrible, with prostitutes and drug addicts hanging around their doors. In one of these temporary places, the Carmel Shelter director saw two young girls ages 6 and 7, whose Eritrean mother and two younger siblings were captured at the border and imprisoned in Egypt. The girls escaped at gunpoint with several others, none of whom they knew. They were given permission to be taken to Carmel Shelter, where they lived until they had a miraculous reunion with their family years later!

In the following months, many Eritrean women arrived who were running from a regime that stripped its citizens of their basic human rights. One night, two young Eritrean girls were brought to the shelter. It was later confirmed that their mother had been shot and killed at the border. As dangerous as the journey was, the women and children continued to flee to Israel.

During these years, a horrible phenomenon was taking place in the Sinai desert in Egypt. Both Eritrean and Ethiopian women were being kidnapped and held by the very smugglers to whom they were appealing for help. While attempting to extort more money from family or friends, the captors raped the women and kept them as virtual slaves. When they were finally released and able to cross the border into Israel, they were deeply traumatized, in need of urgent help and care.

The situation of the asylum seekers reached crisis proportions in those years. The need for employment, housing, health, and education was tremendous. Women were sleeping on the streets and in parks with babies and young children. Tragically, they were being abused by their own partners and others in the community, as frustration and anger grew. In the midst of this increasingly

dangerous environment, Carmel Shelter was a 'refuge' where many of these women and children found safety and security.

Psalm 46:1 says that "God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble." This was the mission of Carmel Shelter – to provide a place where women were welcomed into a family, could receive healing for their broken bodies and spirits, and have the assurance that they were safe and could begin building their lives for the future. Many of these women have been resettled in other countries; some have returned to Africa and are helping their own people. Several continue to be assisted by the shelter staff in Israel. They are very grateful for their time at Carmel Shelter where they encountered the wonderful love and care of their Heavenly Father.



# **My Trip to Cuba**

By Gwen Ward

## **Saturday, November 9th Day 1**

As Anne of Green Gables in the 1987 sequel film once said to Miss Stacey, “If you weren’t here, I think I would’ve just sat down and cried.” This aptly describes how I felt about landing in Cuba. So many things are new/different. I don’t understand the language, the culture, or why God really wants me on this trip. I’m so thankful I’m not alone here. I’m so thankful no one in our group got stopped at Cuban immigration. I was honestly so frightened. Also, I was up since 3:00 am and have a bad habit of not eating/drinking enough when traveling on airplanes. So that added a whole layer of unsavory feelings to the morning.

The power went out at least ten times while at the airport. Apparently, it’s really common here. A lengthy wait began at the baggage claim area. Everyone in our group had two checked bags of tools and medical supplies to leave in Cuba. Between that and the power going in and out, it took a while for everyone to receive their luggage. I was so scared that we would be stopped before leaving with our bags. I prayed and asked God that our group would not get stopped. I said that I needed things to go smoothly on this trip otherwise I wasn’t sure if I would ever go on another mission’s trip. You cannot imagine my relief when we all made it through without getting stopped.

Once we made it to the parking lot, there was some confusion over who we were leaving our bags with. However, the issue was resolved eventually. We got to the organization’s base kind of late but our hosts graciously saved some lunch for us. Before

showing us to our rooms, they asked us not to flush toilet paper because otherwise the manager of the house would not be happy.

I'm thankful that our roof top meal area is covered by a tin roof. It provided much needed shade. I usually love warm summer days but this heat is intense. I'm glad the place we're staying at has cool tile floors. I'll be honest, I laid on the floor for a bit because it felt really nice. The staff are wonderful and my roommates are awesome.

### Sunday, November 10th Day 2

Today started with breakfast at 8:00 am and the rest of our orientation training. Afterwards, we went to a local church. I thought the service was only going to be in Spanish, so I didn't bring my Bible with me. Instead I set it on my bed or the counter, I don't remember which, and then we headed to the church. It turns out, the whole service was spoken in Spanish and then translated into English, so I needn't have worried. The electricity was out in the church's neighborhood so everything was a cappella too. They've been out of power for five days now.

When we got back to the base we had a little bit of time before lunch so I decided to start gathering the things I would need during our distribution of the water filters. I started to panic when I couldn't find my small pocket Bible. Before arriving in Cuba, I highlighted some verses and put tabs on the pages so I could find them faster. The one thought that went through my head was "how am I supposed to share the gospel without it?" I started searching through all my belongings but couldn't find them anywhere. My sweet roommates prayed with me and

helped me look. Turns out, one of the staff had come in and straightened up our room while we were at church. Things like making the bed, taking out the trash, that type of thing. And when they made the bed, they put my Bible under the pillow.

One of my roommates found it. I was pretty emotional after the lost Bible fiasco and I was not looking forward to going out into the community to share the gospel. Thankfully, my friend prayed with me. She shared that she was scared too. Then we ate lunch and headed out into the community. The people who received water filters had been told ahead of time that we were coming. They were also told to have plastic buckets ready for the filter installation. After the filter was installed then the gospel message was presented. There were many people in our group.

There was four people including me from my church group. In addition, there was a translator, and two local people connected to one of the churches in Cuba. Each person from our American team had a different job. One person would hand drill a hole in the plastic bucket and keep track of the filters we installed through an app. One person gave instructions on how to install and maintain the filter. And finally, there was the keeper of the cups/the assistant of the filter instructor. This person made sure that the clean and dirty water cups stayed separate. This was important as at the end of the water installation, the person giving the presentation would drink the filtered water. We didn't want anyone to accidentally drink the dirty water. I was keeper of the cups because I wanted to see how the whole process worked before I had to do any talking.

We went to two places. One was a shelter provided to the people by the government. The people who live there lost their homes

and they stay there until the government gives them new homes. They're sometimes there for a year, five years, or more. We installed water filters for two families and shared the gospel with them. It was kind of cramped and awkward as we all were trying to figure out what we were doing. But God was moving in the midst of our fumbles. I accidentally spilled water all over the floor. Three people gave their lives to Christ and accepted New Testament Bibles from us in Spanish. After that, the local church members talked with them a little and made plans to follow up. When we went to the second place, it felt like our presentation of everything went a lot more smoothly. And the women who we were talking to decided to give her life to Christ as well!

Most families in Cuba have dolls that are literal idols in their houses. They'll offer food or money to them. When a Cuban accepts Christ and decides to get rid of their idols, a local pastor will come to their house and put all the idols in a bag and then smash them with a hammer. That way, they can't be used as an idol again.

Throughout this afternoon we had just enough filters and just enough bibles for the people that we spoke with. Then we went back to the base for supper. While eating, it was announced that a 6.8 grade earthquake happened a couple of hours east of us. The staff wanted to let us contact our families to let them know that we were safe. Wi-Fi and phone hotspots have not been working so one of the staff let me use her phone to contact my mom.

During supper, the power went out. We all sat there, unsure what to do. Then a generator kicked in and our building had power but it was dark in all the surrounding buildings. Thankfully,

power turned back on to the surrounding buildings about ten minutes later.

### Monday, November 11th Day 3

The first house was beautiful and seemed wealthier than the others. The women there didn't accept Christ but had lots of questions. At the second house there was a sweet older lady who had a treadle sewing machine and two dogs. She accepted Christ and she was so appreciative of the new water filter.

The next place we went we gave two filters. One to the homeowner and one to her neighbor. They were both very sweet and accepted Jesus. The last house we went to was added on. The pastor went to the house across the street from the church and asked if we could speak with them. There were three ladies, we gave them two water filters and all three accepted Christ!

### Tuesday, November 12th Day 4

Today I shared that Gospel! I hardly got any sleep last night as I was trying to imagine how I would share the Gospel. I shouldn't have worried. All three women we talked to today prayed for Jesus to save them! My presentation was definitely not perfect but I know God was working through me. I enjoyed talking with them, and I had things in common with each of the women.

I'll share one of their stories with you. The third woman was the Pastor's mom. She was staying at her son's house which was located beside the church while she recovered from an injury. She had fallen a week or two earlier and scraped her foot bad enough to need stitches. Our group was only providing filters to

people who lived within the neighborhood of the church. However, the Pastor's mom lived outside of the neighborhood but since she was staying with the Pastor, they decided to give her a water filter as well. We introduced ourselves and her and I bonded over our love of cats. We showed her how the water filter worked and then I shared the Gospel with her. We used the cups of dirty and clean water as an example. The dirty cup represents our lives with sin. The clean water is our good works or things we do to try to earn our way to heaven. No matter how much clean water we added to the dirty water, it didn't make the dirty water safe to drink. Only the filter could make the water safe to drink, just like Jesus is the only way to heaven. He is the only one who can wash our sins away.

My American friend said that I was radiant or glowing when I talked about Jesus and the Gospel. Honestly, sharing my faith felt amazing! I came to the realization that I need to share it more often. Sharing the Gospel isn't scary like I thought it would be.

### Wednesday, November 13th Day 5

In the morning we went to two houses right next to each other. At the first house there was a man and his wife. The man told us that he was a Christian but his wife wasn't. That was surprising as he was the first water filter receiver we ran into who told us that he was a Christian. We shared the water filter and the Gospel with both of them and the wife accepted Jesus while the husband rededicated his life to Christ! It was so amazing! Then we went next door and there was another younger married couple. The woman, refused to drink the clean filtered water as she had gotten Giardias from dirty water before and it wasn't easy for her to trust it at first. And then the husband expressed how angry he

is with the government and how hard life is. We talked with them and both husband and wife ended up giving their lives to Christ as well! Then we headed back to the church and everyone was singing together. One of the translators encouraged me to go to the front and lead everyone in singing Way Maker. Half of the church was singing in Spanish and half in English. It was such an awesome way to end our morning.

Between our two groups, 60% of people we shared the Gospel with accepted Christ! The people of Cuba are hungry for hope. Who better to give them hope than Jesus?

In the afternoon, the staff surprised us with riding in convertibles from the 1950's. We went to a Cuban market and I got to try bartering for the very first time-it was terrifying but also exciting! Then we went on a walking tour of old Havana and we got some ice cream.

#### Thursday, November 14th Day 6

Today we didn't hand out any water filters or share the Gospel, which was sad. But we did get to go to the beach! It was absolutely beautiful! Each wave was unique and unexpectedly delightful. God you are amazing! I could feel your love and kindness in each push and pull of the waves. Thank you for providing for me in every way this week-even when I barely had the faith of a mustard seed. Thank you for the friends I've made. Thank you for working in and through our teams this week as we installed water filters and shared the gospel. Please protect the seeds that have been planted and help them grow and mature. Please give your new believers hope when they feel hopeless, peace when all they feel is anger and strife, healing where there

has been injury. Restore their electricity and provide them with clean, safe water. In Jesus name I pray Amen.

### Friday, November 15th Day 7

Today was a sad day. Full of tears, hugs, exchanges of phone numbers, and goodbyes. As we watched Cuba get smaller and farther away, a part of me didn't want to leave.



## **The Czech-Israel Connection**

By Jean Ashira

I believe that each of us who carries Israel on our hearts has a story of how God brought that to us, and for me, it happened in the Czech Republic.

I was baptized in the Bohemian region of the Czech Republic where the Moravians had come from. I found out later about the rich history and legacy of these Bible practicing believers. It was winter in a lake of ice, but it was insignificant compared to the fire that began to burn in my heart. It was surreal when God brought me to visit Herrnhut, it felt like I was coming home.

I had decided to be a missionary to the Czech Republic, and in the first week, my pastor invited me to the opening of a new International House of Prayer (IHOP). What a gift from God! I remember seeing a badge on the display shelf with a Czech and Israel flag and felt the Lord speaking to me about being an ambassador of Israel to the nations. The next two years were assignments to and from Czech and Israel building a highway of worship.

Another impression I got from the HOP was that the Czech Republic was a blessing to Israel, as the Hezekiah tunnels provided water for the city of Jerusalem in the time of siege. As I shared this image with others in the room, we laid out blue clothes and walked on them prophetically to Jerusalem. We proclaimed Isaiah 35 that a holy highway is being built. I did not know about the Czech Republic supplying Israel with arms when I received this picture.

The Czech Republic had sold many arms to Israel during the war before Independence, playing a huge part in the birth of the nation. I was in Jerusalem near Yehuda market one day where I met a man whose father was a pilot of one of the aircrafts that came from Czech. He recounted in detail how this aircraft was brought to Israel, and how his father fought in the war. I was amazed at how the Israelis remember their help and are grateful to hear about it firsthand.

Even till today, Czech was the first nation to speak against the European Union (EU) statement that pressured Israel to have an immediate ceasefire with Hezbollah. More recently, responding to the International Criminal Court (ICC) arrests, the ministers of the Czech Republic have been very vocal. “According to Prime Minister Petr Fiala, the unfortunate decision of the ICC weakens its authority in different cases when it puts the democratically elected representatives of Israel on the same level as terrorist organizations.” [1]

The Czech Republic is sounding her voice as a bride, and she is on the rise! Previously she had been little known, because many Czechs speak the Czech language which has not been heard on international platforms. However, there were 12 representatives from the Czech Republic at the Global Watch’s gathering in Herrnhut this year. There has been a significant shift in these few years. The body of Christ is more in unity. Even though they are from different denominations, they are one. They now have expressions of worship groups and events where different parts of the body gather together to witness revival in the nation.

The Czech Republic has been known as the most atheistic nation in Europe, but many disagree with that. After the Global Watch

conference, I attended an Evangelism Explosion training held by the National Director of Evangelism Explosion in the Czech Republic. We had a teacher from Switzerland, and four trainers and eight trainees. Three trainees were international, and five were local young people. It was refreshing to be with these local youths, sharing the gospel with other youths in Brno, a city that is populated by many young people. Each day for five days, we shared the gospel on the streets and were amazed at how everyone had the time to listen and were thoroughly engaged in conversation. We remain in contact with a few of these young people today. The gospel is gaining traction here!

The blessings upon this nation for blessing Israel is evident. I look forward to the good things that will come forth from this relationship. May the Czech Republic continue to set a standard for the other nations and bless them in coming into their calling to bless Israel too.

*I will bless those who bless you (Genesis 12:3a).*

1. (<https://english.radio.cz/czechia-responds-icc-arrest-warrants-netanyahu-gallant-and-former-hamas-8835390>)

## **Encounters with God**

The Testimony of Dalia Dery

I'm Israeli born in Jerusalem. I was born on Passover day on Nissan 14 to a traditional Jewish family. I grew up, like most Jews in Israel, with many questions in my heart. I asked, "Why does no one like us? Why are we always persecuted?" I could never understand, so after my two years of service in the army, I left Israel as a kind of escape.

I lived in Europe, the United States and Costa Rica, and I became a successful businesswoman. Because of my business, I started traveling to Asia, and like many of us many Israelis, I started to get involved with yoga and meditation, having no idea what I was getting into. Eventually I left the "material life," and went deep into meditation and lived in a Tibetan monastery for two years.

After a few years as a Buddhist, I went into a 90-day silent meditation retreat, planning that at the end I would become a Buddhist nun. I already had my head shaved. But in the middle of those 90 days something happened that changed everything! About 30-40 days into meditation, I suddenly began to hear a voice talking to me, telling me that he was God (although no one was with me in the room). A great fear fell upon me, and I believed I was going crazy. For I had heard about some people who did too much meditation losing their mind. "The Voice" kept on speaking to me. I was terrified, and I sat in the corner of the room and wept. I asked and begged "the Voice" to go away.

About three days later I came to realize that if I would not do something about it, I would end up in a madhouse. I said to myself, "It does not matter if I am crazy or not, this is really happening to me. Get up and deal with it." So, I began to talk

back to “the Voice.” He told me that he was God, and he called himself Yeshua (Jesus), Jehovah Tzevaot. My mind was racing, “It cannot be, I am not Abraham, I am not Moses that God would talk to me.” It was impossible for me to accept it. It cannot be true... I was sure I was losing my mind. I believed that my thoughts had turned into voices, and I was actually talking to myself.

A few days later I started to talk back to him, and I asked for proof that he is really God. Then I started to experience many things in the supernatural. Overall, it was a very scary experience at the time because I did not know or understand anything. Although God was still talking to me, I still kept on with my meditation, even more diligently, full of fears and self-effort, trying to ‘be good.’ Until one day the Lord asked me, “Do you want to see where the Yoga teacher ‘my guru’ was leading the people, and where I would end up if I continued to follow this way? I replied doubtfully and stubbornly, not understanding what I was saying, “Yes.”

And I instantly found myself in a very dark and terrifying place. I found myself in hell, full of terror and despair. Horrified, I called out, "Godddd!" and immediately he took me out of there. The feeling of great fear was upon me. I was so confused. It all seems to me like it was an unending dream.

These chilling experiences lasted about two years, during which time I also experienced many supernatural phenomena. Some of them were from God, but most of them were from the dark world, from the devil. I could not understand what was happening to me. I did not know where to turn for help because no one would believe me. These tormenting experiences pushed

me to try to end my life, to escape this nightmare. I tried three times, but God prevented it.

After two years, one day in Bangkok, I walked past a church. Although we Jews never go into a church, I was drawn to go in. I sat there crying and begging God for help. On the wall of that church was a picture of Jesus on the cross. I could barely look at him for the agony that was revealed on his face. But something forced me, pushed me to look at it, and in an instant, I received a revelation of the cross. I knew beyond any doubt that this Jesus is the only way to the Father. There is no other way to God.

This truth terrified me. What will happen now? Who would believe me? What would happen to my family? They do not know him. What would happen to all my friends from yoga and the monastery? What would happen to my people? None of them knows this truth, will they all end up in hell? I have no words to describe the fear that came upon me.

I went back to my room and cried bitterly, and suddenly something happened to me that changed everything. While I was crying, suddenly someone was holding me. The feeling was so wonderful, so comforting, but no one was in the room. And after a few moments, I started going up and up till I reached the ceiling. I looked down and saw myself sitting on the bed. Then suddenly, I was taken at an amazing speed to heaven. It was such a powerful and wonderful experience; it completely transformed me. I found myself sitting in what felt like water. It was an unimaginable feeling of perfection. This water just washed away from me all the fear, all the confusion, all the doubt I had, and I was filled with clarity and understanding and with this amazing joy. I experienced a kind of timelessness, and how everything is

connected to one another, and how much God loves us all. It was amazing; it was heavenly.

But then God started to speak to me with his soft and loving voice, giving me an answer to the question I used to ask him over and over in the last few years. I used to ask him, “How can you blame a blind man for not seeing? On top of it, you made him blind.” And sitting in this beautiful place, God spoke to me and said, “Child, your heart is a grain of my heart, and if your heart is hurting so much for your people, how much more my heart is hurting. And if you're willing to do so much for your people, how much more I am willing and able to do for them.” As he spoke, God filled me with understanding and his answer completely satisfied every cell of my being.

On my return, I was a changed person. I still did not know much, but I trusted him. In his love, in the light, there is no darkness, and I realized that all he does is for good. I knew it; I felt it; I saw it. From that moment on completely his. Since then, I must speak of him. I have to tell everyone how wonderful he is, how much he loved them, and that he is not the one who is responsible for all the bad things that are happening to us. It was very life transforming.

Shortly after that, I went to Nepal, and I had this urge to tell everybody, and I started going from village to village buying food for the people. I would buy a half buffalo or even a whole pig, a sack of rice, and different kind of food, and I would ask the local church in those different villages to cook for the people. And I would send children and different messengers to gather the people from the nearby villages. And while the food was cooking, while the smell was in the air, I would tell them about the two

kingdoms; about the kingdom of light, and the kingdom of darkness, and what God has done for us. And many people would receive him, and we witnessed many mighty miracles. We saw how blind eyes opened and the lame walking, and we saw many people being delivered. It was very amazing to see the kingdom of God really working here on Earth.

I was there for about four years, and then one evening sitting very comfortable in my room, I suddenly smelled this beautiful smell, and then I heard this voice saying, "Dalia, pack and go back home." I was still for a moment to make sure, and I smelled it again, and I heard it again, "Pack and go back home." By that time, I was already an ordained pastor, but I was really shaking. I was afraid to return to Israel for different reasons. But later on, I went to my church which was in Bangkok, and my pastor encouraged me.

Three days just before I entered Israel, before my flight, out of the blue moon, I received a phone call from TBN asking me if I'm willing to do an evangelistic TV program in Hebrew, in Israel. I responded with a "Yes," having no idea, and no experience with television. And that's how I returned to Israel - straight to work in TV, teaching and evangelizing as God was opening doors for me. I also at that time started to teach in many nations about Israel and God's plan. I was fighting replacement theology. I was writing books about it.

And that was my life until the 7th of October. All of us were all in shock here. I, mourning together with my whole country, but we quickly started to understand the situation around us. Two days after the 7th of October, maybe 300 to 400,000 volunteer soldiers joined the army. And they were not equipped at first.



They didn't even have enough food to eat. It was like chaos, and the army needed help. So, I, like many of us, started to help.

At first, I started small, but because of my past experience in business it grew quickly. I used to do a lot of business, moving containers from country to country. It was not an issue for me, so I started to import to the country, at a much better cost than if I bought it in the country, the most needed items the soldier asked me for. Like tactical uniforms, coats, tactical gloves, face masks, special belts for guns, hats, warm equipment in the winter, and stuff like that.

And I would collect money from everywhere I used to teach in different parts of the world, and God opened many doors for me, and enough provision and stuff flowing in. And I use 100 percent of the money for the soldiers. Even when I had to drive to Gaza, or to the northern border, to bring them the uniforms, I would use my own gas, my own money. And God started opening more doors for me.

Eventually, I had no choice but to open an amutah, an NGO, a non-profit called The Truth of Zion. In the beginning I really resisted it. I didn't really want to do it at first, but I had no choice. It was either to open it, or to stop helping the soldiers because it started becoming too big. And even to open the amutah NGO with all its bank issues took only three days to do. It usually takes at least six months to do, but God just kept helping and opening doors from all directions.

By now many soldiers, many battalions know me, and often my private house is full of volunteers and boxes. Even now my prayer room is full of boxes of uniforms with volunteers and soldiers

coming into the house. But what really is wonderful lately, in the past two months I see so often, even every day, in my house people receiving the Lord, including soldiers, which is really amazing. I love them dearly. I love my people, and I believe that God is forever with us. Hallelujah.

God never fails us. A couple of months ago, I cried because in one of the battalions I worked with, the officer died and 14 of them were wounded, and another officer's son died. I just wept here in my room, crying, and crying. And while crying, suddenly I heard his voice saying, "Dalia, why are you worried?" I was wondering if this was my imagination, so I stopped crying, and I heard it again, "Why are you worried?" And then this word came very clear, and I heard in Hebrew, "IDF, Israel Defense Force. Israel is mine. They are defending what is mine. They are mine. Why are you worried?"

And God did something amazing in my heart at that moment. Like it says in the Book of Isaiah, he gave the oil of gladness instead of mourning. He literally lifted the mourning from me, and he put such a spirit of joy in me. It doesn't matter that we are in the midst of chaos and pain, seeing the people suffering, almost every family is mourning, in the inside there is peace. I know that God will never fail us. He always fought for us in the past. He always destroyed our enemy, and he will do it again. He never changes. Just as he opened the sea for all people to cross over, and then with that same water he eliminated the enemy. Every time, in every war when Israel lifted their hand toward God, God gave them victory. And he will do it again.

This is what the Bible is all about. God took a man named Jacob and changed his name to Israel and led him into his kingdom. The

Bible says when Jacob wrestled with the Angel, God said to him in Genesis 32, "Your name shall be no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have struggled with God and with men, and you have prevailed." Throughout more than a hundred generations of our history, we have known that to be a Jew involves struggle; struggle with our fellow human beings, and sometimes struggle with God. Yet in that very name a promise was born. That though we the people of Israel must struggle; we will always prevail because God is with us. His name is Immanuel, and his name is Yeshua.

# **Egypt's Prophetic Future**

By Avner Boskey

The world has witnessed the signing of various agreements between Israel and her enemies over the past 45 years:

- The Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt (September 1978 signed; March 1979 concluded)
- The Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO (September 13, 1993)
- The Wadi Araba Treaty between Israel and Jordan (26, 1994)
- The Abraham Accords between Israel and the United Arab Emirates/Bahrain/Sudan/Morocco (September 15, 2020)

None of these treaties has resulted in a 'warm peace' within the hearts of Islamic nations toward Israel. Jihadi terrorism continues to rear its ugly head, with regular attacks coming from PLO-affiliated groups in the West Bank, and from jihadi groups crossing into Israel from Egypt and Gaza. Opinion polls from Egypt, Gaza, the West Bank and Jordan show an increase of murderous hatred toward the Jewish people and the Jewish state. These realities may be unappetizing, but they reflect the facts on the ground.

This chapter focuses on present realities and the prophetic future of Egypt, the largest Arab country in the Middle East and a central player in this part of the world. What is happening in Egypt right now?

## The deeply rooted nature of anti-Israel hatred in Egypt

Investigative journalist Ksenia Svetlova commented in October 2021: “Anti-Israel sentiment remains a powerful force in Egypt, with many among its elites – writers, poets, journalists as well as civil society activists holding pro-Nasserite views and rejecting recognition of Israel and cooperation with it. This also hampers development of civilian ties with that state.”

Two political analysts note: With “the signing of a peace treaty [the Camp David Accords] on March 26, 1979, the hope, particularly in Israel, was that the agreement would lead to warm, neighborly relations between Egyptians and Israelis based on coexistence, an acceptance of the other, and mutual cooperative endeavors. In practice, however, the peace between Egypt and Israel has remained ‘cold,’ providing the two countries with more than the ‘negative peace’ of an armistice but less than a ‘positive peace,’ which in its broad sense includes reconciliation, mutual acceptance, and cooperative endeavors between the states and their peoples . . . The term ‘cold peace’ still characterizes Israeli Egyptian relations accurately in the current period” (‘Egypt and Israel: Forty Years in the Desert of Cold Peace;’ Moomen Sallam and Dr Ofir Winter; October 2017).

Here are some examples of this virulent Egyptian hatred of the Jewish people and their state:

- The former President of Egypt Gamal Abdel Nasser who led his armies against Israel in June 1967 was gripped by the latent anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism that was prevalent in the Arab world, expressing these perspectives openly and repeatedly.

- Pervasive anti-Israel and anti-Jewish teachings are part of normal curricula in Egyptian public schools.
- In the Jerusalem Post, August 5, 1977, p. 5: “Major-General George Keegan, former head of the U.S. Air Force Intelligence, has said that a ‘profound change in Arab strategy is now underway . . . It is not understood in the U.S. I have seen intelligence which very few Americans have access to, that persuades me that the first element of that strategy is that the feudal leadership in the Arab world strikingly remain committed, Messianically, to the extermination of Israel as a nation and as a people. What has changed about that Messianic determination . . . is the apparent Arab realization that after four futile wars, the direct [i.e., military] approach now appears to be one of such high risk that they are beginning to use the strategy of the indirect approach [that is, diplomatic duplicity]”
- A May 2001 article describes Egyptian pop singer Shaaban Abdel Rehim’s hit song, ‘I Hate Israel.’ as a pretty accurate barometer of the public mood. “The song has swept the charts in recent months . . . Critics have decried the song as vulgar and divisive, but it has touched a deep, emotional chord . . . Despite the official peace between the two nations, the Egyptian public has never warmed to Israel, and anti-Israel sentiments are a common staple of movies and populist newspapers. But the current situation has ‘never been worse,’ said Abdel Monem Said, director of the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies.”

- A Ynetnews article from January 11, 2006, appraises popular Egyptian sentiment about Israel: “It’s been 27 years since the Camp David accords were signed, but the vast majority of Egyptians still see Israel as an enemy state. A poll conducted by an Egyptian state institute determined that Israel and Denmark were not only the least popular foreign countries among the Egyptian public, but that they were also considered enemy nations. The poll, made public on Wednesday, showed that 92 percent of respondents see Israel as an enemy – despite the lasting peace agreement between the two countries. Only two percent believe that Israel is a friend to Egypt.”
- An Associated Press article from September 14, 2006, declares: “Egypt’s best-known democracy movement has switched causes and is now focused on demanding an end to the country’s peace treaty with Israel. ‘One of the costs of pressing for democracy in the Middle East is the fact that most democratically based Arab parties ... will be hostile to Israel,’ said Edward S. Walker, a former U.S. ambassador to Egypt and Israel, now with the Middle East Institute, a Washington-based think tank. The ‘Kifaya’ movement has launched a campaign to collect 1 million signatures on a petition calling for the annulment of Egypt’s U.S.-sponsored 1979 peace treaty with Israel. The move is mainly symbolic, but it highlights the extent of resentment felt by Egyptians toward Israel – and by association, the United States, its main backer.”
- Middle East scholar Daniel Pipes notes: “The Egyptian government has permitted large quantities of weapons to be smuggled into Gaza to use against Israeli border towns.

Yuval Steinitz, an Israeli legislator specializing in Egypt-Israel relations, estimates that fully 90% of PLO and Hamas explosives come from Egypt.”

- In 2011, Egyptian mobs attacked and broke into the Israeli Embassy in Cairo. They were prevented from murdering the Ambassador and his staff at the last moment, through Egyptian Special Forces intervention.

### Former President Sadat's perspectives on Israel

Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, co-signer of the Camp David Accords with Israel, originally had a rather speckled history regarding his attitudes to the Jewish people and to their state. During WWII, Sadat openly expressed pro-Nazi sympathies and was jailed by the British for operating as a Nazi spy. In 1955, in a speech celebrating the birthday of Mohammed, Sadat declared, with reference to the Jews: “The most splendid thing the Prophet Mohammed did was to drive them out of the whole Arabian Peninsula . . . They are a nation of liars and traitors, contrivers of plots, a people born for the deeds of treachery . . . I promise you, we shall send them back to their former status, as the Koran said of them ‘condemned to humiliation and misery’” (edited by D.F. Green, ‘Arab Theologians on Jews and Israel,’ Geneva: Academy of Islamic Research, 1976; pp. 90 -91).

In an interview with the Egyptian magazine ‘October’ on January 14, 1978 (quoted in Shmuel Katz, ‘The Hollow Peace,’ Jerusalem: Dvir, 1981, pp. 231-232) Sadat said: “Fear is the second layer of skin of every Israeli or Jew.”



In an interview with President Sadat in the Egyptian newspaper 'al-Anwar' on June 22, 1975 (cited in Steve Posner's book 'Inside Israel') Sadat stated his perspectives on peace with Israel. He affirmed that his short-term goal was to get back the Sinai Peninsula for Egypt, as part of an effort to push Israel back to its pre-June 1967 borders. But he ominously added a longer-term perspective: that the Egyptian generation coming after his, would have the responsibility to reconquer the West Bank and East Jerusalem: "The Zionist conquest to which we are being subjected will not be terminated by the return of the occupied territories . . . The effort of our generation is to return to the 1967 borders. Afterward the next generation will carry the responsibility." For other helpful comments on this subject, see 'Assessing the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, Thirty Years Later' by Daniel Pipes, March 26, 2009.

YHVH's coming judgments of Egypt because of the violence done  
by her to the sons of Judah

The Hebrew prophets speak specific words over Egypt, regarding the coming judgment of YHVH on that nation because of their heart attitude toward and treatment of Israel:

*"Egypt will become a wasteland, and Edom will become a desolate wilderness, because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, in whose land they have shed innocent blood" (Joel 3:19).*

*"The land of Judah will become a cause of shame to Egypt. Everyone to whom it is mentioned will be in great fear because of the plan of YHVH of armies which He is making*

*against them. On that day five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan and swearing allegiance to YHVH of armies; one will be called ‘the City of Destruction.’” (Isaiah 19:17-18)*

*“Even Egypt, whose help is vain and empty. Therefore, I have called her ‘Rahab who has been exterminated.’” (Isaiah 30:7)*

*“Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, YHVH of armies, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, YHVH of armies, there will be no rain on them. And if the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which YHVH strikes the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths” (Zechariah 14:16-19).*

### The fragile imbalance in Egypt regarding another Muslim Brotherhood takeover

The country of Egypt has been a significant breeding ground – a hothouse – for the birth of modern jihadi terrorist movements.

- The Muslim Brotherhood, or ‘Society of Muslim Brothers’ (Jama’at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin), was founded in Egypt by Hassan al-Banna, a schoolteacher. From his perspective, most Arab and Islamic states are evil and need to be

overthrown. Only strict Islamist rule and the re-establishment of the Muslim Caliphate or 'khilafah' is ultimately acceptable. From that point on in modern Egyptian history, the rulers of Egypt have had to struggle with Muslim Brotherhood attempts to overthrow the regime, and with assassination attempts – some of which were successful.

- Sayyid Qutb was an Egyptian political theorist and revolutionary, and a leading member of the Muslim Brotherhood. He is considered the 'father of Salafi jihadism,' the philosophy that underpins al-Qaeda and ISIS. Egyptian Prime Minister Mahmoud el-Nokrashy Pasha outlawed the Muslim Brotherhood in November 1948, and then was assassinated by a Brotherhood agent on December 28, 1948. Sayyid Qutb was hanged by Egyptian authorities in response.
- Muhammad Faraj was an Egyptian Islamist and jihadi theorist who led the Islamist group al-Jihad (also known as Tanzim al-Jihad). He was executed in 1982 for his role in coordinating the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.
- Ayman al-Zawahiri was an Egyptian Islamist terrorist and surgeon who served as the second general leader (emir) of al-Qaeda from 2011 until 2022. He was one of the main orchestrators of the 9/11 attacks. He was imprisoned from 1981 to 1984 for his role in the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. He was wanted by the United States and the United Nations, respectively, for his role in the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania and in the 2002 Bali bombings. He merged the Egyptian Islamic Jihad

with al-Qaeda in 2001, becoming bin Laden's deputy in 2004. On July 31, 2022, al-Zawahiri was killed in a U.S. drone strike in Afghanistan.

- Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, commonly known as 'The Blind Sheikh,' was a blind Egyptian Islamist convicted of seditious conspiracy in 1995 in connection with the original 1993 World Trade Center bombing. He was the leader of al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya ('The Islamic Group'), a terrorist group responsible for the November 1997 Luxor Massacre in which 58 foreign tourists and four Egyptians were killed.
- Mohamed Morsi was an Egyptian Islamist engineer and professor affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood organization, who became the fifth president of Egypt, from 2012 to 2013. Anti-Israel in approach, he was removed from office by General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in a coup d'état.

Barely twenty years ago, in January-February 2011 the Arab world's largest country was suddenly transformed from being a pro-Western regional power, turning into a pro-jihadi Muslim Brotherhood stronghold. President Morsi's Egypt was now identifying with the same group which had assassinated Egypt's former President Sadat. Egypt had turned from being an opponent of Hamas to becoming its avid sponsor. But within two years, by July 2013, Egypt did an about-face, turning away from Muslim Brotherhood leadership and coming back to its previous pro-American orientation. Today Egypt is considered a strong bulwark against jihadi Islam. But behind the scenes, the truth is that Egypt is tottering on the brink of being once again swallowed up by jihadi forces. Were this to occur, it would be a catastrophic

situation for Western geopolitics, as well as a potential disaster for Israel. Prayer here is very much needed.

### The significance of the 100+ Hamas smuggling tunnels between Gaza and Egypt

The IDF has uncovered thousands of Hamas terror tunnels throughout Gaza, from which jihadi attacks have been launched and rockets have been fired against Israeli civilians. Israel's recent conquest of the Rafah sector (bordering Egypt) has also uncovered over one hundred tunnels used for smuggling weapons into Gaza from Egypt. These could also be used for smuggling Israeli hostages out from Hamas captivity and into Egypt, where they could then be transferred to Iran.

*Such tunnels could not be operated without Egypt's awareness. Hamas pays the el-Sisi family hefty kickbacks for Egypt to turn a blind eye here. Hamas' oxygen life-line flows through these tunnels – weapons, foreign currency, food, etc. – and Egyptian fingerprints are all over them. Egypt is enabling and empowering Hamas in its war against Israel, while pretending to honor its 'peace treaty' with Israel.*

In the Sinai Peninsula, both Hamas and ISIS have terror armies and weaponry waiting to be smuggled back into Gaza – as soon as the IDF can be forced to retreat from the Philadelphia Corridor (which would then open the gates for a joint Hamas-ISIS operation). US and European pressure to catalyze such an Israeli retreat flies in the face of Western protestations of peace and friendship with the Jewish state. Israel's arm is being twisted on this matter. Egypt insists that Israel must retreat from the

Philadelphia Corridor and must return it to Hamas; this is not how allies treat each other. The Camp David Accords have turned out not only to be toothless as far as Israel's defense is concerned; these treaties have legally established a belt of enmity on Israel's southern border.

*Hamas has been firing rockets into Israel for years, and on October 7, 2023, it sent up to 7,000 terrorists to rape, murder, torture and kidnap Israeli families, youths, and pensioners. These activities have been enabled by Egypt which turns a blind eye to Hamas' jihadi activities, and winks broadly as cash changes hands. Egypt thus carries a huge responsibility for the pogroms of October 7. And Egypt's destructive role vis-à-vis Israel continues to this very day.*

### Turkey, Egypt, and Hamas – birds of a feather

Egypt and Turkey have just kick-started political and economic connections after a twelve-year hiatus. The huge irony in this 'quasi-reconciliation' is that Turkey is actually one of the main supporters of Hamas (along with Qatar). At the same time, the Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated Hamas is still Egypt's arch-enemy and was involved in the overthrow of former President Hosni Mubaraq and the crowning of President Morsi in 2011. Yet, in the roomful of mirrors which is the Middle East, backstabbers can turn into temporary allies (the enemy of my enemy is my friend'). Egypt and pro-Hamas Turkey are willing to stand together against Israel in the Jewish state's attempts to weaken and crush Hamas' jihadi dictatorship and savage rule in Gaza. These 'contradictions in terms' are part of standard Middle East realpolitik. The meeting of these two Middle Eastern powers Egypt and Turkey

points to dark forces at work, and it is a worthy focus for intercession.

### Israel blessing to Egypt through Ultimate Abrahamic

In that day Egypt will be like women and will be afraid and fear because of the waving of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which He waves over it. And the land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt; everyone who makes mention of it will be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the Lord of hosts which He has determined against it.

In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear by the Lord of hosts; one will be called the City of Destruction.

In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the Lord at its border. And it will be for a sign and for a witness to the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the Lord because of the oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Mighty One, and He will deliver them. Then the Lord will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the Lord in that day, and will make sacrifice and offering; yes, they will make a vow to the Lord and perform it. And the Lord will strike Egypt, He will strike and heal it; they will return to the Lord, and He will be entreated by them and heal them.

In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians.

In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land (Isaiah 19:16-24).

These verses describe great blessing coming to Egypt after a very rocky immediate future. Severe military defeat for Egypt at the hands of Israel will be followed by a total heart-change for the people of the Nile – both toward YHWH the God of Jacob, and toward the Jewish people as well. At last, there will be a warm peace and a full embracing of Israel, of her destiny and calling, and of her God. The ancient enmity between the Land of Ham (see Psalm 105:23-28) and the Land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will melt away, never to return. From Cairo in Egypt to Irbid in northern Iraq, Israel will be honored and recognized as YHWH's chosen people. The blessings of Genesis 12:1-3 will freely flow across the entire Middle East.

<https://davidstent.org/egypts-prophetic-future/>

(Avner and Rachel Boskey live in the Beersheva region of Israel and are dedicated to stirring up the creative arts, worship, intercession, evangelism, and the prophetic gifts within a Jewish and Israeli matrix.)



## The Fountain of Tears

In the city of Oswiecim, the Polish name for Auschwitz, sculptor Rick Wienecke has created a unique memorial to its victims. Auschwitz was the largest and deadliest of six dedicated extermination camps where hundreds of thousands of people were tortured and murdered during World War II and the Holocaust under the orders of Nazi dictator, Adolf Hitler.

Rick was born in Toronto Canada in 1955. When he was twenty years old, he read the book *Exodus* by Leon Uris that introduced him, for the first time, to the Holocaust, and to the struggle of the Jewish people to have a nation of their own. This was at a time in his life that he was searching for God, and he became more and more convinced, that if there is a God, he must have something to do with these Jews and this country Israel; “How could they (the Jewish people) survive the Holocaust and only three years later declare themselves as a nation?”

The Fountain of Tears is a wall that is 60 feet long and 12 feet high. It has seven panels made of Jerusalem Stone and six pillars of field stones. Facing each one of the panels are seven life size bronze figures. The title the fountain of tears is taken from a verse in the Bible from the book of Jeremiah.

*Oh, that my head were waters,  
And my eyes a fountain of tears,  
That I might weep day and night  
For the slain of the daughter of my people (Jeremiah 9:1)!*

The seven panels are high relief sculptures, each depicting a different crucifixion scene. Each crucifixion panel relates to each

one of the last seven statements spoken by Jesus in the last moments of his life.

- Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do: Luke 23:34
- Today, you will be with me in paradise: Luke 23:43
- Woman, behold your son: behold your mother: John 19:26-27
- My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Mark 15:34
- I thirst: John 19:28
- It is finished: John 19:30
- Father, into your hands I commend my spirit: Luke 23:46

The six pillars of stones function as dividers between each of the seven panels. These pillars represent a memorial to the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust. The seven bronze figures symbolize a Holocaust survivor. His head is shaved, and he is dressed in the striped clothes of the concentration camp. Each figure is responding and identifying to each word spoken from the crucifixion.

There is also water that very slowly trickles over the pillars of stones, symbolizing the tears from the cry of Jeremiah. The water from each of the pillars is channeled out of the courtyard to irrigate six olive trees.

At the south end of the courtyard is a sculpture called Gethsemane. This depicts the struggle over the cup of suffering, the beginning of the crucifixion. At the opposite end of the courtyard are two sculptures: the butterfly and the empty cap, both symbolizing resurrection. All of these elements come together to tell a story, to relate a possibility, to ask a question,

“Could the crucifixion and the Holocaust have something in common with each other's pain.”

It has been said over and over again historically that the suffering of the crucifixion actually created the suffering for the other, the Jewish people in the Holocaust. So, it is important to understand the process of artistic creation in this work in order to understand its communication. The artist has taken these last seven words of Jesus and has done a creative meditation on each one to see if there is identification which would somehow connect the two.

“Neither crucifixion nor the Holocaust were natural causes of death; in fact, each of them had been well-thought-out, designed to inflict the maximum amount of pain, both ending in violent death. In the first case, Jesus was put on trial, accused, and condemned for being the King of the Jews. In the case of the Holocaust, being Jewish already meant the death sentence. In a similar pattern, both died and were buried for three years. Jesus’ resurrection created a heavenly kingdom, while the resurrection of the Jewish people created a nation.” [1]

“Israelis want to hear my story, the process of how the “Fountain” came to be, what compelled me to dare touch this subject of the Holocaust and even more so to compare it with the crucifixion.” [1] “If I had a choice, I would have run from this project, but He (The Lord) didn’t let me.” [2]

“How could I know the feelings of the Holocaust? How would a figure representing the Holocaust react to the words spoken from the crucifixion. The crucifixion of Jesus is what the Jews perceive to be the source of hatred toward them.

My final cry to the Lord was, ‘How do I create a memorial if I myself don’t have a memory? I am a Gentile; there is no one in my family that is Jewish, no one that has gone through the Holocaust! I have to have a beginning point, something of memory to draw from within me!’

Pushing further, I added, ‘I am Canadian, I don’t even have a national memory that I could pull from. If I had been born in France or Holland, at least there would be a national memory!’

Thinking about my words, they made sense, and I felt justified. By using this as an argument I could walk away. In my moment of self-satisfaction, I felt the Lord break in with three very simple words, “**But I do!**” He pushed further, “I have a memory of every child, every man, every woman, every cry from every pit, every train car, every gas chamber, you create from My memory not yours! Having arrived at my last point of resistance, I embraced His heart.” [4]

The Fountain of Tears is now in two places in the world, Arad, Israel, and Poland, just outside the gates of Auschwitz – Birkenau.

1. Wienecke, Rick. Seeds in the Wind. Jerusalem, Israel.: Tsur Tsina Publications. 2015. 189.
2. Ibid, 148.
3. Ibid, 165.
4. Ibid, 129-130.
5. Portions of this chapter are taken from <https://fountainoftears.org/>

## **French Jews Answer Israel's Call to Come Home**

By Howard Flower, ICEJ Aliyah director

“No logic can explain why a country at war attracts so many people.”

That intriguing assessment came from Emmanuel Sion, the official in charge of immigration from France for The Jewish Agency for Israel. While conflicts typically drive people away, he recently explained, Israel is drawing French Jews in increasing numbers despite more than a year of war on multiple fronts. This phenomenon also reveals much about the perils Jews face today in France.

The statistics are striking. More than 2,000 French Jews immigrated to Israel in the first ten months of 2024 – a 95% increase from 2023. The International Christian Embassy sponsored Aliyah flights for 300 of these French Jewish newcomers over this time span, plus another 200 who will arrive here by year's end.

The current surge in Aliyah from France, which remains Europe's largest Jewish community with some 450,000 members, comes amid rising antisemitism in the country, especially in its major cities.

At a recent Aliyah fair in Paris, over 2,000 potential emigres queued up to discuss their prospects for moving to Israel. Their questions focused on practical matters: jobs, schools for the children, and Hebrew classes.

“I never thought I would leave France,” says Shana, a 23-year-old Jewish law student in Paris. She had scheduled her departure to

Israel for November and was taking precautions until then – using an alias on ride-sharing apps and sending hourly safety messages to her parents. Yet she described her decision as a positive choice rather than escaping.

The current exodus differs markedly from previous waves, such as the hasty departure of 7,835 French Jews following the Hyper Cacher supermarket attack in Paris in 2015. Today's Jewish immigrants speak more about building a future in Israel than fleeing France. This distinction matters. Even as French authorities report a 300% rise in antisemitic incidents in early 2024 compared to the same period last year, the movement to Israel appears driven more by attraction than fear.

This presents a stark contrast with global trends. While worldwide immigration to Israel has fallen since January, French numbers continue to climb. Emanuel Sion from JAFI attributes this to a shift in thinking among French Jews, who increasingly see Israeli citizenship as their birthright rather than their last resort.

The implications for France extend well into the future. Each wave of Jewish exodus includes business owners, professionals, and community leaders, creating gaps in French society.

For Israel, these new arrivals present both opportunities and difficulties. French immigrants often have means and professional skills. But they also require specific support, particularly with bureaucratic processes and language classes. The Israeli government has modified its integration programs accordingly, though bottlenecks persist.

Conservative estimates suggest 4,000-to-5,000 Jews will leave France in 2025. While considerable, these numbers would still fall below the 2015 peak. The steadier flow allows for better planning by both the immigrant Jewish families and welcoming Israeli authorities.

At the Aliyah fair in Paris, prospective movers spoke of participating in Israeli society rather than escaping French antisemitism.

“We’re not running from something,” one participant observed. “We’re answering a call that has always been there.”

This sentiment marks a critical change in outlook by members of the French Jewish community. While security concerns persist, and French authorities have strengthened protection of Jewish sites, the primary motivation appears to be a positive pull towards Israel.

This trend raises questions about Jewish identity and belonging in modern nation-states. France’s secular republic has long prided itself on equality and integration, even while Israel’s law of return offers Jews anywhere in the world an automatic right to citizenship. French Jews increasingly see these as complementary rather than contradictory options.

For Israel, the steady arrival of French Jews brings fresh challenges. Success depends not just on absorbing new arrivals but on meeting their expectations. As French Jews increasingly view Israeli citizenship as a right rather than a refuge, helping them find contentment with life in the Jewish state will prove crucial.

The shift in attitudes suggests a deeper change in French Jewish identity. What began as a security-driven exodus has become a considered choice for many to take up their rightful place in Israel while maintaining connections to France.

### Profile of a French Jewish immigrant

Rafael was 30 years old when he decided to leave Paris, the city of his birth, and make Aliyah to Israel last July. Paris had offered him much – a rewarding career as a professor in business and entrepreneurship, his own thriving digital marketing company, and a cosmopolitan lifestyle. But for years, a quiet yearning for Israel had simmered within him.

His connection to Israel was not new. Rafael had served as a madrich (guide) for Taglit-Birthright tours bringing Jewish youth from around the world to explore the country's history and culture. In 2017, he spent a year in Tel Aviv through the Masa program, immersing himself in the rhythm of Israeli life. Yet, despite all these experiences, he had never fully embraced the idea of making Israel his home – until now.

Everything changed on October 7. The events of that day struck a chord deep within Rafael, awakening his heart of Zionism. He realized, perhaps for the first time, how strongly he identified with the Land and people, as though a voice inside declared: 'Your place is in Israel!'

At the same time, the worsening tide of antisemitism in Paris made his decision all the clearer. Living on the ground floor of his apartment building, he began receiving threatening messages



scrawled on his windows: “Free Gaza” and other hateful slogans. The streets he once walked without a second thought became hostile. On social media, Rafael stood firm in his support for Israel, becoming an activist of the “Bring Them Home” protests advocating for the Israeli hostages in Gaza.

When he arrived in Israel, Rafael felt an unexpected sense of safety despite the ongoing war here. He learned to navigate life in Kibbutz Ma’agan Michael, in northern Israel, where shelters have been an absolute necessity as rocket sirens have sounded almost daily in recent months.

Rafael’s stay there is temporary, while he takes Hebrew lessons arranged by the Jewish Agency. In several months he plans to reconnect with old friends from his Masa days by joining them in Haifa. Rafael has no family in Israel, but he is determined to make it his permanent home.

His journey had not been without challenges, but Rafael views them as part of a greater purpose. He often reflects on the paradoxes of his new life: how leaving a stable life in Paris for one of unpredictability in Israel brought him peace. Through it all, Rafael felt that he was finally where he was meant to be – a place he can proudly call home.

1. The ICEJ has been assisting hundreds of French Jews like Rafael to make Aliyah to Israel this year, and we hope to bring even more in 2025. Please support our Aliyah efforts by giving to: [help.icej.org/Aliyah](https://www.icej.org/Aliyah)
2. [https://www.icej.org/blog/french-jews-answer-israels-call-to-come-home/?utm\\_source=ActiveCampaign&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=French+Jews+Answer+Israel+s+Call+to+Come+Home&utm\\_campaign=](https://www.icej.org/blog/french-jews-answer-israels-call-to-come-home/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=French+Jews+Answer+Israel+s+Call+to+Come+Home&utm_campaign=)

## **And the LORD said, “GO...”**

By Ronda Martz

As I write this, I am sitting amongst 569 boxes. Literally. I am moving back into my house after a flood. How fitting that in the midst of this unique time of my life, I was asked to write a chapter for this book. Boxes. Moving. Transition. Change. Well, that is the story of my life!

### **The Early Days**

In 1970, I met Bobby Martz at a house church in Minnesota. He was a self-proclaimed Appalachian hillbilly and I was a rural Nebraska gal whose claim to fame was that I attended a one-room school with an outhouse in the back. Unfortunately, Bobby had grown up in an extremely dysfunctional home with verbal and physical abuse from both his father and mother. Much of his home life was shifting from uncle to grandparent to whomever! He left home and joined the Navy, where he was dramatically saved at the age of nineteen.

As a result of Bobby's conversion from an all-American heathen to a born-again Jesus follower, his life change caused a sensation in the Navy barracks and revival broke out. Sailors came to the Lord Jesus, and some are still alive and serving the Lord. Thus began Bobby's hunger and thirst for souls, and he felt called to be an evangelist. After the four-year stint in the Navy, he moved to Waco, Texas, and was mentored by Dad Ewing. Dad Ewing was small in stature but mighty in the Spirit. He was used by the Lord to pastor, mentor, train, and teach many men who became pastors, evangelists, prophets and missionaries all over the world. Through the connections at the Grace Gospel Church, Bobby

began traveling throughout the United States and overseas to Japan, the Philippines, Korea and Hong Kong proclaiming the precious Word of God and moving in the evangelistic and prophetic gifts God gave.

These travels led Bobby to visit Fred Herzog at the New Testament Church in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, where Fred asked Bobby to help establish a house church in 1970. He moved in with other brothers from NTC, one being Michael Natt. Bobby preached the first Sunday after his arrival. I remember welcoming him, being the friendly person I am. No sparks flew, but we began dating. After four months, I broke up the relationship.

I was the youngest of four children. My family was fairly stable—just hard-working beekeepers and gardeners. After elementary grades in a one-room schoolhouse, I graduated from high school, then from Dana College, a Lutheran college in Nebraska. I had given my heart to the Lord when I was twelve walking in the pasture getting the cows, but assurance of salvation did not come until Campus Crusade explained the Scriptures during my college years. So, after graduation from Dana, I wanted to go to a Bible College that would really teach me the Word of God. On a “whim,” I called Fred Herzog, a total stranger, because a friend of mine told me that he could give me counsel. He invited my friend, Sharon White, and me to become part of that same new house church to which he had invited Bobby. Sharon and I moved to Minnesota, and we both got jobs at the Billy Graham offices that were in Minneapolis.

Working as a spiritual counselor at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, I read many letters of troubled marriages and how people changed after marriage, so out of fear I broke up with

Bobby after dating for four months. He moved on and dated several other girls, one quite seriously. For two years, I did not date, but was happy as a lark living in the “girls house” with five other girls from the church. We had so much fun together. During these years, I took a trip to Mexico and Guatemala with missions on my heart.

God began speaking to me about Bobby and around the same time, He also spoke to Bobby about me. We started dating again in March of 1973, got engaged in July, and married in September of that year. When Bobby asked my dad for my hand in marriage, my dad replied, “Well, as long as you don’t take her halfway around the world.” To which we replied, “We think God has called us to GO to the mission field, specifically the Philippines at this time.” Dad could have fallen through the floor, but he said we would probably marry anyway, so yes, he would give us his blessing.

Thus began our great adventure together. By this time Bobby was thirty-three, I was twenty-five and our hearts were united for ministry, missions, and the pursuit of God and His plan for our lives. Bobby was so unique when he would share in churches—he was passionate and loved sharing the simple Gospel of Jesus. Introductions to his messages could be quite dull and slow while he was “fishing for the anointing.” But when the anointing came, there was the Power and the Presence of the Lord.

### The Mission Field

Only two months after marriage, we began traveling throughout the States as Bobby ministered in conventions and churches. A year and a half later, we spent three months in India to learn

from Brother Ray Jennings, a crusade evangelist. Bobby loved preaching to the crowds of up to 120,000 people. The more the merrier! God would just pull the compassion and the Word out of Bobby as he preached. India was a tough field. We experienced sickness, sweltering heat and uncomfortable rope beds. Once, the Hindus tried to run us out of town and began breaking up our equipment that was already set up on the crusade field. For protection, team member Mary Sexauer and I were taken to the back of the compound and dropped over a wall. Later, we found out we were in a prison yard! We got out of there when it was safe and the rioters had left the crusade grounds. We left town with the help of Indian Christian men and their wives who had hidden machetes under their saris. They surrounded our team to get us to a train.

Bobby and I went back to the United States during India's rainy season when outdoor crusades are impossible, but returned to India (and Ray Jennings) for another three months when rainy season was over. This trip was different because I was pregnant with our first child. I remember being hungry because we only had time to cook two meals a day with the six-wick burner stove. We ladies went to the market and cooked what we could. We washed our clothes by hand, taught the children's meetings and attended the evening crusades. Oh! What I would have done for a cold milkshake!

God moved so incredibly at those salvation and healing outdoor crusades we hosted across India. Over the course of twenty-one days, we saw cripples healed and blind eyes and deaf ears opened. All kinds of sicknesses and diseases were healed by the Lord Jesus. In one of towns we visited, people were so desperate that they literally tore down the brick wall with their bare hands

to come to the crusade. Sometimes they fell at our feet in thanksgiving. We would always say, “No, No, it is the **Lord** who healed you” and point upwards. As Bobby would say, “I can’t even heal a sick mosquito... if they get sick.” Only Jesus is the Great Physician.

Our first child, Sarah, was born in April of 1976. When she was three weeks old, we packed her up, bought new crusade equipment and took a team to Haiti for three months to minister to the Haitians. It turned out that the house we rented was owned by a prostitute whose clients were coming in downstairs. The bedbugs were so bad we could not even sit on the chairs and a two-hole outhouse was also the home of a tarantula! However, God moved in power.

There was a paralyzed man who lived in the mountains who got around by pulling himself along by his elbows, dragging his legs behind him. This is how he managed to feed his animals. Thankfully, his sister gave him a printed invitation to the crusade. As he read it, faith entered his heart. “Jesus is going to heal me,” he thought and began to drag himself down the rocky path. On his way, as he prayed and anticipated a touch from the Lord, the Holy Spirit came upon him and strength came into his paralyzed legs. He stood and began walking down the mountain, then began running and actually beat his sister to the crusade! This man received healing from Jesus! You can imagine the celebration.

Finally, we were prepared, somewhat trained in crusade work, and ready to move to the Philippines. Bobby had been there in the Navy and had some contacts, so we flew to Mindanao in 1977 and hired a Filipino translator who could speak seven languages

and dialects, hired a song leader and an equipment maintenance man. Their wives came too. Our new Toyota HiAce van was filled with eight people and a ton of equipment: a generator, lights, speakers, amplifiers, microphones, wash tubs and cooking gear.

For three years, we traveled from city to city, plaza to school grounds, any place where we could gather a large crowd and preach the precious Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a Catholic nation, many had heard of Jesus, but the belief was mixed with superstition, legalism, religious spirits, and worship of saints rather than worship of Jesus. The crusades were twenty-one to twenty-eight days long. We watched the attendance grow: the Word was preached, oppressions began to break, the power of God was demonstrated by signs, wonders, and miracles. Quack doctors tried to cast spells, but the Presence of Jesus overcame them. People were delivered from spirits of darkness and the love and grace of the Lord Jesus broke bondages. People were being set free. All glory to God!

### Making Disciples

Our goal was to work with local churches. During the daytime, Bobby would gather the pastors and I would gather Sunday School teachers. We would endeavor to encourage them and assist them in their work. Some local churches were legalistic, some were as spiritually dry as a box of crackers, and some of the pastors were not saved at all. We had to ask ourselves some questions:

- Where are we putting all the converts who came forward to receive Christ as Lord during the crusade?
- What kind of church are we sending them back to?

- Will they be disciplined?

Matthew 28:19-20 teaches, “GO and make **disciples** (emphasis added) of all nations.” We were supposed to be making disciples, not just converts. That burned on Bobby’s heart to such a degree that we completely switched ministries. Bobby went “out of his calling” and did something that needed to be done. A drastic change was made.

We moved off Mindanao Island, released our team and God led us to Cebu Island because of its central location in the Visayas (a group of smaller islands) in 1980. Starting over from scratch with no leads, no contacts, no help, we rented a house and started going door to door praying, witnessing, praying, handing out tracts, praying, talking to people and praying. Did I mention praying? After two years of pouring out our hearts, pastors who disagreed with our shift in the ministry began to question us. Why did Bobby leave his calling? What was he doing in the big city of Cebu? When they asked how many people we had gathered, we humbly had to tell the truth. At that point, our “congregation” consisted of an incoherent lady, Mrs. Copta, and a bunch of children. Support started waning. God was testing our hearts.

What do you do when the Lord and His Word are leading you one way, but some people’s opinions and advice are telling you another? We listened and prayed sincerely. The Scriptures say, “There is safety in the multitudes of counselors” (Proverbs 15:22). We were half a world away in the late 1970’s with no internet, no cell phones and no email. The only practical way to communicate was through handwritten letters which took two weeks to get the States. Any reply also took two weeks, so at least a whole month



elapsed before we received a response. Yes, there was the land line phone, but no one would spend nearly \$5.00 per minute to talk unless it was an emergency. We were missionaries. Who had that kind of money?

After two discouraging years of much prayer and very little fruit came ***THE BREAKTHROUGH***. Many months before, Bobby had a dream that was now being fulfilled. In the dream, he was sitting in a chair holding a Bible and about a dozen young people were sitting around him asking, “What is in that book?” This literally happened! Young people soon came to know the Lord and Cebu, which was called a “missionary graveyard,” (since Magellan planted the Catholic cross on the island and claimed the islands for the Pope,) came under the power of the Holy Spirit. Revival broke out. We started a home Bible study which soon grew to a small church body meeting in a hotel.

In the summer of 1982, we went to the States for a short three-month furlough. We planned to return to the Philippines on October 30<sup>th</sup>. I was pregnant at the time with our second child who was due in late December. Our tickets were booked, but Bobby kept sensing that I should stay and have the baby in the States. Everyone had babies in the Philippines, so I felt that was totally unnecessary. Why would I need to stay behind? However, he was really hearing from the Lord. He went ahead to the Philippines and while he was enroute, complications with the pregnancy began. Before he landed in Cebu, I had an emergency caesarian and delivered a tiny baby boy, Daniel, in only the thirty-third week. Had I had flown with Bobby on a fifteen-hour flight, who knows what might have happened? This is just a practical example of how important it is to listen to the nudges of the Holy Spirit. How keen are we to the voice of the Father?

## A Church is Born

The year 1982 was filled with church planting. The group of students in Cebu City turned into a reality and before we knew it, the body of believers grew. Then, we expanded to Negros Island. Bobby and a young man he was mentoring who lived with us put our van on a ferry to get to Negros and they drove around the whole perimeter of the island continually praying about where to plant a church. After much prayer, the Lord led them to a fishing village, Calatrava. It was on the coast and seemed ripe for a harvest.

It sounds totally crazy, but we built a very simple grass-roofed church with open sides on rented land before there were any new believers. During the nights, we would host an open-air crusade at the city plaza which was going strong. People were touched by the Lord, and many gave their lives to Christ. Some were healed, while others were delivered from evil spirits. Jesus Christ as a Risen Savior was preached, and those who were dead in their trespasses and sins came to the Light and lives were changed. Then an invitation was given for all those who wanted to learn more about the Lord Jesus to come to the simple Bible study building in the mornings. Many came. Thus, a church was born. All glory to God.

From 1982-1991, we were filled with contentment and joy in serving the Lord. The churches were growing, lives were being changed, outreaches were begun. Our financial support was sufficient. Bobby traveled back and forth between the islands, pastoring both churches. He would be in Cebu for three weeks

and then go to Calatrava for a week. He installed the young man mentioned above to live in Calatrava full time.

Meanwhile, another son was born in 1986. It was a problem pregnancy from the beginning and I nearly lost the baby several times. For the last four and a half months, I was committed to full-time bedrest, but made it through to the thirty-eighth week, went into labor and David was born.

### Changes

In 1990, we applied for our yearly visa, but this time, the Philippine government denied our extension and basically gave us a year to get out of the country. We were shocked. How could we leave the people we loved? How could we move our children from the only culture they knew? Who would care for the churches? It was a tough year for us, planning to leave the people we loved as our own family. But we had to, so we wrapped things up as best we could, sold what we could, gave away a bunch and headed for the States. At this time, Sarah was fifteen, Daniel was eight, and David was four.

The children did not like orange juice, milk and other American foods. They wanted fish and rice - whole fish with head and tail attached! They were Americans on their passports, but Filipinos inside. They marveled at toilets that automatically flushed, and did not know why people laughed at their Filipino gestures of pointing with the lips and raising eyebrows to say hello! They were third culture kids. We all know that there is culture shock when you initially move to a foreign country, but there is also the reverse when coming back to the States. At one point or another, we are all called to face adjustments and changes. Are we flexible

in the Lord's hand? Can we say, "Where He leads us, we will follow and what He feeds us, we will swallow?"

Upon returning to the States, we did not know where to go or where to live. And what would we do when we settled? Bobby had not graduated from high school. What kind of job could he get? But working a job was not his heart; he wanted to preach. He wanted to share the Word of God. He had a passion that burned deep, deep inside to see souls saved, delivered and disciplined. So, we began doing what we did twelve years earlier before we left for the Philippines; we traveled from church to church holding special meetings.

For four years we traveled from East Coast to West Coast, north to south, like the old itinerate preachers on horseback, only in a car and with a family. After five straight nights of preaching in a church, we would take a day or two to travel to the next scheduled place, and enjoy that body of believers for five days, then go on to the next church. We had a box of schoolbooks in the trunk (which was packed like a puzzle) and I would teach the kids during the day and we would all go to church every night and listen to Bobby preach. On the top of the car was a carrier with changes of clothing and a bike rack with bikes for the boys. Sometimes we took side trips to see the Grand Canyon or Niagara Falls or to visit grandparents. Daniel said that it was the best four years of his life.

We were kind of homeless, like Jesus, with no permanent place to lay our heads. Did I miss having a home? Did we get tired of the constant driving, moving, shifting from one place to another, sleeping in other people's homes or with their dogs who slobbered for a living, or in church nurseries or wherever we

called “home” for five days? Well, it was an adventure! I did not have to clean a house, only a car. I did not have to wash a houseful of windows. That was the lifestyle the Lord chose for us for a season. We were content.

Three times in those four years, we stopped traveling for Bobby to get alone with the Lord for forty days of fasting and prayer to recharge. He had such passion to see people healed and set free and thoroughly enjoyed studying revivals of old such as the Welsh Revival, the First and Second Great Awakenings and other great moves of God. He read and fed himself on the miracle-working power of Jesus, and watched videos of A. A. Allen, Kathryn Kuhlman, T. L. Osborne, Oral Roberts, Jack Coe and other tent revivalists of the 1950’s and 1960’s. Bobby learned from them and often laughed that he was being mentoring by the dead (those who had already gone on to be with the Lord) by studying their examples of lifestyle, reading the books they wrote, or watching them on old VHS videos.

### A Place to Call Home

We were at Manna Church in Fayetteville, North Carolina when Jack Watts, an elder and realtor, asked us if we were ever going to settle down. I will never forget that day. A constant prayer for the past four years had been, “Where do you want us to settle, Lord?” Sarah was already in college in Newport News, Virginia, Daniel was twelve, and David was eight. Was this the time to buy a home in the States? We jokingly made a long list of our “dream home.” Six months later, Jack called to say he found a farmhouse near Parkton, NC. It had everything we had asked for including a little pond for Bobby to fish in. I had taken Bobby to the airport for his once-a-year visit to the Philippines that very day. Guess

who had to be the one to decide if we would put in an offer on the house. Bobby said I proved to be a Proverbs 31 woman because I felt it was the Lord and bought the house for an unbelievably low price. After twenty-two years of marriage and ministry, we finally became homeowners.

For most of the next ten years, 1995-2005, Bobby continued traveling and preaching in churches around the United States while Daniel, David and I stayed at the farm. Bobby was gone about 260 days a year, traveling for a month, coming home for about two weeks then going out again. That was interspersed with a yearly trip to the Philippines and outdoor crusades in Brazil, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe. We began to see why the Lord brought us back from the Philippines. God was calling us to GO to the nations; not just one nation, but to many nations.

In 2005, Bobby suffered a severe aneurysm, but our faithful God raised him up! The Lord healed him of so many things so many times during his lifetime. Bobby's interest in Jesus' supernatural healing began while he was in the Navy. Because of a rare eye condition, he was told that by the time he was thirty-five years-old, he would be blind. He had heard that Jesus still healed people, so Bobby declared:

***I was going to try this out. If Jesus healed me, I told Him I would preach healing. So, I laid my own hands on my own head and asked the Lord to heal my eyes. Then, I felt like a bucket of cold water was dumped on my head. My eyes were instantly healed. When I checked out of the Navy, my eyes were 20/20.***

That was the Power of the Lord. From that day forward, Bobby was blessed by the Lord to see many people healed by Jesus as he operated in most of the gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10.

After the Lord healed Bobby of the aneurysm, he continued to GO. There were still people to be reached, nations to be impacted and lives to be changed. The Lord opened numerous doors locally, throughout the States and internationally. Outdoor Salvation-Healing Crusades continued in Germany, Ukraine, Brazil, Costa Rica, Kenya, Uganda, and the Philippines. In addition to this, when Bobby was at home many people were impacted by a small group that Bobby led at Manna Church called “Operating in the Supernatural.” He was able to mentor others who also hungered to see the power and experience the Presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Always About God

In April of 2020, Bobby was diagnosed with prostate cancer and had surgery in July of that year. He was suffering from very low sodium levels which had put him in the hospital previously. His body systems were just not working right. He still led his small group, but suddenly on August 6, 2020, Bobby died at home while I was out on a walk. Jesus just swooped him up at eighty and a half years-old. In a second, he was in the arms of his Savior, his Heavenly Father, amidst the host of heaven. What glory!

The rest of us here on earth reeled in shock. Bobby was so loved by so many. His preaching style was so unique and he was always so excited about Jesus. Storytelling was one of his strengths; one minute he would have the audience laughing and the next minute

they would be awed by the Presence of the Holy Spirit. When people asked him whether he was a prophet or evangelist, he would just laugh and say he was, “a ditch-digger” just digging trenches for the Lord to move in the hearts of people who needed salvation, healing, and deliverance. He never really liked titles.

Well, he did like the titles of father and grandfather. Our three children and three grandchildren are part of his ongoing legacy. God has done a wonderful work in our children who were born and/or raised on the mission field. Sarah, Daniel and David love the Lord and are faithful to him. Sarah, and her husband Mike, have given us three grandchildren. Hannah is praying about becoming a missionary; Ben is a worship leader at our church; and Micaela is open to whatever God has for her. We were not perfect parents, but we knew the importance of spending time in the Word of God daily with our children. It is important that we commit and dedicate our children to the faithfulness of a loving and just Heavenly Father.

Since Bobby’s homegoing, the non-profit we started back in 2002, Hour ***of Harvest, Inc. (HOH)***, is going forward. It was never about Bobby anyway. It is about the harvest field: impacting nations and changing lives. God continues to open doors. I serve as ***HOH*** president and five highly qualified men who have hearts for prayer, missions, the Word of God and to see the Kingdom of God spread around the world comprise the board governing the organization. Because of the incredible work of the Heavenly Father, the churches we planted in the Philippines are fruitful and multiplying. ***Hour of Harvest, Inc.*** stays connected with leaders, pastors and missionaries all around the world, funneling finances



and laborers to assist in the work of the Lord throughout many nations.

I usually lead two to four teams overseas each year. In 2024, we went to the Philippines for the annual Easter convention. We also traveled to Guatemala and Cuba. In 2025, if the Lord is willing, we are endeavoring bring team and see Him at work in the Philippines, Brazil, Cuba and Puerto Rico. We want to see the Kingdom of God spread around the world. God is good.

So, there you have it; a little glimpse into the lives of two country bumpkins and one big, marvelous God. Now just half of the duo remains on this earth, but somehow the Lord has multiplied the works of our hands, as He always does. It is all about **HIM**.

For now, it is back to the adventure of unpacking the contents of those 569 boxes. A flood may take possessions, but it cannot take away our joy in following Jesus. I look forward to my next adventure in the Kingdom business. How about you? Let's GO into all the world.....

([www.hourofharvest.org](http://www.hourofharvest.org) For quarterly newsletters or comments, email Ronda at [hoh.martz@gmail.com](mailto:hoh.martz@gmail.com))

## **God Calling**

By Susan Heagy

God's Calling. Most of us have heard of it, but what is it? Is it for everyone? Can we actually hear it? See it? Is a calling from the Lord even possible? Yes, it is not only possible, but each one of us was created to receive, and answer God's call. Our DNA has God's plan written on it; called from before birth.

*"...Before I was born the Lord called me; from my mother's womb He has spoken my name. He made my mouth like a sharpened sword, in the shadow of His Hand He hid me; He made me into a polished arrow and concealed me in His quiver" (Isaiah 49:1-4 NIV).*

*"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart...Do not say 'I am too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you..." (Jeremiah 1:4-10 NIV).*

God's Calling is actually not about us. Our life, fulfilling our calling, our purpose, is about the reputation and glory of God. We are never qualified for where we are called. God does the qualifying as we go. When we receive our calling, a burden from the Lord comes into our heart. When you hear it you cannot put it away. You are chosen. You become stirred, courageous, willing to move beyond the familiar.

Like Nehemiah, you can step into the unknown to accomplish the impossible. He faced death in speaking to the king. He faced ridicule to rescue the people of Jerusalem by building a wall when he had no idea how to do it. When someone receives their

calling, and follows it, they can feel extremely satisfied, motivated and capable of the impossible.

*“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you” (Isaiah 43:1-3a NIV).*

To demonstrate the dynamics of being called, I want to share my own call, my refusal, and God’s Grace to call me again. I was eleven years old, standing outside the church our family attended. I remember hearing God’s voice call to me, telling me to go into missions. I didn’t question the intended destination, but simply assumed God was sending me to Africa. I believed Africa had cannibals, and if I went there, I would be lunch. No thank you. I turned down the offer and walked away.

Over the next forty years I grew up, married, had children, and established a career in the movie theatre industry. Though all the while I was true to my faith, I never forgot God’s first call. However, I did assume it was in the past. God does not give up on us. Forty years after my rejection He came after me. It was time for me to fulfill my assignment. But I wanted to do it my way; make more money so I wouldn’t have to live by faith. Nothing new. Moses objected at the burning bush. And Jonah. And Peter...

Through my stubbornness I was miserable, and I got fired. God rewarded me with a gift of a two-week vacation in Israel. He had me right where He wanted me. Alone, desperate, no-where to go. My “vacation” was anything but that. I had dreams, visions,

an audible voice speaking when I was alone - not what I was expecting. I seriously thought vacationing meant God would stay home! Instead, I recognized God was saying something, though I did not know what.

As I sat on the return flight awaiting take-off, I asked the Lord in a rather exasperated voice, "What do You want?!" He quickly answered me, "I want you to have the compassion of Yeshua." I was so relieved He did not say "Go to Africa!" I quickly agreed with a simple, "Okay."

Understand the power of that one word 'Okay.' By coming into agreement with God I had just removed forty years of rebellion. I didn't know it yet, but His Grace had brought me to the brink of my calling. Essentially I had just said, "Hineni." The Hebrew meaning is, "Here am I."

The result of accepting what God offered meant I immediately began to weep. It was ugly crying for the 12-hour flight home, and I continued to weep for the next 1 ½ years. God was conditioning me and beginning to qualify me for His purposes.

*"Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him" (1 Corinthians 7:17 ESV).*

I went home "looking" for my calling in the form of another job. It did not happen. I spent 1 ½ years in training, living by faith. In September 2003 I received a phone call from Israel. "Guess what, we found out there are Holocaust Survivors in our city." Immediately I felt a hand go into my chest, take my heart, and

squeeze. It was so real I expected to see a hand. I heard myself say, “I have to go to Israel.”

Receiving our calling is not always what we want. I was mad. I did not want to go back to Israel. I did not want to work with the Survivors because they were old. I told God long ago I would serve Him, but please not to give me old people. Holocaust Survivors were the oldest!

In spite of my tantrum, bad attitude, He was patient with me. A few weeks later everything fell into place and I prepared to go. I had no idea what I was going to do, and only \$50 in my pocket. Hineni. By faith I went. Still mad, I went anyway.

*“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.” (Hebrews 11:8 ESV).*

I had no experience for whatever was ahead of me. I was a businesswoman, with corporate experience. I knew nothing about Israel, Holocaust Survivors (i.e., old people), living overseas, etc. After I arrived in Israel God gave me a vision of standing on the edge of a cliff. He was asking me to step off into the air. Not to expect Him to catch me, but for me to expect the cliff edge to grow, and extend under my feet! This was the level of faith He wanted me to have.

Upon getting settled, God gave me my instructions. Detailed. Exact. Specific. When we answer our calling God guides us in every way. You will know what to do and when to do it. And if you forget, He will take you through. For me, I learned by following God’s instructions, going with a translator, and meeting

my first Survivor, Evgenia. She was small, timid and shaking with fear. I sat beside her and she began to tell her Holocaust experience.

“I was eight years old and in the ghetto with my mother. The Nazis had sealed the ghetto so no food could come in. We were starving. My stomach hurt so much! To alleviate the pain my mother gave me the hoof of a horse to chew on.”

As Evgenia shared this last bit she began to shake. To comfort her I put my arm around her shoulders. The moment I touched her I felt an incredible electric shock go up my arm, down into my chest and directly into my heart! It was so strong, I gasped a deep breath. And with that jolt, I fell deeply in love with Evgenia! I received a supernatural passion for the Holocaust Survivors. I was now commissioned. My calling was complete. I now received the compassion and love for the Holocaust Survivors.

*“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Yeshua took hold of me” (Philippians 3:12-14 ESV).*

I pressed on, obeyed, went when I was called, even did it angrily, and now I had received my calling. God “took hold of me!” I found out my DNA has Holocaust Survivors written on it. I found freedom in my spirit within my calling. It was unexpected. I had no idea.

*“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (II Corinthians 3:17 NIV).*

*“The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace” (Romans 8:6 NIV).*

*“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace... as one who serves by the strength that God supplies- in order that in everything God may be glorified through Yeshua” (1 Peter 4:10-11 ESV).*

Suddenly I discovered abilities I did not have before. I began to interact with different cultures. I learned about the Russian Survivors. The Lord equipped me with a passion and connection with them I never had with anyone before. And it is still true today, 21 years later.

Was my time easy? No. I fell and broke my ankle. Attacks came in different forms from both the world and believers. It was so bad that at one point I considered giving up. But God had a plan. As He separated me from what I knew, He replaced it all with Himself. I drew closer to Him and learned to rely on Him alone.

Simultaneously I experienced amazement, blessings, miracles and discovered it is possible to live in the supernatural. Sometimes it was a rollercoaster, riding from euphoria down into the valley of despair. Better said, I went from grace to grace.

*“I sought the Lord and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame” (Psalm 34:4-5 NIV).*

Remember, I only had \$50 with plans to stay six months. But God. God sent ravens to feed Elijah; God provided food in a famine to feed Elijah and the family he stayed with; God gave Elijah

supernatural strength with cake and water from an angel and enough rest, all to last 40 days. [see *1 Kings 17:5-6, 15; 19:7*]

God provided all I needed without using my \$50. And I had no anxiety or worry about my finances or needs.

*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Philippians 4:6-7 NIV).*

God cares for us and wants us to share in His care for others. Peter healed the crippled man on the way to the temple. He had nothing to give except the gift of God. [see Acts 3:1-10]

*“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy” (Proverbs 31:8-9 NIV).*

God began to perform the miraculous. He allowed me to be a part of his caring for the poor and needy. I saw physical healings, trauma released, spiritual understanding of their emotions and needs. Survivors asked us to teach them how to forgive and receive forgiveness from Yahweh. Each day was a day in a supernatural world. Through scripture He identified for me who the people really were that He had given me. He will always give scripture, a foundation, for your calling. This was mine.

*“A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing...” (Psalm 68:5-6 NIV).*



Yahweh is the Father to the Survivors (fatherless due to WW II, they are orphans), a defender of widows (most Survivors have lost a spouse). God sets the lonely in families (what does an orphan need? A family). He brings out prisoners with singing (I saw this literally when a Survivor was healed, she sang for us).

*“God’s gifts and God’s call are under full-warranty- never canceled, never rescinded” (Romans 11:29 MSG).*

You will never be prepared for your calling. You do not have the activated gifts you need when called. God will always give you what you need, when you need it, without fail. He promised.

*“Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling...” (II Peter 1:10 ESV).*

Be eager for your calling, for it is one thing in life that will never, never fail if you work hand in hand with the Lord and if you match that calling with holiness. The calling itself is holy. Be holy.

Receiving your calling can come in a variety of ways:

1. It can be audible like Samuel and Moses
2. It can be an obvious answer to prayer
3. It can be a voice speaking to your heart and head
4. It can be through prophecy fulfilled
5. It can possibly be through someone telling you, but be cautious. Do not depend on another person’s words. Always, *always*, get confirmation through God Himself.

If you thought it up yourself, it most likely is not your calling. If it is possible to do on your own, it is not your calling. If it is impossible to accomplish without Him, answer the call.

Pay attention to your dreams. I did. My dreams and visions from when I was first in Israel have now been coming to fruition.

*“For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry” (Habakkuk 2:2-3).*

God has a plan for every person conceived. He has written on everyone’s DNA. When you choose to step into that plan, no man can stop you. You will always succeed in God’s timing.

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11).*

In scripture we can read about six people who answered God’s call. Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, Isaiah, and Ananias all said “Hineni” to Yahweh when He called. God calls us to do what we cannot do without Him, in a place we never thought we would go, to do what we thought we would never do.

Choose to go forward. God will give you a spiritual boldness. I am a testament to that. Hineni. Here I am in Israel. Tell God, “Hineni.” Here am I. Send me. Be willing to step off the cliff. The God who made the cliff is able to extend it under your feet. We are the Last Day generation. It is time to step into your calling. Pray for fulfillment of your calling from God. May He be glorified through your obedience.

Hineni.

# **A Heart for Türkiye**

By Vic Whitaker

Anatolia, or Türkiye as it is now known, is a fascinating country with a deep and powerful history. Often described as “an open-air museum,” since it is littered with ruins from ages past, including a rich history of the early church. This is the birthplace of Saint Paul and the crucible of the Ecclesia, the location of the Seven Churches of Revelation, once the heart of Christendom and the throne of Constantine, and now an Islamic state. If you look at the map of the region, Türkiye looks like a bridge between Asia and Europe, which in some respects it is. It’s largest city, Istanbul, has one foot in Asia and the other in Europe, straddling the Bosphorus, but despite this the people are very much Asian, with a blend of European.

Most statistics will indicate that Türkiye is over 90% Muslim, but this is far from true. Many are included as Muslim simply because they were born in Türkiye, not because of any religious affinity. It was similar in England during my youth: most English would call themselves Christian simply because they were born in England. It’s more a matter of national identity rather than religion. The truth is that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk created a secular republic in 1923 with the clear intention of keeping religion out of government. As a result about 40% of Turks are secular, but quite nationalist in outlook. The large cities in particular tend to be mostly secular, but for political reasons the current president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, is turning the country back to Islam in the hope of regenerating the glory days of the Ottoman Empire.

The Turkish government recognises the Orthodox and Catholic Churches as being the authentic Christian churches, and is highly

suspicious of the Protestant Church, seeing them as a threat and “funded by the CIA.” This might sound ridiculous to Westerners, but is a widely held belief amongst Turks.

My wife and I moved to Türkiye in 2015 to establish a community of prayer in the Toros mountains. Even though we were aged 65 and 60 at the time, the local villagers were convinced we were spies. Apparently MI6 has an interest in a small mountain village with goats and crops, hours from the nearest military base, and employs pensioners to spy on them!

We had only a rudimentary knowledge of the land and the people, having never visited until we heard God’s call to go. Our initial impression was that it is much more modern and high-tech than we had anticipated, but that changes as you travel into the central and Eastern areas, away from the major cities. Here you find the agricultural communities that reveal the heart and the life of the traditional Türk. It was in such a small community that we got to know rural Turks.

Türkiye has been a missionary field for over 50 years and remains so today. With a population of 85.3 million (2023) and only 8 to 9,000 Indigenous Christians there is still much work to be done. Interestingly the Turkish Constitution allows freedom of belief, thanks to Atatürk, but proselytization of Muslims is forbidden by the Diyanet - the Ministry of Religion. This leads to a situation where foreigners can meet for worship, but are not allowed to build new churches. We were members of an International Church in Antalya, which met in a building designated a “Cultural Centre.” Everyone knew it was a church, and the police even supplied protection when there were bomb threats against the churches one Easter, but as long as we were seen to provide

facilities for foreigners and not for local Turks, we were allowed to have meetings.

Despite the restrictions, this “Church for foreigners” hosted nascent churches for a number of different nationalities: Iranian, Russian and even Turkish. We were aware that the police had spies in our midst, but for a time at least, they appeared to turn a blind eye to our activities. As a result a number of new churches were born in the city.

As with many Islamic countries, the main barrier to the Gospel is the veil that has been drawn across Turkish eyes by lies and half-truths. One of the most common is that there are so many versions of our Holy Book that it can’t possibly hold any truth, having been re-written so many times! Also the very idea that God could have a son is outrageous to their minds.

Of course, the way to their hearts is love, as with every other ethnic group. Loving them and showing them what a life of love looks like can tear the veil from their minds.

Apart from the International Churches serving the ex-patriot communities, there are also many mission organisations from different nations operating teams throughout Türkiye.

Unfortunately in recent years the atmosphere toward them has been changing, becoming less tolerant and more hostile. In April 2007 three Christian men were tortured and murdered in Malatya, in Eastern Türkiye. Necati Aydın, Uğur Yüksel and Tilman Geske (a German national) were martyred by five young Turks who pretended to be interested in the Gospel. As long as the Diyanet exists there will continue to be official hostility to any Christian presence in Türkiye.

Although still relatively small in number, the Indigenous Turkish church has grown significantly in recent years and has begun to form networks of church plants across the country. These churches have been assisted by foreign workers (the term missionary is avoided) who have mentored, trained and enabled them. The Diyanet identified this danger and started to target foreigners who worked with the Turkish churches. Their simple strategy was to identify and exclude them by denying the residence permit that all foreigners need to live in Türkiye. Over a period of just a few years many of the workers supporting the Turkish church were either labelled as a threat to national security and forbidden to re-enter the country, or simply denied residence. Many of these workers relocated to nearby countries to maintain their contacts and continue their work from across the border.

In 2023 this process was accelerated due to the government's reaction to large numbers of Ukrainian and Russian immigrants arriving because of the war in Ukraine. This, in addition to the burden on housing and the economy caused by the earthquake in the East in the same year. The already fragile economy was further unbalanced by these two issues, causing housing problems and increased inflation. The government response was to stop the majority of renewals of the residence permits, forcing foreigners to leave in large numbers. My wife and I were among these.

This has effectively divested the Turkish church of long-term support from foreign workers, but that isn't all bad news. The Turkish church will now have to stand on its own feet, develop its own leaders, outreach and expansion. It has already demonstrated its ability to do this in the current networks and

the incredible response to the 2023 earthquake in Eastern Türkiye. The Turkish church presented a powerful witness in the majority-Muslim Eastern provinces by housing, feeding, clothing and caring for the victims for many months - Turks loving Turks, just as the Lord has commanded His disciples to do. This is how the Gospel will break down the barriers in Türkiye.

In recent years, from the surrounding nations once subjugated by the Ottoman Empire, has begun a process of brotherly love and forgiveness to their former Turkish oppressors. A coalition of Christian leaders from the Balkan Countries have formed what is known as the Balkan Call, and have been reaching out in unity to offer forgiveness, blessing and support to the Turkish Church. This is just one of the ways God is at work. There is much to be thankful for in this region. With God's help we will see the church arise once again in the heartland of her infancy.

I conclude with an encouraging word from Saul (Paul), a native of Tarsus in Eastern Anatolia, to his brothers and sisters in the early church in Efes (Ephesus) in Western Anatolia, still entirely appropriate for the church in Türkiye today...

*I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe (Ephesians 1:16-19 NIV).*



# **How a German Woman Got a Heart for Israel**

By Elisabeth Oehlwein

My journey started early in my life. I grew up Christian and loved the stories in the Bible, especially the ones from the Hebrew Bible, or how we called it, the Old Testament. From the beginning to King David there were so many people I loved to read and hear about. But it was not related to today. Those stories happened thousands of years ago.

In the calendar of the evangelical church there was a Sunday assigned as “Israel Sunday.” I always liked the topic. But it was never related to the present, it was always about what was written in the past. And once a year we prayed for the peace of Jerusalem, whatever that meant.

From an early age on I loved to read. I was obsessed with books and was always on the lookout for new stories. I loved to dive into another world to feel and see the characters in their different realities. My parents had books like *Exodus* and *Hadassa* on their shelves. When I came across novels about the establishment of Israel in 1948, I was deeply involved emotionally with the cause of the Jewish people. The refusal of Britain to allow them refuge in their ‘Palestine’ mandate shocked me. And more shocking was the realization that they allowed the Arabs to arm themselves, while they punished the Jews who were caught with arms to defend themselves.

Even before the war in 1948 broke out, there was so much antisemitism. This was puzzling to me because the Arabs are also Semites. Are the antisemitic Arabs against themselves? Then there was the Nazis, the Holocaust, and the Mufti of Jerusalem

meeting with Hitler and agreeing with his insanities while the world looked the other way. All of this felt so unrighteous against the Jewish people, that in my heart I became one of their defenders.

In school we were taught about our German history by an excellent teacher. We visited the Buchenwald concentration camp, and our teacher organized a tour with an excellent tour guide who was a young history student. Our teacher went with us to watch one of the movies produced by the Nazi propaganda ministry in order to understand their evil ways. Because of this I could relate even more on a personal level.

In 2010 I came across the book *Son of Hamas* by Mosab Hassan Yousef. I was shocked and intrigued by this insider's revelations of the situation in the Middle East. A couple of months later we were asked to present one of our favorite books in German class. The misinformation about Islam and Hamas was huge in Germany, and unfortunately still is. I wanted my classmates to hear the truth. Therefore, I choose Mosab's book, because he explained the Islamic faith from an insider's perspective in a very logical and understandable way.

When I was studying at university, one of my flat mates, a student of theology, told me that he was going to 'Palestine' to help at an archaeological site in Jerusalem. In my mind I was thinking, "?????" What is he talking about? I thought Jerusalem is the capital of Israel?! What does he mean by 'Palestine'? From the books I read in the past, I knew that 'Palestine' was the name of the region during the British mandate. The Jews immigrating to this part of the world called themselves 'Palestinians.' They bought land from the Arabs who were living there and started to

build and work the land. Therefore, I knew there were Arabs, who called themselves Arabs, and Jews who called themselves 'Palestinians.' I googled 'Palestine country' and couldn't find any map.

As I dove into the topic, I started to understand that this term was not used much after the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. And it was not related to an existing state in the past, but a term used by an Arab terrorist in the 1990's who no longer called the Jews 'Palestinians' but called the Arabs Palestinians'. In 1948, after the declaration of Independence by the Jews, the Arabs in the area were told by the other Arabs of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq to leave their property, because they wanted to eliminate the Jews, and after they would have driven them out, the Arabs could return to their houses.

As it turned out, Israel survived! The Arabs who stayed in their homes became Israeli citizens. The other Arabs who left their houses became refugees, mostly in Jordan. Only towards the end of the 1990's did the Arab PLO leader start to call the Arab refugees 'Palestinians', giving the term a completely new meaning. Now I had an idea what this student was talking about, but this was more knowledge in my head than in my heart. Therefore, I was still an observer of the things and not very connected to Israel.

In 2014 I had a cancerous brain tumor and was treated at a children's oncology center. God intervened in my life, and I started to read the Bible regularly, not only verses in the mornings, but larger passages during the day. One of the nurses told me about an organization which fulfills dreams of children with a life-threatening disease. Although I was a young adult, she

said I should try. In the end, I was accepted, and I flew to Israel and attended “the Feast of Tabernacles” celebration by the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem (ICEJ) which also including a tour to explore the country. During the March of the Nations in Jerusalem, I was overwhelmed by the crowds cheering us Germans, and the children were so eager to get a German flag. This love towards the German people touched me deeply. I also had the privilege of being hosted by a wonderful Messianic pastor couple.

On my return to Germany, I had a lot to process, and when the opportunity opened in 2015 to return to the land, I was very excited to do so. I was part of a program about discovering the heart behind worship and intercession. Through it, the Lord set me on a new path. I got baptized in the Kinnereth and stayed beyond the ten days of the program as planned and stayed in the country on my tourist visa. I must admit, I fell in love with Israel and its people.

Since that journey in May 2017, I returned to Israel several times. While I was waiting for my return to Israel in the fall of 2017, God gave me two words: Vision Israel. This started my journey in full-time ministry. I’m still working and walking out this call. And I want to encourage you to go with what the Lord tells you. Trust Him always. Endure. Persevere. Overcome. The devil will oppose you when you do what God wants you to do, but don’t lose hope. He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4).

## Indigenous Peoples

*Indeed He says,  
'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant  
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,  
And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;  
I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,  
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth'  
(Isaiah 49:6).*

*After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude  
which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples,  
and tongues, standing before the throne and before the  
Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their  
hands (Revelation 7:9).*

God's plan of salvation through Messiah Jesus began in Israel, and then extended beyond the borders of Israel throughout the entire world. Many Indigenous peoples today from the ends of the earth are recognizing their connection to the land of Israel and to the Jewish people.

On October 28, 2024, a group of about 60 indigenous representatives from around the globe, gathered at Jerusalem's Western Wall Plaza to show their support for Israel and the Jewish people. The unique delegation marched from Jaffa Gate to the Western Wall through the alleys of the Old City, many of its members decked out in colorful traditional attire from a wide variety of Indigenous cultures, with beaded headbands, feathered headdresses, embroidered shawls, and woven textiles.

Among the crowd, alongside symbols of Indigenous cultures, many waved Israeli flags to express their support for the country in a time of war. But the delegation was uniquely positioned to also convey another message: Jews are indigenous to the land of Israel. For many in the delegation, the journey to Jerusalem represented more than just a physical pilgrimage. It was a meaningful public expression of their kinship with the Jewish people and their Zionism [1]

The march was organized by the Indigenous Embassy Jerusalem (IEJ) which opened in Jerusalem in February 2024 to show a tangible solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people, and to affirm the status of the Jewish people's Indigenous status.

The embassy's goals include:

- Sending a message of solidarity from Indigenous peoples around the world
- Recognizing the Jews as indigenous to Israel
- Standing with Israel in her struggle against forces that seek her annihilation
- Emphasizing the ancestral connections Indigenous groups have to their lands and resources

During the opening event for the IEJ, Regent Xami Thomas, from the Koi Tribal Kingdom of South Africa declared, "Anyone who says that Israel is not Indigenous doesn't know what they are talking about, because if Israel is not Indigenous, there is no Indigenous nation on the earth." He went on to apologize for the Indigenous people for the horrible thing that the ANC

government to this glorious nation. The friends of Israel are much more than the enemies of Israel.

While a dictionary defines Indigenous as “relating to or being a people who are the original, earliest known inhabitants of a region, or are their descendants,” the full meaning is much more comprehensive.

Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Fleur Hassan-Nahoum expressed the Jewish people’s connection to the land of Israel, “To be from a land where your ancestors became a people, and the Jewish people have been a people for 5000 years. We’ve been in Jerusalem as a united tribe for 3000 years, but we only became a people in our land. All our liturgy, all our Torah, the five books of Moses, everything is connected to our birthplace as a people in this land. 5000 years ago. Even though we were in the diaspora for so many thousands of years, we yearned to come back to our land, and we came back to our land, the land of our ancestors.” [2]

Mary Faus is an Ojibway-Cree native of Ontario, Canada, and a spiritual leader and advocate for her native people. Her passion is to help them reclaim their culture and voice. She recognizes the connection between her people and the Jewish people, “There are so many similarities between what has taken place between our people and Israel. We are both native to our lands. We have both seen the devastation of our people. Our people have walked through a process of forgiveness to set the land free from the burdens of the past. We want to walk without the offense that has been carried down from generation to generation and stand with our Jewish and Arab brothers and sisters in the unity of the one new man.” [3]

The Worship Rebels, a husband-and-wife duo Alex and Brandi Castillo, represent a unique expression of the culture and voice of Indigenous people through worship. A whole new path of ministry and life was opened to them when the Lord supernaturally awakened Alex to his indigenous identity (Arawak Taino). Simultaneously, doors opened for their family to minister in First Nations (Native American) circles. Since then, the Lord has brought them into close relationships with Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders alike across Turtle Island (North America) and bound their hearts to the mission of releasing the ancient sound of healing and redemption to every nation, tribe, and tongue.

Alex and Brandi were part of a recent summit held in the historic city of Herrnhut, Germany, where Native peoples from Turtle Island and Māori people from New Zealand joined Messianic Israelis and people from the nations in a powerful expression of forgiveness, spiritual connection, and a foretaste of heavenly worship.

Seeds of this connection between Indigenous people and Israel were planted more than 30 years ago by Reverend Michael Maeliau, a prophet from the Indigenous peoples of the Solomon Islands, a South Pacific nation of 826,000 people. He received a vision from the Lord of ‘Deep Sea Canoes.’ In this vision, people from the Pacific Islands were going up to Jerusalem at a time of trouble. They stood with Israel to give honor to the Holy God of Israel.

The following song, written as a tribute to “Papa” Michael Maeliau, expresses this connection represented in his vision:

### Deep Sea Canoe Vision



*From Abuibiu to Adamadakwa to Ngalimemeo, from the uttermost to the uttermost Aulimae (Maeliau).*

*From eternity, holy and boundless heavens  
A glorious horizon beams in gold toward Israel the holy nation of God.*

*From Mt. Sinai's consuming fire to Malaita,  
Your Holy Island we worship the God of Israel, YHWH.*

*YHWH, you are holy and eternal, incomparable YHWH, the Almighty, our God.*

*From the sides of the North, Malaita, your holy island,  
foretold in prophecy, God will raise up His anointed one, a servant.*

*He shall come from the rising sun, announcing God's holiness, proclaiming God's kingdom.*

*Declaring the revelation of the glory of the Lord, establishing worship for all nations, languages, tribes, and people. They shall worship God and His awesome deeds, revealed the whole earth is full of his glory (Isaiah 41:2).*

*Maeliau, you stand as a seer, prophet, warrior, and a priest, our devoted father.*

*Maeliau, spoken of in His Holy word, you are the voice of the prophet (Isaiah 40 & Isaiah 41). Departed to heavenly glory, your message of restoration now spreads across the globe.*

*Oh, Holy children of God in the Holy tabernacle of God.  
YHWH, the unbeatable warrior, forever resides, forever  
abides, with all generations, forever dwells in your homes  
with your children and your children's children.*

*We praise you, oh God, Lion of Judah  
Emmanuel, God with us, we worship you.*

*Glory to the righteous one, from the ends of the earth, from  
our hearts, we anoint you King for your millennium reign. [4]*

God's plan of salvation began in Israel and will find its full expression there. We are now living in a time of Israel's trouble, and God has called us to stand with them as they face opposition from many nations. These events are leading up to the second coming of Jesus when he will set up his millennial kingdom, a 1000-year period in which he will sit on David's throne in Jerusalem and reign over all the earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

*The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah  
and Jerusalem.*

*Now it shall come to pass in the latter days  
That the mountain of the Lord's house  
Shall be established on the top of the mountains,  
And shall be exalted above the hills;  
And all nations shall flow to it.  
Many people shall come and say,  
"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
To the house of the God of Jacob;  
He will teach us His ways,  
And we shall walk in His paths."*

*For out of Zion shall go forth the law,  
And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.  
He shall judge between the nations,  
And rebuke many people;  
They shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
And their spears into pruning hooks;  
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
Neither shall they learn war anymore (Isaiah 2:1-4).*

1. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/indigenous-leaders-rally-in-jerusalem-to-affirm-historical-jewish-ties-to-the-land/>
2. <https://www.indigenousembassy.org/>
3. Taken from statements:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAUdErk7dI4&list=PL1PbtJXrJrILdG5VNfzqQudROEpH3UvTt&index=41>
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWliYA1UnWM>

## **Interceding for the Nations**

By Sam and Kathy Matthews recorded October 2, 2019.

Sam: It's really good to be able to share some of our story, and it's been a great story. We've had to find ourselves in some interesting circumstances that we didn't really plan on. We had a very idealistic plan of what life was gonna be, and some things kind of jump up. But the one thing we did know was the fact that we loved Jesus, and the fact that we wanted to follow him and to know him. That just kept growing inside of our lives.

So, the setting is something that God put in Kathy's heart some time ago, and just a few weeks ago that she would love to tell our story in this Blue Room. The Blue Room was where Rees Howells spent most of his time interceding. Many of the events during World War II found themselves being changed by the Spirit of God using the group of intercessors. It was in this room where I found myself after the first reading of the book *Rees Howells Intercessor*, and I stood in this room, and God gave me a real mandate and the call to spend a life of prayer, and that was something that was so powerful.

So, this room is very special to us because it was the place where intercessions went up for the laborers to be touched and the workers to be brought into the kingdom to see the gospel sent to the world. We know we were affected by those intercessions. So, this became a very precious room where we spent a lot of time in with Samuel Howells, Rees Howells son. So, Kathy had it on her heart to share the story here.

So, here we are! We were very touched by the person of the Holy Spirit, and this understanding that he had more for our lives. And this story continues from the standpoint that we just fell in love

with Jesus. One of the things that God really said to us early on and that experience was Psalm 37:4 that God gave us one day. He was waking us up, giving us book, chapter, verse. This is one of them, and he said:

*Delight yourself also in the Lord,  
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.*

That became our passion. We don't know what was happening to us. We know he's leading us, and we wanted to delight in him. So, he's going to be our delight, and he's going to give us the desires of our heart. So, we went from just absolutely not knowing what was happening, to finding out because we were delighting in him.

Kathy: It was a delight, and it still is a delight. That is one reason I wanted to stop here, because I delight being here. I feel touched by God and a group of people that so impacted our lives and impacted the world and the events of the world. I feel so grateful to God number one, but to those people because I'm alive today because of that, and to know him as I know him today. It's been a delight. Sometimes we share some of the struggles because I think that's important. It's real, its life, and what you do when you hit them. But I just look back, and what a privilege, what a delight it's been. The gain is so much more, so much more.

I think when he gave us that, he was directing our hearts, and letting us know how much he's involved in every aspect of our lives. It was just little things sometimes that were just fun to watch unfold. God told me to believe him for a dishwasher. I was trying to get well, and I felt not to tell anybody. So, I didn't tell anybody. "Okay God, we'll just thank you for the dishwasher."

One time my mother was visiting, and I was pretty sick, and that was hard on her. So, I was sitting at the table that day with my mother and we got this call, and somebody asked us from a store, "What kind of appliances, what color?" We just kind of looked at each other, like mmm. Then a day or two later as we were sitting there somebody knocked. So, Sam goes to the door, and there's a box and this delivery man says, "This is for Sam and Kathy Matthews." And Sam said, "I didn't order anything." And then he realized, "Yeah, you did." And so, it was fun for us, the impact that it had on others, I mean nothing escapes him that is part of something that we need, that we want, just little things. So, we were just delighting ourselves in the Lord, and we lived like that.

Sam: The interesting thing further about that story is the fact that we said, "Well, who sent this?" And they said, "We don't know who sent it," and there was a card there, and I opened it up, and the only thing the card said was, "Psalm 37:4 Delight yourself in the Lord, and he'll give you the desires of your heart." And that become our confession through that whole series of days of sickness, and became a whole motto of her life.

I was just telling Kathy, "I've done this for years.," but just having been in Japan, and they've just translated my book, *Apostolic Teams* into Japanese. And so, they were selling them, and they were wanting me to sign, and we were signing for all these people, and that's what I would write in there Psalm 37:4, because I want everybody to get captured by the Holy Spirit to realize that that's the essence, that's how we do these things. So, in the midst of that whole sickness, and the midst of those things, God gave you a promise out of Psalm 40, and really moved on you in that.

Kathy: One of the things that God just tends to deal with me is he'll always speak to me with what he wants to do, and he'll give me a scripture usually. And in the Scripture, sometimes it's a process, sometimes it's not, but it puts a definition. Though I have never understood the definition of what he was doing until after. Sometimes the revelation of what he has done increases even years after, as you see fruit coming up in other aspects. But the purpose of what he's doing, and then what he did. And so that was something that we didn't talk about as much.

Another time I just wanted to be sure that I honored him in such a way, because I do honor him, it was just wonderful. In Psalm 40:1-3, it says:

*I waited patiently for the Lord;  
And He inclined to me,  
And heard my cry.  
He also brought me up out of a horrible pit,  
Out of the miry clay,  
And set my feet upon a rock,  
And established my steps.  
He has put a new song in my mouth—  
Praise to our God;  
Many will see it and fear,  
And will trust in the Lord.*

That's what he said he was going to do. When he first started speaking to me, and I knew there was some conditions in, "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers" (3 John 2). So, he prospered my soul. But one thing he said to me that same morning, and he

spoke those words to me, “I'm not just going to heal you for you to feel good. I'm going to heal you from my glory.”

Well, I had no idea what that meant, but there's some of that in this passage. But I found the things in my life that were not directed by the Spirit, that had never yet been touched in me of the Spirit, that I didn't even know I had needs in. Those things he changed in the process of showing up, giving of Himself to me. The life would just come in, and I would be positioned in different ways and in new ways. So, it was a beautiful, delightful thing, because I would get more of him all along and experienced so many wonderful things.

So, delighting ourselves in him is so important. I mean, from little things to huge things, he's worthy of it all. But what I found was, sometimes when I don't ask anymore, but just praise him for it, he did put a new song in my mouth, it was a song praise. I don't think I was ever a big negative person or a complaining kind of person, but I wasn't full of the life of God and living in that aspect of it yet. So, I found he healed my soul. He gave me a new outlook on all kinds of things.

Sam: We had no understanding that real praise was to lose yourself and to magnify Him. And it was something that he just kept leading us into like a new song. We didn't know that he could put a new song in our mouth. We didn't know that we could have that kind of release and that his word would come alive in us. So, it became very special.

Kathy: What I found at the end of it that I just stand amazed at today, is that he really did put my feet up on the rock. Not only was I not shaken, but I was also healed. Then he said, “Many



would see it and fear and put their trust in God.” Whether it's been you telling the stories, or whether it's been me, it's gone all over the world, and gone to so many places, and so many people have turned to God in a different walk, and it affected many lives.

At the time I thought, “Well, okay, I'll stand up in the congregation, the great congregation, and say, ‘He healed me,’ I can do that.” But I didn't know the depth of where he could take the victory that had been lived out in this. And so, it was very precious to me, and that's why this room is precious to me. When I come here, I'm reminded of all the victories that I didn't even know were possible till we read the book, *Rees Howells Intercessor*. And then, having lived among some of the people in all of the visits we made, and being touched by the lives in the book, I'm just so grateful.

So, testimony is important, and we know that. But if those testimonies hadn't been recorded for us to read, our life might have been totally different, but they helped move us on. So, I'm standing on the rock saying, “Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord,” and they will share stories. They will have their own testimonies of how God moved mightily, and it'll keep affecting other people all over the world. And so that's my cry. He's just so wonderful, and so good. So, I just kept putting my trust in Him. What can I say? He's trustworthy. But God is good, and that's, that's what we came out of at that time, saying, “God is good.” God is overwhelmingly, eternally, wonderfully good, and he still is. And so, sharing anything, I get touched again and I feel the goodness of God just coming all around that other people will also be touched by that goodness of God and come to know him in that way.

Sam: So, you hear the cry that's coming from Kathy, that's her desire, and it's not just her desire, it's the desire that God put there with those verses, because in the midst of the sickness, that's when he said, "This is what's going to happen." And you look at it, and you go, "I'm one sick little girl lying in the little bedroom, but this is what God says is going to happen as a result of walking through these things, looking to him with faith. And it's a great, great opportunity to be able to see and to know those things.

Kathy: That marked our lives, changed our lives, set us on a great course of just knowing this goodness. But as we're going to talk some about another time and another intercession that we found ourselves in, what I found is God is so good. I couldn't have done the second one without what he did in us the first time. Because when I went into the second one, my feet were on the rock, and I knew they were on the rock, and that's an immovable place. It's a place of victory, so going into the next one, that just became paramountly important, and I'm so thankful.

Sam: The first intercession was in 1975 and 1976, and there were a lot of other intercessions in the years following. What was very interesting is the fact that when this second intercession happened, it really marked us in ways that were very significant for the spread of the gospel around the world. But, when this one hit, she was administrator of our Christian school. She's there every day. She's very involved. She's overseeing everything throughout the ministry, and then all of a sudden, she's not going to show up the next day. And God really said, "Don't tell people what's happening right now." He said, "You just tell them you're standing on him, who is your rock." It's very interesting. At the time, we did not think about Psalm 40. That wasn't in our

thoughts, but yet the Spirit of God, that's the God that's present, was giving us the next statement, "Don't tell people what's going on. Just tell them you're standing on him, who is our rock."

So, the next morning I went to school. I went in there, and everybody's saying, "Where's Kathy?" And I said, "Well, we're standing on him, who is our rock?" And they said, "We know that, but what's happening with Kathy? Is she okay?" I said, "We're standing on him, who is our rock. That's all I can say." We can understand their questioning, and they just kind of looked at me and go, "Wow." But here again, he had positioned her years before on the rock, and then in this situation, that became the declaration we made, not realizing how important that was, other than this is what the Father is saying.

So, a little bit about that intercession. God had been dealing with us about the nations, interceding for the nations. We started the church, this Christian school, with the whole understanding of this is for raising up laborers. We're going to train laborers to be ready to go to the nations. And so consequently, we threw ourselves into that, and some of the nations started opening up. We started coming to the Bible College in 1987, and the relationship with Samuel Howells, Rees Howells son, was developing, and he was becoming a very strong spiritual father to us. And so, it was just a great time. But we had three intercessions that God gave me, and one of them he had given some years before, but he said, "You can't touch it until I tell you can touch it because you don't have the faith to touch this." And he gave some instruction of some things he would want to see happen before we did so.

But the three intercessions where we were coming against the antichrist spirit of various religions, and that works as the thing that pushes things away from Christ. One of them was we were praying against the antichrist spirit of Roman Catholicism. Number two was breaking of the sword of Islam, and number three was the marriage of Judah and Ephraim, and all the promises of Israel coming into maturation, coming into fulfillment. So those are the three. They're pretty large intercessions.

And so, we understood, or thought we did, you wait until I tell you to do this. So there came a point at the end of 1988 that God said you're to step into those things. So, we started fasting, we started praying. And so, that was great. One night, Kathy's was in our bedroom praying. I'm in the living room, praying late one night, and all of a sudden, she starts crying out in excruciating pain. I mean, it's just a cry, an unbelievable cry of pain. I go running into the bedroom and blood is gushing from her rectum, and there's just blood going every direction. It was a pretty bad experience.

So, immediately you begin to do those things that you know to do practically with towels, and you begin to pray. You begin to ask the Father, "God heal this. God, we come against this. We rebuke this." But one of my greatest questions was, "God, what's happening? What are you saying? What do we need to know right now?" And so, as we're going through this and we're trying to figure this out, we're trying to contain this bleeding. Do I go the emergency room? Do I not go the emergency room? Where are we? What's happening? Speak.

So, all of a sudden, I start feeling this presence of God. Kathy's on the bed, and this incredible presence, this weighty presence of God that just starts. I felt him enter the room, and I felt that this presence was just coming down in the room. And I didn't think about bowing. The weightiness of the presence of God as it got to the top of my head, it just began to bend me. That weightiness literally as it came down, took me slowly to the floor. Kathy's crying out and crying out in pain. But when that presence got to the level of the bed, that crying out starts to go down, until I'm on my face, on the floor, and she's quiet. And I'm going, "Wow God, you're here. What's happening? Is this over? Is she okay?"

And I have no idea of how long that period was. I have no point of reference, but we just knew that there was just such holiness. And then after a while, that presence began to lift, the same way it came in, and about the same speed it began to lift. When it got to the bed height, she started crying out again in pain, and it just kept going up and going up, and the presence left the room. And so, she's crying out in pain again. I get up and there's more blood, and God tells me, "Go in and get some handwritten notes that you had, of some of Reese Howells statements and teachings." And I had been studying some of those. Well, they weren't numbered when they were given to me, and I had numbered each page. And so, when I went in there and picked up that stack, God said, "Look at page number such and such."

So, I looked at that, and found that page, and I looked right at a sentence, I didn't start reading. I looked at one sentence and it said this, "God can only use a man as far as his faith can take him." And I just dropped those papers to my side, and I said, "God, I don't want to play by those rules. I don't want it to depend on me." God said, "No, this is what it is." He said, "You

are in a race with death, and either faith will make it there first, or death will make it there first.” And he said, “This problem is not a physical problem,” although it had very physical symptoms. He said, “It is a spiritual attack being brought by those spirits that we have reached out to touch.” That's what is happening.

So, he said, “If you take her to the doctor, they will not be able to determine why this is happening. They will not be able to do anything to stop it, and she would die.” There's nothing they're going to do because it can't be taken care of in the natural. So, he said, “If you will do what I've taught you to do, I will walk you through this.” So, I didn't know anything to do except to pray in the Spirit and read the Word and fast, those three things that build faith. That's what I've been telling people, and this is the way we've been living.

People would say, “Why do I have this problem? What do I do?” I would say, “You need to pray in the Spirit so many hours a day, and you need to read the Word.” I said, “Well, that's great. I know that, but what do I need to do?” He said, “You need to pray in the Spirit, and you need to read the Word.” And people go, “Well, what if I get tired of praying in the Spirit and reading the Word?” I said, “It's simple, read the Word and pray in the Spirit.” That's what you have to do, because that brings in God, who brings in the mysteries, which brings him in. And we had mysteries facing us, and I needed to know what he was saying about it. But he said, “If you'll do what I taught you to do I will walk you through this.” And then he said, “You don't have the faith to break this spirit of death.”

I could have been arrogant and said, “Oh yeah, I have the faith, because I had the faith, and I got her through that in 1975. I have

the faith.” But it was at a totally different position. It was a totally different level, touching thrones, dominions. It had a whole new level that we had not done before and in measure, but this was a whole new place that God was taking us into. So anyway, he said, “This is what you need to do. You're in a race with death,” and so that set us down.

I mean, she suffered for just under four months in agonizing pain, and God would speak to us. I mean, sometimes I would be walking, praying in the Spirit, and asking God, “What are you saying?” And he would give me another nation to intercede for. On one night, he gave me four nations, and I said, “God, I can't, I can't take anymore. This is almost killing us now, how are you adding? We're trying to get through these, and you're adding more nations. We can't do this.” That was my humanity, I couldn't. But anyway, I said, “Okay, you're giving them to me, then I'm going to take these nations on, and I'll start interceding.”

One thing that he said to us, that I left out a moment ago was when I went in there and looked at those handwritten notes, he said, “You can't pray for me to heal her. You can only pray for the nations. Only pray for the nations because she doesn't need to be healed. Those powers need to be broken, those powers that are holding those nations.” That's what he was after, so that began that process. So, he also said, “If you try to save her life, you're going to lose it. But if you lose your life for me, then you're going to find it.”

Now, we knew that verse, but all of a sudden that verse took on an incredible personal element of not just a verse that we say “Amen” to. I can't save her life by praying for her life. I can only save her life by praying for the nations. So that's what we told

people. We said, we can't pray for Kathy's healing. We can't pray for her to be healed. It's not a healing. These powers have to be touched. We have to touch the powers, and we have to break that hold off all the people that are going to be set free.

And if you just think, from the end of 1988 into 1989 when this was all happening, the world began to open up further. I mean the Islamic world. More people started coming to Christ during that time in these years that have followed because of those intercessions. Now we're some of the millions that pray and are interceding to see people come out of darkness into the true message of Jesus Christ. But that's where he asked us to walk. That's what he asked of us. He's asked other things of other people, and we just sought to be faithful to see those things happen. It was an incredible story.

Kathy: That reminded me, the next morning after God had so walked in. He just walked into the intercession. It was so much bigger than us. He just walked into it. So, there was an aspect we were carrying things and fighting things, but he was there, he was doing this.

The next morning, we got a phone call from a prophetic brother who I had never met, but Sam had done several things with him, and but he called with a word that morning. This is after Sam started all of this from God, and he called, and the essence of the word is that when this spirit of death is broken, that it will be a sign and a seal that the nations will begin to open. And that's exactly what we saw. But again, it confirmed that we weren't crazy. We are not moving anywhere except in him, in his direction. It was a great confirmation.



Sam: Because we had people leaving the church. We had people from other churches coming and prophesying to me when they heard what was happening saying, “Kathy’s gonna die. This is wrong. This is radical. God doesn't do this kind of stuff.” I said, “God didn't do this. We're touching these powers. These powers are touching back, he wants us to break those powers.”

I remember one day I was talking to this brother just because he wanted to know more about how Cathy was doing. He was engaged in these intercessions for the nations, which had been his life. And while I was talking to him, all of a sudden, I got this vision of Saint Bartholomew's Day, many years ago when over 50,000 Huguenots were slaughtered in mass. And I saw that bloodbath, and well, Kathy’ still bleeding and she's losing an immense amount of weight. But I saw that bloodbath, and I just had to get off the phone, because I went in this deep travail against that spirit, against that spirit that stopped the very flow of the gospel.

It was those kinds of experiences where he would show us certain things. It wasn't just that he gave us this one instruction. He would show us that spirit that you're reaching out to touch is that spirit that touched Kathy. It was an incredible journey we were on, and it was so uncharted. We had never been at that level where you couldn't pray for healing, you can only pray for the nations. And if you did, if you let your humanity get in the way, you're actually going to negate the very thing that you're wanting, because he wants the nations to be touched by his grace. So, it was an incredible, wonderful journey of finding him in the midst of these things, when you realize this is this is him, this is what he's doing, and this is something that is not just

affecting us, it's affecting millions of people into billions of people.

And Samuel Howells was involved praying with us in this. We'd already been in the Bible College several times, and he knew this, and it was a wonderful time of knowing that in those days after we came through this, that we'll talk about it. This was after the Berlin Wall had gone down and the USSR was unraveling, which had been such key intercessions for Samuel Howells and this group of intercessors. Samuel Howells told me one day on a walk, he said, "Sam, just as God used my father to stop the Fascists with Hitler and Mussolini, and God has been using me to see the USSR unravel," and these intercessions for China and all the Bible distribution that he had done through the years. He said, "To be able to see that, I can't tell you what this means. I was prepared to die, never seeing it, but believing it to be so, but seeing it is one of the greatest fulfillments. I cannot tell you what one feels to see it. Just like my father saw this, we've seen this, you and Kathy have been touched by God to see these things of Islam broken, that the people would come out of the darkness to come into the light."

And so again, it became a real confirmation to have people of that stature and people that had no stature except in the presence of God, praying with you and believing with you. And because they knew we're standing on him, who is our rock, and they had seen so many things, and heard the testimonies. One of the nations that God gave me that one night that I didn't want, he's been able to give us the privilege to go into that nation and go into some tribes that have never heard the gospel. And I've been able to walk there and see those people. One night, 90% of this tribe of 270 people all came to Jesus, and to see them

absolutely forsake everything that had bound them for centuries. And they never had schooling. They didn't know anything. They'd never seen light bulbs. They've never seen airplanes. They were just deep in the jungles, but it was marvelous when you know that intercession opened those things.

What else did God say to you in tremendous pain?

Kathy: It's so connected. I don't know how else to put it. When I could no longer eat.

Sam: Because she went without eating for 50 days.

Kathy: Immediately, when I knew that was the situation, what came out of me, I just said, "I declare a fast." You're not going to do this because we're fighting powers and principalities. He said, "I declare a fast." I was sustained very beautifully. But one of the times this was a real cry. Sam was at church and doing the service, and I got hit really hard, and I was lying on the bathroom floor, which kind of lets you know how hard I got hit. I just started crying and when I did, I saw Calvary, and when I saw Calvary, what came out of me was, "If you can do that, I could do this." And so, I never cried again. I still had pain at times, but I was so conscious that I was involved in something eternal, something that was going to enable many people to come to Jesus. And it was beautiful. But seeing Calvary was one of my most beautiful encounters.

Sam: It was life changing because she had reached her end, as far as being able to handle the pain physically and emotionally. And, she thought, "I just can't do this," even though she knew what it was. But when he showed her Calvary, it changed everything,

because it was like, she never cried again. I mean, she was in agonizing pain, but it was just something that was settled because this is true. It's like beholding what Jesus did in Gethsemane, and because he can take this, I want what you want, and that's what she wanted, delighting to do his will.

We came out of that 1975 intercession saying, "God is good." This one in 1989 we came out declaring, "God is faithful." That's what we found; God is faithful. And because we found he was faithful, and not just because we were getting everything we wanted when we wanted it, it was the fact that he had set us on a course and years before we realized that our whole lives had become intercessions. It wasn't just that we have prayer time in our life, or we have our meditation in our life. It's the fact that everything we're doing was on a course, was something that it was producing to fulfill the kingdom of God. And it became very, very special that we're delighting to do his will.

Kathy: So, he put that on my heart. That was part of the 40th Psalm. The momentary light affliction did produce an eternal weight of glory. We saw that and we were living in that after the first intercession, where the Holy Spirit could take that whenever he wanted to, and however he wanted could use us in those intercessions. So, it was beautiful. And we had a little more understanding of what it means to really give Him glory. And coming out of this second one, that just became stronger and stronger, as we'd see nations open up, and we'd see you do things. After this one, I was amazed sometimes, because we'd be someplace, and somebody that I didn't know would come up to me, and they were intercessors, and they knew of me because you were out traveling. They would come up and they would tell me things that they couldn't have known except by the Spirit of

God that were happening, and how he engaged them. It makes you so thankful. When he speaks something, it really carries weight with it. And when we share his sufferings, it really carries a weight of the glory, and it's amazing.

Something has happened to me on this last trip to the Bible College. That is where I can get overwhelmed really easily, everything about our life has become intercession, because that's what he's doing and how we're connecting with him. Every morning, I could have my own personal times with him, and it was loving and loving, and loving him.

On Tuesday I was just sitting there loving him, just loving him, and loving the way he loves me, and what I heard was, "It's written in my book in heaven that I delight to do his will," and that was one of the promises he gave to me, because I do want to do his will. I delight to do his will. It was just precious.

Sam: That is precious. Some years after this intercession, one of our teachers called me in the hallway one day and said, "Sam, how is it that you and Kathy just always do whatever God asked you to do? It makes no difference; you don't worry about what's going to happen or not. How do you do that?" And I just looked at it and thought, "I don't know that I have an answer to that question. I never thought it was like that. We've just done it." So, I said, "I don't know. I want to think about that." So, I did for a couple of days. I mean, not non-stop thinking about it, but I'd think about it and go on with doing a lot of other things. But I came back here, and I said, "You know, I think it all comes down to one thing, we just love him. Yeah, we just love him."

So, if he's really our Lord, if he's really our master, then we just want what he wants. And the whole thing of the intercessions is that he is the great intercessor, and he's at the right hand of the Father forever making intercession. That's what he does. So, if I really become one with him now in this life, then I am going to be involved with him in these intercessions. I can't keep from it, because that's who he is, that's what he does. So, it's not just some kind of nice experience, it's the fact that that is what he's doing. He's trying to bring the kingdom into manifestation within the earth and see out those things.

Kathy: But we love him. We just love him. And he's all together lovely. So, seeing Calvary, I know my life's not in vain. And the stuff, it just wanes. And so much significance because every victory produces something in the spirit realm that's just amazing.

Sam: And that's what people need to realize sometimes, that they don't see certain things, because she mentioned it a moment ago. But when we went to France, those first times that were part of those intercessions. But when we went and I shared these stories, there was one individual who was our translator, and he became a dear friend. We were speaking at three different churches, and after the third night of hearing these stories that we were telling, he says, "I just want you to know something. My life was touched by the Spirit of God at this time with what you're saying. I just want you to know I've seen that my life has been affected by those intercessions." And it is just really very humbling, and France was the first nation that we really went into.

That was the first of the intercessions, but again, we never desired to go to France. We didn't want to go to France, but the

Holy Spirit spoke it. I wasn't thinking about me or the intercessions at all. I was hosting a live television show out of Tulsa, Oklahoma for a network that was there, and I was interviewing some guests that were getting ready to go to France as missionaries, just graduating from a school in Tulsa, and they made one statement, and when they did, it was like the Holy Spirit just struck me throughout the face. And they said, "There are 36,000 cities and villages in France that have no Jesus preaching church."

I'm from a Southern Baptist background. I know that on that year, it would have been 1985, the Southern Baptist denomination was 140 years old, and it's taken them 140 years to get 37,000 churches. And God said he's going to have me responsible to pray until there's a church in every city and every village. I felt very overwhelmed by that, but I was absolutely captivated by that intercession.

Our church was new, and we were in this little rented facility, people are trying to figure out how crazy they think we are, or how wonderful they think we are. And immediately, I come back going, "We're going to France. We're all going to France. We're going to reach France, this is intercession." So, we had people leave because we don't care anything about France. I said, "I don't care anything about France. I've never wanted to go to France. Who cares about France?" But God cares, and from that moment, we were just touched by it, and we had to go. And so, we've seen lots and lots of churches come up, and those guys keep going, and it's just marvelous. But all of those things birthed in those intercessions for the nations

One day I was praying, and God said, "I want you to read Psalm 23." This is in the midst of these 50 days, and I'm going, "God, I don't want to read Psalm 23 because Psalm 23 is the one that's given mostly at funerals," and I thought, "I don't think I want to hear this message." And I said, "God, you want me to read Psalm 23, so that's what I did. "Yeah, though he walked in the valley of the shadow of death." And when I read those words, God said to me, "You need to get ready. Kathy's getting ready to become unconscious." And I said, "God, I don't know what to do." But he said, again, "If you'll do what I've taught you to do, I'm going to walk you through this."

So, a few days went by, and one day I came home, and when I walked in the living room, all I could feel was death, and I couldn't even go to the bedroom. I just prayed, prayed, walked the floor, and prayed in tongues again, I don't remember how long, but it was a good season of time. And I prayed, and went in the bedroom, and she's totally unconscious. She's just gray and ashen, and I can't I speak to her and shake her, and she doesn't wake up. And so, I continue to pray. And God told me this was going to happen. And so, we just continue to stand on him. It was our rock. We continue to stand and say, one minute is long enough for God.

That was one of the things that in the story Reese Howells book, if it didn't happen now, it had to happen the next minute. And that's what our believing. If he said it, then we're going to believe it. So, one minute is long enough for him, no matter what today is, or what ten days before it has been, or three months before it has been. One minute is long enough for God, he can change everything in one minute. So, I spent a considerable amount of time praying.



Then she came to and she said, “Sam, I can't believe what happened. All of a sudden, the darkest, dark overtook me, and I couldn't stop it.” And so, she would talk, and we prayed, and then she would go back unconscious. And I fought that for three days, and she would slip back into this state for three days. We fought that spirit of death that was there, and then she came out of it, and never had that again. And we've had doctors explain to us that the lack of blood, those things, whatever's happening in her body, but God was faithful again.

This is something that we had such a leading and knew this was his voice, we couldn't walk away from it, because he said, “You just can't take her to the doctor, because they won't find anything, and thus you wouldn't survive. You have to intercede for the nation.” So that's what we continued to do. And he would give us these nations, and we would pray and magnify God and take these next steps. But one minute is long enough for God. That's what we kept saying.

The first intercession of 1975 in the Psalm 40 passage gave us a foundation that further prepared us for the next intercession. And this intercession further gave us for the next one, and we found out that they were linked together. It's an incredible journey because the more that we walked in it, the more that we loved him. There's the essence, we kept getting captured by the fact that his love for the world is so large and so intense, and that he's looking for those that will pray, that will intercede, that will really stand against the god of this world.

*But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who*

*do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).*

So, you have to touch those powers that liberates people to come into that. And during that time at the end of 1988 I asked God, "What are you saying about the next year?" And he said, "There's going to be a war after the spring of the year in the Middle East." And my first response was, "God, I don't like wars. They're horrible. People suffer, people die. So, if you're telling me this, why? Give me some scripture." And he did. I went to it and read, and he said, "I'm getting ready to break the sword of Islam," and that's what gave birth further to this intercession.

He said, "People are going to say when the war starts, it's because of greed, it's because of power, it's because of oil, it's because of money." And all those are true, "But I'm telling you in advance so you can start telling people, because when it happens, you can tell people that it's happening, because I'm in the process of breaking the sword of Islam, and I'm in the process of fulfilling all the promises for Israel." You can say something after the fact, but then I realized that we're prophesying this. So, I started saying that all over the world. I came to the Bible College, and I was prophesying those things, and there's going to be a war, and this is what's happening, and this is the intercession.

There was a pastor that taught here at the time, and he would usually have me come to his church when I was here. And he had a man that was Iraqi, an Iraqi family, who had come to faith in Jesus. And so, this man was so excited, that there was going to be a real breakthrough in the Islamic world. So, he was just excited

about that. He would be there in the meetings, and he'd be there when I did services in his church. And when the war broke out and they started bombing Baghdad, he was very upset. And I showed up when those things started. And he came into the meeting, and he came running up quick to me, and I didn't know what he was going to do, and he just said, "You caused this war." I said, "I didn't cause the war. I'm just telling you that's what God said." And he said, "No," because his family was in danger. I mean, his whole family is there, and the bombs were falling. So, he wasn't very happy.

But the next time I came, he came running up to me again, and I kind of braced myself. I thought, "What this guy going to do?" He came running up to say, "Hey man, this is so great! This is wonderful! While the bombs were dropping, my family separated themselves in various rooms in their house so they all wouldn't be killed at one time. So, they spread out, and Jesus appeared to my mother in her bedroom and said, "I'm Jesus, the Son of God," and his whole family came to Jesus as a result. So, he saw the power of the intercessions. He saw the power of God giving those insights. And it was the beginning of a real change. We saw so many things happening throughout the Islamic world, as the people have seen, and because God was just breaking through some of those powers. So, one minute is long enough

I had Satan appear to me three times during that, almost four months, twice in our living room. And when he would appear, it was probably one of the most frightening experiences I've ever had. And sometimes I wonder if I've ever really gotten over it totally. But as I was praying one day, walking back and forth, and all of a sudden, there he was, and he said to me, "You're going to lose this. You're not going to win. Death is going to get you first."

And that's what it looked like, it looked like death was getting there first. And he said, "You're not going to win this. You're going to be totally discredited. You're going to lose everything." And it was just an incredible thing.

And so, he would say, "So what are you going to do when all this happens?" That was his question, "What are you going to do?" And what would come up inside of my spirit in the midst of this, "I tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to walk across the street, I'm going to walk up on the platform and I'm going to tell everybody my faith failed. I'm not going to say, 'If this church had prayed harder, Kathy would have lived. If we would have done more, Kathy would have lived.' I'm not going to say that to anybody. I'm going to say my faith failed, that I did not fulfill what God asked me to fulfill."

And I said, "Then I'm just going to take off and keep going to the world to tell people about Jesus Christ. I'm going to turn that because Jesus bore this sickness. Jesus took this away. Jesus defeated every devil. He defeated you." That just came out of me, and he would go into this rage. I mean, the one thing he wanted me to do was to deny Christ himself and the victory of Calvary. And we couldn't, I mean, Kathy had seen Calvary, the victory was there. We've been touched by that reality.

Kathy: God gave me this after the intercession, after the victory, and that was over. As you'll remember, I've been healed before, and I know how good God is, but this came with great emphasis now:

*Now I know that the Lord saves His anointed;  
He will answer him from His holy heaven  
With the saving strength of His right hand (Psalm 20:6).*

I mean, there is a different knowing, a different level of being able to release faith because of what we had come through, we had seen some of those powers halted. And so, there was a different gained place, and that was precious, a building block for the next one. It goes on to say:

*Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;  
But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.  
They have bowed down and fallen;  
But we have risen and stand upright.  
Save, Lord! May the King answer us when we call (Psalm 20:7-9).*

He gives you that. And yeah, paying attention to it, but not till the end was the emphasis so real in me. It can't be taken. It's undeniable. We've seen principalities and powers moved. We've seen darkness leave. We've seen great light going to places that had never known the light. It's so real, so powerful.

Sam: So, to kind of end this story, we come one night and we were believing that by March 26, that year was Resurrection Sunday. The church was packed out. People were getting saved. People were getting healed. We were believing we were going to see her totally raised up. It didn't happen that day. It was a wonderful day. That night, in the service, God gave me Genesis 22 about Abraham offering up Isaac. And while I'm teaching on that, I hear God say to me, and I tell the people that God has said, "You've made an altar out of everything I've taught you." He

created this altar, now, can you lay Kathy on it, and trust me? I'm telling the people this as I'm experiencing it. So, I go, "Yes, God, I can do that." This is what he said, "I built an altar." Well, altars are made to put things on. So, "I built this altar, and can you trust me?" So, I did.

Then the telephone rings up in our sound room, and Kathy's calling me to say, "Tell Sam to come home. I need him now." So, I go across the street to our house, go in, and she's in agonizing pain. I sit on the couch that was in our bedroom, watched her suffering, praying. And sometime in the night, God says to me, "Take her to the doctor," and I'm going, "God, have I failed?" He said, "No." I said, "Well, you told us not to go the doctor, now you tell me to go to the doctor." He says, "Just trust me, you take her to the doctor."

The sun was getting ready to come up, and I was getting her ready to go. Of course, you're feeling like a failure. We've been fighting this. She suffered, and there's this whole situation. So, we get to this doctor, and we go back to the doctor that she saw years ago, and he wasn't doing surgery anymore. So, we went to this other guy in the same office complex, and he looks at her and he goes, "Oh my goodness. I can't tell what's wrong with her. We'll have to do some tests. But you're telling me what she's been going through. Her body's in terrible shape. She hadn't eaten for 50 days. She's been losing all this blood."

So, we get her in the hospital, and they're going to do these tests the next morning. And I'm still struggling with all this, like what is going on. So, that night, in the waiting room area, nobody's there, just me and I'm in there, just praying, praying, praying in tongues, walking the floor, and Satan appears the third time, and he looks

at me and he goes, "You've won. You beat death, and you have won this battle." And I just rejoiced.

The next day they took the test on Kathy. This was the incredible thing. When the doctor came out, he said, "Well, I know what shape your body's in, but I can find no reason, no explanation as to why." He said, "She has a totally healthy 40-year-old colon." She was 40 years old at the time. And I said, "What do you mean a perfect 40-year-old colon?" He said, "It's just like it ought to be. There's nothing wrong with it anywhere." I said, "Well, how about the deformity that's in it?" Because in 1975 they had seen that there was a deformity in a section of her large intestine that was restricted and had been from birth. He said that's probably what caused her problem to start with, that was the issue.

Well, when she was touched in 1975 that deformity wasn't taken away. It was just that all the tissues got healed. He said, "There's no place restricted in her colon." I said, "Well, it was." He said, "That may be so, but I'm telling you, this is what it is." Well, that communicated so much, and then I understood why God had us, go to the doctor.

But since the 1975 situation, and she was lifted up from that, our intercessions for these last years have been for the nations, the restoration of all things, the apostolic, the prophetic, the foundational things. And I've been declaring God's restoring all things. Heaven's received Jesus till the restoration of all things. God's restoring everything. And during those prayers for the nations that that's what we're declaring he's doing, he restored her colon, and absolutely we got it confirmed. It was just incredible to realize God let us know that praying these years for

the restoration of all things, that he's actually doing it. He was doing it in her body.

That day the doctor says, "You can go. There's nothing. I don't know. There's nothing," which is what God said, "They can't find anything to start with." They couldn't find anything then and now, it's all well. I can't explain all the blood loss. There's no reason it should have been happening. So then when we leave, Kathy goes, "I'm hungry." I said, "Well, what do you want to eat?" She said, "I want a hamburger." I said, "Nobody eats a hamburger after not eating for 50 days." But I said, "You want a hamburger? I'll buy you a hamburger." So, we did. I took her to a fast-food hamburger joint, and she ate that hamburger. I watched her, and I just wept, because Satan told me in some of the appearances, one of the things was, "You're never going to eat another meal with your wife," but she ate a hamburger two days later.

We came out of that intercession, totally more in love with him, and I came out like a wild stallion running to the nations. I mean, it was just like, this is where I'm going. So, some of those places he gave us, we've been to, and all of those things that are unfolding. We came out with, "God is faithful." He is faithful. Absolutely faithful. And we've been standing on him who is our rock.

After the Iraqi War, there came a time when the Ayatollah Khomeini became ill, and he died in 1988. If you remember, he had internal bleeding. They checked him into the hospital to try and figure out what was going on, and they couldn't determine the cause of this bleeding, so they did exploratory surgery. They couldn't explain the bleeding, so complications came in and he died.



The intercessions, Kathy lives. The very thing, the very symptoms that those powers touched her with to take her life is the very power that very same thing happened to that man. Interesting, to say the least, and frighteningly humbling to realize you're involved with those kinds of intercessions. We didn't wish anything to him, or back on him, we were just coming against those spirits to see those things broken so that the people could be set free. He's faithful. We're just going to go to the nations, and they will be changed, and Jesus is going to be glorified. It was great.

So, the first intercession in 1975, God is good; the second intercession in 1989, God is faithful. There were a lot of intercessions between these, but not to this magnitude that set everything else for the next decade. And the one we are in now for the nation of Bangladesh is not totally complete, but God is triumphant. So, we're still involved in that, and that's what we're trying to complete is God is triumphant. We've seen the glory and the agony and all kinds of things in the midst of it, but you just must go when you need to go. Paul's statement of "filling up what's lacking in the sufferings of Christ." Well, I read that verse, and I thought Paul had his theology wrong, because my theology that I was taught didn't emphasize that. You're filling up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ, it's the execution of his victory. All things were subjected to him, and we haven't seen all things subjected yet, so we get the privilege of subjecting those powers to the authority of Jesus Christ.

Wow, what a God! May everyone be blessed by these testimonies and maybe learn to know him better. May you learn to hear his voice, and may he fill you more and more with his

great love. May you give him praise forever and forever. We're just getting started in this. Amen.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sLnJUhNNko>,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=gYO1yEiDCrk>)

(Dr. Sam Matthews is the founder and senior elder of the Family of Faith Church in Shawnee, Oklahoma. He holds an M.Div. and D.Min. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Matthews serves International Christian Leadership Connections (ICLC) as a member of the Apostolic Company and is the founder and president of Family of Faith College. He is greatly used by God in intercession, spiritual warfare, and the raising up and functioning of five-fold apostolic teams. Dr. Matthews travels extensively, ministering with international teams in many nations throughout the world.

Sam entered the life of intercession as God taught him how to pray and believe for the healing of his wife Kathy. He was further mentored by Samuel Rees Howells, and continues to speak at the Bible College of Wales.)

## **Iranians Supernatural Love Israel**

By Hormoz and Donnell Shariat, October 12, 2024

We're in such a time of blessing and challenge, all at the same time. Our global ministry is just exploding after God has done a great cleanup and brought holiness in our ministry. It's just so tremendous and amazing. We keep saying, "How do I stay present with the Lord where I need to keep hearing what he is saying?" This is more needed now because people are thirsty for the kingdom of God. That's the time when you need to walk very carefully, and we are in the middle of all that.

Hormoz has a program on a satellite channel. We have two satellites channels that beam into Iran. The regime can't stop that. It goes right into their living rooms, right into their homes, and they watch what's called Channel 7. People have their illegal satellite dishes, and the regime can't stop it. Hormoz calls it the flower of Iran, because when you look at the picture, you see satellites everywhere.

They want to know what's happening in the world. They want to know what's happening in Israel. The people of Iran love Israel. Many, many, many of them. We are looking at percentages, but a very high percentage of the people, especially those who come to know Christ and are transformed by the word of God, they love Israel. We've heard testimonies where they say, "I was bitter against Israel because that's what I was taught, and as soon as I received Jesus Christ, he came into my being, and my spirit was born again, suddenly I just had this great love for Israel." It's just been phenomenal to watch what God is doing.

There is a supernatural move of God in Iran. By supernatural, I don't only mean the signs and wonders which is normal, visions

and dreams which are normal, but one aspect of this supernatural move of God is the people of Iran. I'm not just talking about Christians, I'm talking the people of Iran who are Muslims, at least born Muslims. Most of them don't believe in Islam. But the supernatural move of God has made them love Israel. It is beyond logic, beyond what anyone does.

What I see is the hatred toward Israel is also supernatural. You go around the world, and you look at history, and people for no reason hate Israel. But the other side is also supernatural. People love Israel for no reason, like Iranians. Israel has not done anything to them to be qualified for their love, but they love Israel. A growing number of Iranians, even Muslims, love Israel. And I'm not just claiming that there are many, many evidences.

Let me share the move of God. How like October 7th of last year, there have been many protest demonstrations around the world, even in the U.S. and on the campuses. And what you see in media is all pro-Hamas, pro-Palestine. That's what's you see all the time, and not even once has the media showed the protest by Iranians in the U.S., multiple times and in Europe, even on campuses. Not once have they showed that there were many pro-Israel protests by Iranians in the U.S. and rallies on campuses where Iranian students stood up for Israel. There was not even one rally for Palestine by Iranians, not even one. Some Iranian students were beaten up on U.S. campuses for standing for Israel. So, that's a move of God.

Why would they, the Iranian people, when the government of Iran says, "Death to Israel," the people of Iran are saying, "Why, why should we hate them? They have not done anything to us. It's you the clerics. You have ruined our lives. We hate you. We

don't hate them. We want to destroy you. We don't want to destroy them.” So, they feel it's a move of God; it's supernatural.

They look at all the nations in the Middle East, and Iranians have started to think. And that's a freedom that's come on Iranians is that they have started to think. That might be minor to you, but it's a major move of God because Muslims are not allowed to think, and Iranians have started to think and compare. That's why they're coming to Christ. They're thinking, “Okay, why should we hate Israel? We shouldn't.”

Number two, look at the Middle East, the only kind of freedom, democracy is in Israel. Number three, look at all these Islamic nations in the Middle East, they're miserable, but Israel is prospering in technology and everything else. If you want to be like any country, if you must choose any country to be like in the Middle East, we will choose Israel. So, this is all very logical. The love for Israel is in the hearts of Iranians, and it's growing in a major way.

When Israel attacked Lebanon just a few weeks ago, guess what the Iranian people's reaction was? What do you think? They were celebrating! Iranians were celebrating on the streets of Tehran. There were clips of dancing on the streets and passing out sweets and saying congratulations to each other. The people of Iran are not for Hezbollah. The government of Iran is, and when Israel attacked Hezbollah, the Iranians, people celebrated. We don't celebrate the deaths. I'm just reporting; I'm affirming what they did. There was dancing on streets for the death of the Hezbollah leaders and Hassan Nasrallah.

We know God is not happy even with the death of a wicked person. We know his heart, but people were happy on the streets. They were saying that it's so good that they have Hezbollah's leaders and Nasrallah. And they would say, "Israel would you do the same to our own leaders in Iran? Would you come just like what you did and eliminated all those Hezbollah leaders one by one? Would you come and attack us and surgically remove these mullahs so we can be free?"

That shows the depth of the suffering of the people of Iran, the depth of hopelessness of Iran. Any nation that would call a foreign nation and say, "Would you attack us? Would you invade us? Would you send your fighters over to us?" That's unheard of! That shows a confidence Iranians have towards the U.S. and Israel. But it also shows the depth of a miserable life, a hopeless life. They have no hope of getting out of the tyranny of these clerics.

They have come on the streets several times in the past, but they have been killed by the Iranian government. And unfortunately, this is amazing, every time Iranians have come on the streets, and the Iranian government was in danger, the U.S. government has not helped the people, but they have helped the government. The biggest one was at Obama. When millions came on the streets, and it looked like the end of the government, do you know what Obama did? He gave them \$150 billion dollars right away! And what did they do with \$150 billion? Right away they hired the Syrian and Arab mercenaries and Hezbollah mercenaries. Tall and equipped, they came on the streets of Iran and killed thousands. It's not their own people, so they just shot.

Two years ago, was the ‘Woman, Life, Freedom’ uprising, sparked by the death of Mahsa Amini in police custody and protesting against the Iranian government's treatment of women and broader societal issues. Tens of thousands of people, mostly young high school students, came on the streets, and again, thousands were killed. And when they were on streets, guess what the Biden Administration did? When it looked like the government was on its way down two years ago, Biden right away during those days gave \$6 billion dollars, and in a matter of two months another \$16 billion dollars to the Iranian government, and there was no mention of the peoples uprising.

So, I will talk about supernatural again. This is beyond logic why the Iranian people still love the U.S. I guess they separate the U.S. government from the U.S. people like they separate themselves from the government. And I kind of hear the Iranian people say, “Yeah, the U.S. government has done this to us. They never helped us. They kicked the Shah out. They’ve helped ruin our nation, but we know that was the government. It was not the people. We love the U.S.” They still amazingly love the U.S., so God is moving now.

At the same time, Ezekiel 38 and Jeremiah 49 are being fulfilled step by step in all these events. These events of the last few years are not random, they all match these prophecies.

*Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; 6omer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops—many people are with you.*

*‘Thus says the Lord God: “On that day it shall come to pass that thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan: You will say, ‘I will go up against a land of unwallled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates’— to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places that are again inhabited, and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land. Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish, and all their young lions will say to you, ‘Have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder?’”*

*“Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “On that day when My people Israel dwell safely, will you not know it? Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army. You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes” (Ezekiel 38:5,6, 10-16).*

*Behold, I will break the bow of Elam,  
The foremost of their might.  
Against Elam I will bring the four winds  
From the four quarters of heaven,  
And scatter them toward all those winds;  
There shall be no nations where the outcasts of Elam will not*



*go.*

*For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies  
And before those who seek their life.*

*I will bring disaster upon them,*

*My fierce anger,' says the Lord;*

*'And I will send the sword after them*

*Until I have consumed them.*

*I will set My throne in Elam,*

*And will destroy from there the king and the princes,' says  
the Lord (Jeremiah 49:35-38).*

(Dr. Hormoz Shariat is the founder and president of Iran Alive Ministries (IAM), a Christian ministry that uses satellite broadcasting and the internet to reach Iranians with the gospel. He is an Iranian Muslim convert who came to America during the Islamic Revolution in the 1970's. He earned a Ph.D. in Artificial Intelligence from the University of Southern California and a BA in Bible and Theology from Jessup University.)

## **Israel is Not Replaceable**

By Peter Tsukahira, December 7, 2024

Good morning, everyone. It's an honor to serve you and bring the word of God. Four hundred and twenty-eight days of war! This has already been unprecedented in the history of modern Israel. Of course, in addition to the wars we have in the south and north and next door in Syria, what we read in the news about this new onslaught of anti-Semitism springing up in places all over the world.

In some ways what we are facing today is similar in the days of the rise of Nazism. But in fact, what we are facing in our generation is even more of a challenge. This war for us is a local experience that we have walked together for more than a year. But we shouldn't think that this war that Israel is waging is just about our survival and our security. Of course, it is, but we know that the impact of what's happening here is wider and spreads throughout the world.

About one hundred years ago Nazism spread across Germany, and at that time was considered a Christian nation. After all, Germany was the birthplace of the Reformation, and in a significant way, one of the seeds in the rise Nazism was a wrong theology, a wrong belief that had been held the church for over a thousand years. And that was the Christian belief that the church had replaced Israel in God's plan for the world. It was the Christian belief that the church was all that mattered, and the Jewish people didn't matter at all. It was believed and still is in parts of Christianity that the Jewish people had failed in their covenant with God, that they had fallen from grace. And this led to the belief that the Jewish people had been rejected by God.

After all, they had rejected Yeshua as their Messiah and King. And the church began to believe that the Jews were guilty of the death of Yeshua. And if they were guilty, they should be punished.

So, these were the seeds that had been sown all over Europe for over a thousand years before the Nazis came on the scene. I am not going to go through all the history today, but Nazism was defeated, and the people of Israel survived. And now by the grace of God, German people are our friends. German people today are some of our best friends. God can do miracles. Who would have thought that the people whose nation gave birth to Nazism could be our friends today?

Today is December 7<sup>th</sup>. Some of you may know it's Pearl Harbor Day. Eighty-three years ago on this day, the Japanese Empire attacked Pearl Harbor and effectively plunged the United States of America into the second World War. Millions of people died as a result. Nuclear weapons were used for the first time. But today, the Japanese are your friends. That gives me faith to believe that one day the Arabs are going to be our friends. The people of Lebanon and Gaza will be our greatest supporters. It takes faith to believe that. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1).

Yeshua is the Prince of Peace, and he is the only one who can make the bitterest of enemies, the greatest of friends. That's actually the only thing that true peace really means. It's one thing to get power from the Lord to destroy your enemies, but it just means they are going to come back when they're strong again. But enemies that change into your friends, that's where God commands a blessing. And we need to pray through this present

conflict because that's the goal of the Lord, and that's the ministry of Yeshua in our midst.

Today we face a different kind of replacement. Even though replacement theology isn't completely gone from the Christian world. Today in this region we face replacement ideology. Surrounding us are more than fifty nations and almost two billion people in the world who embrace a belief and a religion that says Israel has no special relationship with God. It says that Israel has no divine promise for this land from God. They believe that Israel has no divine calling from God to exist at all. And that's what this phrase, "from the river to the sea" really means. It is really the statement: "We will replace you. You will be gone, and you will be replaced by others who believe as we believe."

So, as believers, it is vitally important that we understand what the Bible really says about this. It is time to get over the replacement part and understand what God says about Israel. To do this in the minutes that we have remaining, I want to take you to the heart of the letters of Paul. Many people believe that the letter to the Romans was his greatest letter. So, in the next few minutes I want to take you to the heart of this letter, and I want to show you how laser like and accuracy the words given to this apostle were.

It is incredible that he can write words two thousand years ago that so accurately and clearly describe our times and speak with God's authority about how we should conduct our lives today. So, turn with me to Romans chapter 11, and let's look at verse 1. Paul begins with these words:

*I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. (NASB)*

And look at the beginning of verse 2:

*God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. (NASB)*

Now that's pretty clear, don't you think? You have to wonder, "How could the Christian movement have gotten it completely wrong and believed exactly the opposite for seventeen hundred years!" It really boggles the mind. Here's a question we should ask, "When Paul wrote these inspired words, was he aware that his own people, the Jewish people, had rejected Yeshua as their Messiah and King?" Of course he was aware! No one knew it better than Paul. Remember, before he was born again, he was a persecutor of the early believers. He was there at the stoning of Stephen, the first martyr, holding the coats of the killers, heartily agreeing with the death of Stephen.

Paul was on the way to Damascus to further persecute the early Messianic Jews when he encountered Yeshua, and his life was turned around. And then after he became a believer, not once but several times, his former Jewish friends wanted to kill him. You may remember the story from the Book of Acts where he is let down by a basket from the walls of Damascus. He is taken to Caesarea by a Roman guard because of threats to assassinate him. No one knew better than Paul that his own people were enemies of the gospel. But still he writes, "Has God rejected them? May it never be. Don't let that thought enter your mind."

There it was two thousand years ago inspired by the Holy Spirit! His words have been in our New Testaments that long. So, we might ask this great apostle, “If God didn’t reject the Jewish people, then what happened?” Well, he explains, go on to verses 11 and 12:

*I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!*  
(NASB)

When Paul says, “they,” he means they the Jews. When he says, “you,” in this letter he is writing to the Gentile leaders of the Roman congregation. Paul writes that God is wise enough and powerful enough to use the failure of Israel to recognize Yeshua as God’s opportunity to come directly to the Gentile world. But in verse 12, isn’t he suggesting something amazing! He says, “If you think the day of Israel’s rejection of Messiah was amazing,” and every time we read the Book of Acts and marvel at those wonderful things, which was the day of Israel’s rejection. Isn’t Paul saying in verse 12, “You wait until they accept Yeshua as their Messiah.” How much more their fullness! Guess what? That’s now!

We come along two thousand years later, and it’s as if this letter were written to us, so we would know that this is not just an accident of history, but God’s amazing foreknowledge. God said, “Yes, when my people Israel reject their Messiah, I will use that as an opportunity to bring the gospel to the world.” But you wait, the day would come when that gospel will come back to them,

and they will raise holy hands and lift up the name of Yeshua. In his own land! In his own country! Among his own people for the first time in two thousand years. That's what Paul was beginning to suggest in verse 12.

He goes on in verse 15:

*For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? (NASB)*

Is it any surprise that the devil is so angry about this? That he is raising up enemies left and right, center, north and south all around the world to try to stop this from happening. But is he going to succeed? Never! Never! The enemies you see today, one day will be gone. The enemies that you see today one day will be your friends, because God is on the move. What will their acceptance be, but life from the dead.

If you need to be cheered up today, you need to realize that that's what you are. That's why it matters that we gather to worship and lift up the name of Yeshua. That's why I say, "This isn't a war about our security or our defense only. This is a war over truth." Truth that sets men and women free all over the world. We're intended to be a light of this truth, at the very center of it.

The word that Paul chose to use as 'life' is the word 'zoe' in the New Testament Greek. And it's the word for life that describes the kind of life that God has in himself. The gospels say, "In him was life, and life was for the world." That's what we are.

And then Paul begins prophesying about the nature of the Messianic body that God will raise up in Israel in the last days. And this is so important for us because we are growing, we're expanding, we're putting out new branches. The olive trees are growing. These words are the seed. These words contain the DNA, God's creative inspired words spoken. Here's how Paul describes it in verses 17 and 18:

*But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. (NASB)*

These words are so clear. Aren't they? We have the advantage of the fact that we are part of the resurrected nation of Israel. We, by the grace of God, have been called to be a part of a nation that is today alive from the dead. The great thinkers and theologians and Christian leaders, they couldn't see this. Paul saw it. Paul saw it by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And we see it because we are in it, and because our existence is being tested every single day.

So, this is a warning to all who believe. Never boast against the Jewish people, even in their unbelief, because God chose them to be the root. From them came the Messiah. He is the root and the offspring of David. And we who are non-Jews and Jews we're part of that Abrahamic covenant.

I don't know why it's so difficult for the world to understand basic truths. The Jewish people wrote the Bible; all of it. Every single



writer of the Bible. We can argue about Luke because it doesn't say. But if he were Jewish, that means one hundred percent. The heroes of the Bible Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, the Prophets, the Judges, the Kings, Yeshua himself, all the original apostles. Is this some mistake?

So, why do we have to fight this long war, it's so bitter, so cruel? Why does it seem there is going to be no end to it, because the enemies are lining up, their standing in line for their chance. My friends listen, it's over this. This is why! This is why! Because God said and God chose. That's why, in the confidence of faith that we can put our trust in him today. We say, "God, it's because you said, and now you will do what's necessary. Oh Lord, how many are my foes, but how great is the rock of my salvation! And you, Lord will prevail, and you're looking to see if there is just a little faith on earth today." Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Continuing in verses 19 and 20. Again, he is speaking to the Gentile leaders of the church of Rome, the church that would become the greatest on earth.

*You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear. (NASB)*

Believers around the world need to look at what's happening in Israel because this is a battle over God's word and God's inheritance in this land, and the identity of the Messianic body in this land. God says to Christian leaders, "You cannot ignore this," and here's why in verse 21:

*For if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. (NASB)*

I am glad that the Apostle Paul wrote these words, not me. If you want to get upset over this, I'm afraid you will have to take this up with Paul. If God didn't spare the natural branches, and he didn't go easy on Israel, why should he go easy on you?

Continuing to verse 22:

*Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. (NASB)*

On October 7<sup>th</sup>, Severity. This is God warning the world. I have chosen the people of Israel as my example. And they will be my example in obedience and blessing. They will be my example in unbelief and chastisement. But God says, "I am never changing my mind, and I'm never taking back what I gave them."

In a way, this is a people chosen like Yeshua to suffer for the benefit of others. The good news begins in verses 23 to 24. And I believe that this is the part of the letter that is specific for us today.

*And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? (NASB)*

Now would be a good time for a 'Hallelujah' because we are the generation that gets to see this with our own eyes. Not just to see it, but we participate in it. Two thousand years ago Paul got it. Right? Don't you think the day will come when Almighty God turns back to his chosen people the Jews. Broken off from their covenantal tree by unbelief, lying as if dead on the ground, God says, "Well I can graft them in again. I can make them live again."

And that's what we are as Jewish believers in Messiah. It's as if Paul wrote this letter and sent it out two thousand years later. It has arrived! Now, that's not the Israeli postal system; two thousand years later the letter arrives. Paul you're right; that's exactly what God is doing. How much more can these natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? Of course they can! Of course they can! But now we see this with our eyes.

Verse 25:

*For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. (NASB)*

Bible mysteries are things that God hides for a while until the appointed time. It's because of this verse: "the fulness of the Gentile nations coming in," I can say to my Arab Christian brothers and sisters, and our friends and members of this congregation, "Your day is coming." The day when Yeshua is lifted up over all your people. And that day is coming close. We are in the birth pangs of this. And what a shout of joy will rise over the Middle East when that day comes.

How many will stand with me and believe in this? We're sowing into this. That day will come with power, and God will change our bitterest enemies into our best friends. Personally, I believe that Arab Christians will come with the gospel to Jerusalem. And they will say something like, "We have sacrificed everything to exterminate you, to kill you, but now we come to sacrifice our lives so that you will believe in your Messiah." And they will provoke this nation to jealousy. That's the vision! That's coming!

Let's look at verse 26:

*And so all Israel will be saved. (NASB)*

That's what we live for! Right? It's so wonderful Paul writes that "a partial hardening is happened to Israel." Partially hardened, it must also mean partially opened. And that's what we're seeing all over this land, in particular because of all the pain in this war. Hearts are beginning to open. Minds are beginning to change. Deep questions are being asked about God. And we know where this is going because Paul wrote it to us. "All Israel shall be saved."

Verse 28:

*Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. (NASB)*

Paul could have written this last week to us.

Verse 29:

*For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. (NASB)*

I don't know about you, but I love this verse. Every time I've gotten to the end of myself and totally think I've failed, I come back to this verse, and I hold it up before God, and I say, "Oh God, I might have fallen far short this time, but you said," The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. Lord, you won't change your mind about me." And God says, "Yeah, you're right." Listen, it's Okay to borrow this verse and apply it to yourself. But when you're finished borrowing it, put it back where it belongs. You can see obviously this verse is specifically about Israel and the people of Israel. God says to the world, "I'm not changing my mind." They can obey, they can disobey. They can be blessed, or they can be corrected. But God says, "I am never changing my mind, and I'm never taking back what I gave."

Paul at this point pauses from his narrative to express his praise to God. Remember, he didn't have a word processor, so he couldn't go back and edit his message. This is one flow of the Holy Spirit. It was pouring out of him, and at this point he starts to sing and praise God. He probably doesn't know he has another six chapters to write after this. But maybe as this truth is pouring through him, maybe for just a moment he saw us, and God whispered in his ear: "Paul, it's going to be two thousand years. Your people are going to be scattered. They're going to wander the world. They're going to be subjected to terrible punishment. But I'm going to find them, and I'm going to bring them back, and then I'm going to give them the gospel." Even on the top of Mt.

Carmel. And two thousand years from now they're going to read your letter, and they're going to say, "Paul, you got it!"

What an anointing! What an anointing! Think of this, this man is writing something that God is telling him. Two thousand years later, we read his words, and we say, "Paul, this is exactly what God has done." I think Paul maybe saw this for a split second, so he begins to praise God in verse 33.

*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! (NASB)*

Look at verse 36. You tell me if he is singing or not.

*For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen. (NASB)*

It's like he took a break from writing the letter, and just started praising God, and whoever he was dictating to just wrote it down. Here's my point. Now we go to the next verse, which in our Bibles is the next chapter, but he didn't write it like that. It's just the next thing God said. This is Romans 12:1:

*Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. (NASB)*

He's just described what the New Testament congregation is like. What are the roles of the Jews and the non-Jews in our midst? Then he begs us, "You come together to the altar to worship God." One body! One Lord! One sacrifice! One body together!

This is what glorifies the Lord. This is the bride of Messiah that he is returning to wed. Jew and Gentile mixed together. One new man in Messiah!

And then he says in verse 2:

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (NASB)*

The world is filled with every possible ethnic division and strife and racial hatred. Those divisions, rivalries, wars, rumors of wars, this is what drives our world. But Paul writes, “You’re not like that. You come together to the altar of the Lord to worship together. In this you prove what is the will of God, what is good, acceptable, and perfect.”

So, I offer these words to you from the Lord as an encouragement. to build our faith, to stand ever more steadfast in our commitment and our trust in the Lord. Commitment to our calling to be an example not only for the house of Israel, but to be an example for the world, and to stand together as we have from the beginning because the greatest challenge and the greatest reward is yet to come. The light that is shining now is going to shine even brighter and brighter.

It's important for us to receive that strength from God, the ability to reach beyond by faith because we trust him, to reach beyond the pain that surrounds us, the disorder, the wars, and the rumors of wars. Grasp hold of the unchangeable Yeshua. The enemies we see today will be gone, but Yeshua is going to

remain, and we as his body, we're going to be here. Our calling is to be very fruitful in the days ahead.

(<https://www.youtube.com/live/D4Tsn6-gpgg?si=tax5yBG4C6Z4s6X0&t=4018>)

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## **Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast, 2024**

The Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast (JPB) is a global movement that brings together government and religious leaders and key influencers worldwide to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and Israel's prosperity. The JPB is organized by a coalition of Israeli and international leaders, and the program includes keynote speeches, panel discussions, and prayer sessions. The goal of the JPB is to promote interfaith dialogue, strengthen relationships between nations, and encourage leaders to work together for the common good.

Albert Veksler is the organizing force behind the JPB. In 2008, Veksler, who worked for years as the CEO for various nongovernmental organizations, founded JPBM Consulting, which manages projects in team development and training, NGO structuring and coalition building.

These are three highlights from the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast held in New York City in September 2024:

1. Invocation delivered by Carter Conlon, General Overseer of Times Square Church in New York City.

The Lord put on my heart this morning Psalm 126:

*When the Lord brought back the captivity of Zion,  
We were like those who dream.  
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,  
And our tongue with singing.  
Then they said among the nations,  
"The Lord has done great things for them."*

*The Lord has done great things for us,  
And we are glad.*

*Bring back our captivity, O Lord,  
As the streams in the South.*

*Those who sow in tears  
Shall reap in joy.  
He who continually goes forth weeping,  
Bearing seed for sowing,  
Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,  
Bringing his sheaves with him.*

Lord, we think this morning of the times that you have miraculously delivered your people Israel. We remembered the days when Moses and Aaron showed up in Egypt to confront one of the most powerful armies on the face of the Earth at that time, trying to keep your people in captivity.

We remember your power, your mercy, your grace, and your provision. We remember the king of Medo-Persia issuing a decree suddenly allowing those who wanted to go home to rebuild the testimony of God's glory in the Earth, and we remember it with thanksgiving. We remember 1948, when after being dispersed throughout the world for so many years, God, you miraculously brought Your people back again into the land that you had promised them.

As the scripture says, "Our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with singing, and they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for us." God, moved with such power that those who lived outside of who you are stood back

astonished and stunned at what you had done for your people. You have done such great things, and oh God, as the scripture says, "We are glad." The people of Israel are glad for the things you have done.

But it is time to turn again our captivity, oh Lord, as streams in the South. The people of Israel have gone forth in tears throughout the world for many, many years and have paid a heavy price for the promise that you made to them through Abraham that they would be a blessing, and through them the whole world would be blessed. They've gone forth weeping, but they've borne in their hearts that precious seed of promise, and your word says, "They shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing home the fruit of that promise.

Lord it is time for You to work again for this world has made void your law, as the scripture has said. God, we ask you one more time to fill the hearts of your people Israel with laughter and rejoicing. We ask you one more time, oh God, to do a work in the Earth through Your people Israel that can only be attributed to the power of your hand and the great mercy that is in your heart.

Lord Jesus, you said, and the scripture tells us, that a blessing would come into this world through your people Israel, and God, the time has come, and we ask Lord that you would do a work that would astound us; that would astound the whole world.

God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob that you would bless your people Israel again in such a powerful way that the whole world would have to stand back, and they would have to acknowledge that you have chosen these people as your beloved in the earth, and that you love them. Thank you, oh God, for what you're

about to do. Thank you, Lord, that the scriptures shall be fulfilled, most likely in our generation. We give you praise and glory, oh God, with all of our hearts, and as a follower, as a believer, as a Christian believer, I pray this blessing in Jesus' name. Amen.

## 2. Message delivered by Albert Veksler, Director, Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast.

The Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast is something that started in a very unique way. Robert Ilatov was appointed by the Speaker of the House to the position of Christian Allies Caucus Chair, which meant he was responsible for the relations between the Knesset and the Christian world. So, we were in the Knesset, and Robert asked for my help and said, "Albert, can you help me?" I said, "How can I help you?" He said, "We need to build another alliance of the friends of Israel." I said, "Why? There are so many great organizations. You have the Christian Friends of Israel, the International Christian Embassy for Jerusalem. There are Bridges for Peace, and others who are doing great work in building bridges. Robert said, "No, we need something that comes from here, that is ours, that comes from the Knesset. I said, "Ok, so we need a prayer breakfast." He responded, "You are out of your mind! This is a Jewish state. You don't expect us to pray to Jesus, do you?" And I said, "Robert you know, we can actually find something that the Jews and Christians can agree about," and Robert said, "Forget it, you are out of your mind."

Then Robert went to the president. I don't know what he said to the president, but he came back and said, "The president loved it! He will host the prayer breakfast in his own residence. He will receive us. He will support the work as long as he's in the office. He will not tell it in public, but he will do this because he loved

the idea. Albert, are you going to help me now?" "Well," I said, "Now I have to help you."

And so, in 2017, on Jerusalem Day, the very day that Jerusalem was reunified in 1967, we were gathered at the Waldorf Astoria. Michelle Bachmann was our keynote speaker, and she prayed for half an hour, and something changed. Something was literally, tangibly, changed after that prayer. And we had no clue when we had planned the Jerusalem Prayer breakfast, we thought, "Well maybe we can have an annual prayer breakfast. We will gather in the Knesset and, we will come to the president's residence, and we will gather in the hotel, and we'll have a good time."

But then the invitations started coming. The first lady of Uganda, a senator from United States of America, another senator from Australia. Then we went to London. We have had 29 Jerusalem Prayer Breakfasts since that day. Eight in Jerusalem and 21 outside of Israel. We recently had one recently in Stockholm Sweden. Prior to that in Australia. The former First Lady of Brazil invited us to the palace, and we stayed with her for five days. It was amazing! Opening up the country and asking for the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast to come.

Why is this going on? Why is it so important for God? What is so important about Jerusalem? Why would this cause such interest? Well, we heard it yesterday:

*If I forget you, O Jerusalem,  
Let my right hand forget its skill!  
If I do not remember you,  
Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth—  
If I do not exalt Jerusalem*

*Above my chief joy (Psalm 137:5,6).*

Isn't it amazing! This is all in the scriptures! In a Jewish wedding, what happens when the groom is about to kiss the bride? Before he does, he says, "If I forget you Jerusalem," and then he quotes the same scriptures. Are you going to be married to your beautiful bride, or are you gonna be married to Jerusalem? It seems both! There's something about Jerusalem that is absolutely mystical. You would think, "What is so mystical?"

Remember what Solomon prayed. He said that Your eyes would be on that place forever. Forever! That your name would be in that place forever. Remember when Daniel heard about the decision that no man can pray for 30 days. Where does this kind of idea come from? Nobody can pray unless they pray to the king! So, what did Daniel do? He opened the windows of his house towards Jerusalem, and prayed three times, as was his habit. Didn't he know that he's gonna be thrown into jail? Didn't you know that he came out?

So, there's something about Jerusalem. Solomon, when he prayed, described the worst kind of scenario; a scenario if your people have sinned, and we have, and we have been taken captive to a foreign land, and if from there we return to you and pray towards that place, you will hear us. The city of a great king! The city, you would say, "There's so many problems in that city." Of course! If God says He is going to bring a blessing to this world through this city. Of course, there will always be those who will try to challenge God's promise. And yet Jerusalem unites. This is an amazing thing to see. You can see how denominations, people, and groups who would never work together actually can be united around Jerusalem. Jerusalem unites. Jerusalem brings

peace. There are so many Christian denominations that people are thinking, "Where is the common denominator? Where can we meet?"

Scripture says that you've been grafted into the olive tree. Do you know where the branches meet? Do you have an idea where the branches meet? In the tree. So, there's something mysterious about Jerusalem. There's something about that city. There's something about the promise that his feet shall stand upon Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem. There's something about it because the peace of Jerusalem is the peace of the whole world.

And you know we are here now at a very strange time. I mean the United Nations, just a few blocks away from here, have made up their minds to adopt the International Court of Justice decision to make it illegal for a Jew to be in Judea and Samaria, in East Jerusalem. Read the Temple Mount. Read the Mount of Olives. Half of our capital, illegal! The nations, one after another, send their honorable ambassadors to lift their hands and to vote that God's covenant is criminal. That's what they're trying to say. They're trying to say, "God, you have no right to tell where your people should live. You have no right to make promises. You have no right to say this land belongs to Abraham Isaac and Jacob forever. You have no right to give its limits and borders to the nations."

We are reaching against God and his anointed. As it says in the Book of Psalms, this is why nations are raging. Why are they enraged? That's our question to the United Nations. And we have about 30 nations here today, and we are here to say, "We don't agree. We agree with our God. We agree with what is written. We agree with the covenant. We don't agree with what our

governments actually have decided to do. We don't agree with a two-state solution.”

We have to do that, to stand up for God's word. We have to stand up for his covenant because this is the time that the red line is about to be crossed by the nations of the world, and we will see the consequences that this world has never seen. We've seen a few helicopters fall, but this is just the beginning because you cannot mock God and get out of it for nothing. You cannot say things against God's word and walk out as if nothing happened. So, we are here, we want to see the fear of God come over the United Nations. We want to see the fear of God come over these ambassadors. We want to see the fear of God come over these people, these honorable people representing their governments. That they would do what is right for their nations. That they would bring a blessing over their nations because God's foreign policy is quite simple. He said, “He who will bless,” and He speaks about the nations, “will be blessed, and through you all the nations of the world will be blessed.”

God doesn't want any nation to be cursed. God doesn't want any nation to be left behind. God doesn't want any nation to be in a position where they would not have his blessings. God wants every nation to have his blessing upon them. But he chose his channel. He chose his way. He said if you bless Israel, I will bless. He didn't say check out Israel whether Israel is worthy of your blessing. He didn't say you have to analyze and check and see if Israel is actually worthy. No, he didn't say that. He said if you bless, you will be blessed, and if you curse, God forbid, you don't want to see what would happen.

### 3. Prayer by former U.S. Congresswoman Michelle Bachmann.



We are moving into a different time, and I'm really looking forward to this moment because this isn't about a time for a speech. This is now a time for prayer, and this is a time for repentance. Repentance is needed at this time. We're in the period of Teshuva on the Biblical calendar when Moses ascended the mountain for the 3rd time, and he received for the second time the tablets, the commandments.

What was his purpose in ascending the Holy Hill? It was to repent. It was to repent for the Jewish people who fell into idolatry, who were worshiping the golden calf. And so, he went up to plead before the Lord, to repent. It is this time of year that Teshuva, returning to the Lord is patterned after, and it's a gift that God gives. It is a gift, though we give ourselves to him, he knows that our hearts tend to wander. We tend to look inward. We tend to be selfish, and not think about the things of the Lord, and worse yet, we allow obedience to the word of the Lord to slip.

That's the gift of Teshuva on the calendar; that we have this time when we lean in, that we read his word, and when we rend our hearts before him and ask him as King David said, "Search me and try me Oh Lord, and if there is any wicked way within me." Lord, remove that from me. First show it to me, and then remove it from me. Because we cannot do these things by ourselves. Only he can through his power. His precious Holy Spirit can come in and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. That's what we are here for. This is the work. This is the reason we are here for the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast.

God has privileged us to have had 29 Jerusalem prayer breakfasts all over the world, and this is the centerpiece work that we call that nation or that city to do. It is to repent, repent for us, repent for our nation, repent for how we have treated Zion. As we spoke about in Joel chapter 3 verse 2, there is only one criterion upon which the nations will be judged, and that is how they have treated Zion. Have they divided the land? Have they scattered the people? Have they cheapened the Jewish people, or terrorized the Jewish people, or cheapened the Jewish way of life? Because God created the nation of Israel to be a light unto the nations, to bring the law forth from Zion, and to give us, the rest of the nations, a pattern for living. That's why Israel is a blessing to all nations on Earth.

We need to ask ourselves how have we treated this tremendous gift that God gave to the earth, the people group to whom his Messiah descends, the Messiah that redeems the whole world. And so, this is our time to come forth and repent.

I will read now from the word of the Lord. I'd ask if you want to close your eyes, if you want to bow your head, but I would ask that we come with one heart, one mind in full unity as we come before the Lord during this time of repentance.

*Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30).*

*Unless you repent you will all likewise perish (Luke 13:5).*

*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).*

*He who covers his sins will not prosper,  
But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy  
(Proverbs 28:13).*

*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew  
4:17).*

*I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to  
repentance (Luke 5:32).*

*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous  
and repent (Revelation 3:19).*

*Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance,  
and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God  
leads you to repentance (Romans 2:4)?*

Father, we thank you for this month of Ellul, this month on your biblical calendar when you are open to receiving your beloved and hearing the prayers of your beloved. Lord, we first come to you with personal repentance. Lord, we fall on our face. We fall on our knees as you shine a light upon our mind, our hidden thoughts, our speech, our speech that doesn't honor you, our hearts, our hearts that turn from you, and turn to our own wicked ways, our hands that bring about sin in our own lives and bring harm against others, our feet and legs who can't wait to carry us into trespass against you.

Oh God, we repent personally for those grievous sins in our own lives. Lord, not just because we are caught, and you've caught us in that sin, we grieve because we have violated your standard. We invite your Holy Spirit in this room, in this moment, so that

we can see the fullness of your wonderful face, so we can see your holiness as you were in the Garden of Eden with the first man and woman that you created. A perfect relationship between yourself and man, ready and able to give every act of goodness and kindness. Nothing was lacking. Your name represented strict justice. We see that as a negative. We don't like being strict. We don't like justice. We don't like that because we know we're guilty, and yet that is the condition upon which you created the world. Strict justice because there was no sin in the world, and strict justice prevailed. What a great world You gave, and our forebears sinned, and from them Lord, we were contained in Adam and Eve. Our seed was in them and that sin then came into us, and you and your graciousness, and your kindness in the garden. You pronounce that you would bring redemption, that you would defeat the serpent. Lord, you would crush his head, and all he would do is bruise your heel.

And so, Father, we thank you that at the moment that we turned against you, and we sinned, that at the very moment there you were with your love to redeem and reach out and tell all of mankind, "I will make a way where there is no way." And so, you called a man Abram from Ur of the Chaldees. You called him to come into the land that you said you would give him forever in Genesis 15:18. From him, from his son Isaac, the child of promise, from Isaac, Jacob, and from Jacob and his 12 sons, the 12 tribes. From those descendants would be your chosen people and all the world would be blessed through this line of redemption that you created to redeem all of us, Lord, as you called all of us to come into repentance. And so, in this moment, we repent. As we look at your holy face, as we experience your glorious presence, Lord, we want to be where you are.

We know that your train fills your temple, and so here in New York City, Father, as we come to you on bent knees in repentance. Lord, we come to you now as proxies in this city, this greatest of all cities in the world, New York City. Lord, we come to you and ask for repentance for this city, this city of New York, Father, which has allowed Jew hatred to occur over the history of this city from its very inception. It welcomed the first Jew, the next 23 were barred from its city walls, until the first Jew contended and prevailed. He was the poorest among them, but he said he would be the one who would be the guarantor for those 23, and Peter Stuyvesant relented and allowed them to come in.

That was the beginning of the discrimination, and we see it yet today. We saw it last year at Columbia University, as we have heard. We see it on the NYU campus. We see across this city where there were demonstrations after October 7<sup>th</sup>. Individuals were in the streets in front of a children's hospital, a Jewish children's hospital. The nurses, the doctors, the children in cancer treatment looking down on the street while they're dealing with their cancer, and on the streets, the people shaking their fists saying, "Death to Israel. Death to the Jews."

Oh God, forgive this city. Forgive this city for hating in a sense that you write about in your word. It is though they have drunk from the cup of reeling, a cup filled with alcohol and drugs mixed. They've drunk from that cup, and they have such a dysfunctional view of the Jew that it is incomprehensible, this hatred. It's not a hatred that is in any way natural. It is a cup of reeling, and so we repent for the cup of reeling that has been poured out in the City of New York, in the city that has not stood for what is right, true, and just. We repent for the lack of justice in this city. We repent

for the district attorney in New York City who doesn't seem to know right from wrong, criminal from innocent, and who refuses to uphold justice.

We pray, Lord, and we confess and repent even at the state level. In the Attorney General's office, Lord, where we see there is no righteousness there. Justice is not coming forth from that office. We repent as proxies for what we see. We are not here to be in any wise political; that isn't our purpose. We are here to be biblical. There is a mandate that you have given regarding justice. There is a mandate that you have given regarding the treatment of one another: to love one another, to bear one another's burdens.

And Father, we repent that in this city, the church, those who claim the name of Jesus Christ. Lord, we repent for the church that has failed to stand up for the suffering Jew in our midst who has been killed, stabbed, and pelted. And where have we been? Where has our voice been? God, we repent for our lack of advocacy for our brethren. And we know better when the word of God tells us better.

Father, I cry out to you for the United States of America, and for how we have treated Israel and the Jewish people since October 7<sup>th</sup>. Again, not to be political, what have we done that is biblical? What have we done that is unrighteousness? And our leader, whom we have elected went to Israel, and gave a check not to the Jews who were killed and were tortured but gave a check for hundreds of millions of dollars to Hamas. They said it wasn't Hamas, but that's exactly where it went. The check cleared to their bank accounts. And the billionaires who stole and trimmed from them took more.

And Father, what we have done to aid those who hate Israel, who killed the Jews. We were the ones who financed this. For that, we repent. We repent of the billions of dollars that we have given for the pay to slay program. Money that went to pay terrorists to kill innocent Jews, which is still going to kill innocent Jews. The money that we have given to the United Nations Refugee Relief Program organization, where they were actually terrorists themselves. They actually participated on October 7<sup>th</sup> themselves. We paid for that! We repent. We repent.

As this war is conducted, we can't even figure out who needs to win, and who needs to lose, and we have told Israel," You're not allowed to win." What is wrong with us? Oh God, we repent. We repent for our vice president who in her November speech gave Hamas' talking points and spoke to the prime minister of Israel as though he was a little child, and told him, "You are not going to win this war. We refuse to let you win this war." And at the end of the day, you had better step aside because we are going to get behind a terror state on your border.

Oh God, we repent. We repent again, not being political, but we repent. And now the question is munitions and weapons, and we have been slow walking when we saw over 300 rockets from Iran, for the first time in history, come against the Jewish state. It's as though our default position is: Oh well, Israel is just unique. God will take care of them. He will be the umbrella. Oh yes, he will, but we will miss the opportunity to be privileged, to be used by God to bless when Israel in her greatest hour of need.

This year has been the greatest hour. If we would all leave New York City in this moment and go to Jerusalem, and go to the

northern border, and go to the Gazan border, and go to the border of Jordan, and go over to Judea and Samaria, and go to the South where Egypt is. If we saw all of the attacks, or Yemen that fired a missile into the heart of Israel yesterday, if we were there and could see in the eyes of the people the post-traumatic stress that they've lived with for a year. They haven't had time to even grieve, and yet here we are in the United States supposedly Israel's big friend. What a lie! And we've put our thumb on the scale on the side of the perpetrators who killed little babies, and raped innocent women, and continue to rape innocent women.

Oh God, we repent. Oh Father, we don't deserve your forgiveness, but we receive it because we need it. We need it, and in this year, when we've seen our own nation turn upside down into a nation we no longer remember. And we wonder why. It's because we've abandoned our first love. Our first love is your word, and our obedience to your word. So, Lord, in these days as we are ascending to Rosh Hashanah, the first day on the calendar, the sweet New Year that will begin with its ten days of awe and reverence for your holiness, and who you are. As we continue to repent and ask that our name be written in your book, as we come to the Day of Atonement with you on Yom Kippur on October 12<sup>th</sup>, Father, we repent.

And for all nations, I ask that you stand now stand and repent for your nation. Stand and repent for what you know has been wrong in your own life, and your own city. As we see the United Kingdom has essentially turned its back on Israel. As they completely stopped giving them weapons and ammunition. I pray repentance over the United Kingdom. I pray they will come to their senses. Lord, all nations seem to have their backs turned toward Israel. In this moment, when Iran has built and fortified a



ring of fire unlike anything Israel has ever faced since 1948, much less 1967. We have no idea the Armageddon that the head of the snake Iran has planned for Israel.

And yet Lord, you are the holy one. You are the God of Israel. You are the one with a strong right arm. You are the God who neither slumbers nor sleeps. So, in this hour, Lord, as we pray our prayers of repentance, we pray in advance for the evil that evil doers are planning toward Israel, and we cancel those plans now in your mighty name. And in the name of Hashem, that none of those evil plans will come to birth, see the light of day, or prosper.

I pray that every one of those 150,000 rockets embedded in southern Lebanon, that none of those rockets would be effective. That you would de-neuter those rockets. I pray that you will make them ineffective. Blow them up. Let not one of them come in to hurt your people or harm them. Lord, take away every weapon of warfare out of Gaza. Again, Lord, make their gunpowder dry, and stale that it would never work. Those troops that are in Syria, which are in Iraq, which are waiting to come, they have blood lust on their mind. Lord, I pray you will blind them. Blind them. Let them not be able to advance against the Jewish people.

Lord, we ask that you now deal again with Iran. Just cancel and defile their plans, that they would come to naught. And the pressure that is happening to the King of Jordan, I pray, Oh God, that all of those who are in Jordan right now in the ammunition, Lord, remove it from their hands that it would come to nothing.

Lord, you know the fortress that's been built in Judea and Samaria. Lord, you are the fortress. I pray that your fortress will come forth, and that theirs will fall like the walls of Jericho. And I

pray for Egypt, in that border, and all of the shameful tunnels that for filthy lucre the family of El Sisi, and the country of Egypt. They allow the weapons of war to go in and kill the Jewish people. What a shame, and so we repent. We repent for Iran. We repent for Egypt. We repent for Syria. We repent for Iraq. We repent for Jordan. We repent for the Palestinian Authority. We repent for Hamas. We repent for Hezbollah, and for all of the enemies of unrighteousness.

And we say that the name of the Lord will be lifted up. We say, "The Lord will be lifted up." We say that you will be established, and that your name will be raised all over the earth. And that Jerusalem will be protected. That Israel will be protected and stand tall. That the Jewish people will be saved, and the terror by night that is intended for them will not come to pass. We thank you now for the faith in this room of those who name your name, who know they have no innate power. The power comes from you, and so, we give glory back to you now, and we ask that you have thine own way. In the name of Hashem, the God of Israel, we pray. Amen.

## **The Journey from Jihad to Johnny**

By Johnny Halteh

The House of Victory (“Beit Nitzachon” in Hebrew), located in the city of Haifa on Mount Carmel, is Israel’s first Bible-based men’s rehabilitation center. Founded by David and Karen Davis in 1991 after the first Gulf War, the vision for this ministry is the “one new man” in Messiah of Ephesians 2:14-16. Many Jews and Arabs with backgrounds of substance abuse have found deliverance and new life through the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. Graduates of House of Victory are now leading productive lives, and marriages and families have been restored. Some are also serving as ministry leaders in Israel.

One graduate named Johnny shares his powerful story of transformation from an Arab from the West Bank who hated Jews, to someone who now has a love for the Jewish people as well as Arabs and also understands that Arab and Jew can be one together because Yeshua loves us all!

My name is Johnny. I was born in Jerusalem, in the old city, but I grew up in the West Bank. The West Bank is where the Palestinians live, and in that area the first thing you need to do is to hate the Jewish people, or to hate Israel because they taught us that the Jews took our land, so we need to fight to take our land back.

As a kid, I was nine years old, and I remember a young man who came and gave me a stone, and I began to throw it at the Jewish people or the soldiers of Israel. In that time, I didn’t know what I was doing, I’m still a kid, but we liked that thing. They taught us, so we grew up with that thing. We believe that they

hated Arabs, so we needed to fight, we needed to take our land back.

Another thing about myself is that I grew up without family. My father passed away a long time ago. Growing up alone, I felt that God had forgotten me. There's nobody to take care of me, and I felt very empty. When I say empty, I mean there was no hope for the future. There's no love. Nobody cares about you. Nobody wants you. I felt like I was nothing in this world, so I began to drink, and I began to smoke. And I remember I took my first steps on the drugs, but I thank God because he came in the right time and chose me. So, I didn't go deep in the drugs, but all my life it was empty and there was nothing to do.

I grew up during the first intifada, then the second intifada. In the second intifada, I was beginning to know what I was doing. We needed to fight, but I was beginning to throw a stone at that time not because I wanted to fight or to bring my land back, because I wanted to die, and I saw it as a good way to die. If I begin to throw stones and die in that way, I will be a hero in the eyes of my people.

But thank God, in that time God had his hand on me. He saved me. Until the day came. I remember my sister in 2010, she told me, "It's enough. I want to help you take big steps," and she said, "There is place in Haifa. I will take there, and they will help you." I remember I came here in 2010. It was a Sunday evening, and I was sitting with Eric Benson, the Director, talking about the house, and he told me it would be like one year. I looked at my sister and I said, "I cannot do it. It's a long time without smoking, without drinking. I cannot do it." But she said, "Try one week or two weeks, and let's see how it will go."

The next day Monday we had a meeting in the Kehillah, and I remember there's a man and woman. They came and they sat with me, and they began to talk with me about Jesus, what he did to save me. At the end, they asked me, "Would you like if we prayed for you, and you opened your heart for God to come and to live in you?" I said, "Yes," and they began to pray for me, and I remember in that time for ten minutes I was crying. I don't know why, but at the time that I was crying I saw all my life like a movie going right before me. After they finished praying, the man came and he hugged me, and I don't know what's happening in that time, but it was the first time in my life I felt there's peace inside me. I felt there's something to take me to stay here, to stay in this house.

They told me when you wake up in the morning, begin to read the Bible, begin to read the Psalms. When I began to read it, and I'm beginning to feel that God is talking with me. I know there is hope for the future. I know there is love. I know that he's my father. Growing up, I knew there's no father for me, but I know that he was with me in the past. He's with me now, and he's with me in the future. Day after day God began to teach me how to forgive people, how to love each other. After I thought there's no love, I don't have love, but he wants me to give the love, so he teaches me, he gives me this love. Without him I cannot do these things.

Another thing happened here in the house, God opened my eyes to see the truth about the Jewish people and land of Israel here. He sent a guy here into the house. I remember his name was Yossi, and he's Orthodox Jewish, and I and him we were good friends. One day he invited me to his house. I was going to his

house a little worried that his family, they didn't know I am Arab. They will throw me outside the house. They will not welcome me. So, all the way I was asking him, "Yossi, did your family know that I'm coming? Did your family know that I'm Arab?" He said, "Come, come, don't worry."

When I got there, the picture that I have here changed. I was going back to the House of Victory sitting in the bus praying asking God, "What do you want to show me here? What do you want to teach me here?" I found here that I saw another picture about Jewish people. They are good. They love the Arabs. They were good with me. Why don't we have this all the time?

I had two pictures now in my mind. As living in the West Bank and growing up with all that thought. They gave us a picture about Arabs when they left this land in 1948 how the Jews killed the Arabs. So, I have this picture. But when I came to House of Victory, I found another picture that the Jewish people they are suffering. I have these two pictures now, and here I was praying and asking God, "God, I have two pictures here. Where is the truth? Are the Arabs suffering, or are the Jews suffering?"

And God spoke to me, and he said, "Johnny both of them are suffering because they are far from me, and both of them they are my people. Both of them, I love them, and what you need to do Johnny, you need to pray for both of them." And really from that time I began to pray for the Arab and for the Jewish people. Especially for the Arab people, that's how God used me to open my eyes to see the truth that we are one. Our father is one. We are not enemies. That he will do the same with the Arabs in the West Bank or in Gaza. That one day we will come and put our hands together because really, we are brothers.

After 13 years here, I can see that I have many blessings. that he gave me. I got married. I have two kids. I was working in the Kehillah for 10 years, then God opened doors for me to come to serve and to work in the House of Victory with the guys, to encourage them. I thank God for what he did, and what he's doing in my life. As I told you at first, I was empty, but now I am full of blessing. And every time I say, "God, thank you about everything that you give me."

And he answered me, "Johnny, it's the beginning. It's the beginning. I have more and more to give to you. I have more because you are my son, and I love you." And the other thing about my name, I told you my name is Johnny, but God when he gave, he gave me everything. My old name was Jihad, but God he changed all my life. He changed my name. He gave me a new name from Jihad to Johnny. All I can say to him is, "Thank you. Thank you, my father, because really you are my father. You were with me in the past, and now, and you will be with me in the future."

In this house we are not only taking in Jewish people. We take Arab and Jewish people together, and I pray that it will help us. It will encourage us especially if you pray for the Arab and for the Jewish people here in this house. They come here broken, but they leave here with many things, with a new life. But the new life needs to be from him, and the peace needs to be from him, because the peace that we need only comes from him. No man, nobody can make peace between Arab or Jewish people without him, only from him. So, please if you can pray for the peace for Arab and Jew in the land in the House of Victory that God will use every man. That he will come here Arab or Jew that he will use it

for another people to bless another people and to come together to live together with peace.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvipOaVNmTQ>)



## The Missing Chapters

*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come (Matthew 24:14).*

As a young man preparing for ministry in the early 1990's, Ed Watts took a class on the books of Romans and Galatians at a prestigious Pentecostal Bible College. The course covered the entire book of Galatians, and Romans chapters 1-8 (God's plan of salvation) and 12-16 (the outworking of that plan). Why were Romans chapters 9-11 purposefully omitted from the curriculum?

I believe it is rooted in anti-Judaism, the severing of the Hebrew roots of the Christian faith, and a lack of understanding of the full plan of God, the gospel of the kingdom.

### Anti-Judaism

The seeds of anti-Judaism in the Christian church began in the second century. By the time of Justin Martyr (AD 160) a new attitude prevailed in the church, evidenced by its appropriating the title "Israel" for itself. In his *Dialogue with Trypho*, a Jew, Justin Martyr emphasized that what was of old had belonged to Israel was now the property of Christians. The Jewish Scriptures were a central part of this transference. "They are not yours but ours," Justin stated emphatically to Trypho.

The overthrow of the Jewish nation – especially the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple by gentile armies was seen as chastisement, proof that God had rejected his once chosen people. The church also viewed the sack of Jerusalem as punishment of Jews for the crime of crucifying Jesus. In the third

century Origen wrote, “And these calamities they [the Jews] have suffered, because they were a most wicked nation, which although guilty of many other sins, yet has been punished so severely for none, as for those that were committed against our Jesus.”

When Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire, Jews experienced a further wave of discrimination and persecution. They lost many of their legal rights; they were not permitted to live in Jerusalem or to seek converts. The church fathers taught that the unfaithfulness of the Jewish people resulted in a collective guilt which made them subject to the permanent curse of God. This was the backdrop of the council of Nicaea.

The council of Nicaea in 325 was a gathering of church bishops organized by Emperor Constantine in 325 AD. The primary purpose was to unite the Church and make an official position regarding the divinity of the Messiah. One group declared that the Messiah always was, while the other said he was created by God. The former group won out, and the Nicene Creed was formulated and released.

Regarding Jesus, it declares:

*I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven.*

However, if you read the entire text of the Nicene Creed, there is no reference to this God being the God of Israel. Without God's calling of Israel, there is no Nicaea. The stories begin with Abraham. There is no mention of the Jewish ethnicity of the Messiah. When Paul speaks of Jesus, he emphasizes the fact that he came from Israel.

One of the purposes of the Nicaea Council was to change the date for the celebration of the resurrection from the Jewish calendar, that is, Passover (or the Sunday closest to Passover), to 'Easter,' which "was to be on the Sunday after the first full moon following the Spring equinox." In other words—it was to have no connection with the Jewish Passover.

At the time, there were roughly 1,800 bishops in the Church. Approximately 120 of them were of Jewish heritage. Dr. Jen Rosner notes, "From all accounts that we have, these Jewish Yeshua-believing bishops were not present at the council of Nicaea, and moreover, they were not invited—which we can understand from Constantine's posture towards the Jewish people." [1]

So, on the one hand, we need to celebrate the Council of Nicaea for its powerful, bold Christology—in rejecting the idea that the Son of God was created and embrace his deity. But on the other hand, we must recognize that Nicaea was another step in de-Judaizing the Church. It was another step in the ethnic cleansing of the New Testament from its Jewish roots. In declaring that Christians were no longer allowed to celebrate anything Jewish, the church lost its connection to its Biblical foundation, resulting in a hardness of heart toward Israel and the Jewish people, and a disconnect with God's kingdom purposes for them.

For Paul, the salvation of Israel and her future revival were central. He devotes much of Romans to this. For the bishops of Nicaea, who literally boycotted Jewish participation in this most crucial council, the future of Israel was not even on their radar. It was the past. They are “the murderers of our Lord.” This would set the stage for centuries of tolerated, even promoted, Jew-hatred in the Church.

The Gentile church became more and more antisemitic in its policies and official pronouncements. “One hundred years after the official severing of the Jewish believers from the nourishment of the body, the world plunged into a thousand years of spiritual darkness. Indeed, there is a direct correlation between the alienation of the Jewish brethren and the fallen spiritual condition of the church.” [2]

Things went from bad to worse for the Jewish people over the course of church history. It was Christian Crusaders in 1099 who locked Jewish families inside the great synagogue in Jerusalem, set it on fire, then marched around singing, “Christ, we adore thee.” Then came the Inquisitions and forced expulsions under Roman Catholicism.

“The Spanish Inquisition was founded in 1478 to battle heresy; it lasted until 1834. Anyone who was suspected of being a secret Jew could be arrested and brutally tortured until they confessed. Those who were found to be secret Jews faced spending the rest of their life in horrific prisons or being publicly burned to death. The Inquisition arrested people for cleaning their houses on Friday (supposedly in preparation of Shabbat), fasting on Yom Kippur, cooking traditional Jewish foods, or avoiding pork.” [3]

The Reformation brought little relief to Jewish suffering in “Christian” Europe. Martin Luther’s antisemitic rant against the Jews set in motion another 400 years of persecution culminating in the Nazi holocaust. In an infamous 1543 treatise, “On the Jews and Their Lies,” Luther urged that “synagogues should be set on fire, their homes smashed and destroyed. Jews should be banned from the roads and markets, their property seized, and then these poisonous envenomed worms should be drafted into forced labor and made to earn their bread by the sweat of their noses.”

Jesus was no longer seen as a Jew, but as an Aryan persecutor of Jews. The church lacked the understanding of the missing three chapters of Romans. They had become “Ruth-less,” lacking God’s heart for Israel and the Jewish people. For many centuries very few Christians understood God’s purposes for Israel, that He would restore the Jewish people to the land of their ancestors in fulfillment of scripture.

### The Gospel of the Kingdom

Protestant Reformer Martin Luther restored the gospel of salvation to the church, but was it the full gospel that Paul preached? Paul had not yet visited the predominantly Gentile church in Rome, when he wrote his masterpiece, the Book of Romans. In it, he expresses his desire to preach the gospel (of the kingdom) to the believers at Rome.

*So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for*

*everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek (Romans 1:15-16).*

He describes the gospel of the kingdom as “my gospel” in Romans 2:16. In the first eight chapters, he lays out God’s plan of salvation for how individuals, both Jews and Gentiles, come to saving faith in Jesus. This plan is summarized in the five verses that comprise the Romans Road to Salvation:

1. Romans 3:23 “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”
2. Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
3. Romans 6:2 “For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
4. Romans 8:1 ““Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ.”
5. Romans 10:9 “That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Regarding individual salvation, there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles; all must enter the kingdom of God through the same narrow gate which is Messiah Jesus. However, God’s plan for the nation of Israel doesn’t stop there. According to Reuven Doron, “While many believe that all God has for the Jews is to be individually saved and brought as scattered sheep into the sheep

pen, the scripture gives ample evidence that God has reserved a national restoration for Israel.” [4]

According to the Prophet Zechariah, a time would come when,”

*“I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn” (Zechariah 12:10).*

*“In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness” (Zechariah 13:1).*

Paul concludes the first eight chapters of the Book of Romans on the mountaintop of Romans 8:37-39:

*Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

But the book doesn’t end there. Paul addresses the big picture of the gospel of the kingdom in the election of Israel, their national rejection of the Messiah, the grafting in of the Gentiles, and the subsequent return of Israel to the kingdom.

*For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? For if*

*the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you (Romans 11:15-18).*

Furthermore, Paul warned the believers in Rome, not to be ignorant of this mystery, or arrogant toward Israel:

*“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:*

*‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion,  
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;  
For this is My covenant with them,  
When I take away their sins’” (Romans 11:25-27).*

*For God’s plan for Israel is eternally irrevocable (Romans 8:29).*

When the disciples asked Jesus about the timing of restoring the kingdom to Israel, He did not say that Israel would not be restored, but rather, He told the disciples that it is in the Father’s timing, and it was necessary for them to receive the Holy Spirit to equip them to be witnesses of the gospel of the kingdom of God beginning in Jerusalem.



*Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:6-8).*

The focus of Jesus' message was the Kingdom of God:

*From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17).*

*And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people (Matthew 4:23).*

*But He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent" (Luke 4:43).*

*He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Acts 1:2-3).*

And as we approach the end of this age, God is also moving to restore the kingdom to Israel where Jesus will rule and reign from

Jerusalem. We have seen the natural rebirth of the nation of Israel, and we are coming into days where the nation will return to the Lord and fulfill His calling for them, to be a light to the nations.

*The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.*

*Now it shall come to pass in the latter days  
That the mountain of the Lord's house  
Shall be established on the top of the mountains,  
And shall be exalted above the hills;  
And all nations shall flow to it.  
Many people shall come and say,  
"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
To the house of the God of Jacob;  
He will teach us His ways,  
And we shall walk in His paths."  
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,  
And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:1-3).*

According to Messianic teacher Alyosha Rabinov, the kingdom will be restored to Israel:

"To 'restore' means that something existed in the past, but it got broken down, and it must be fixed to return to what it was."

"The kingdom will be restored to Israel again, but the next time God will reign not just over Israel, but over the entire world. And that will happen when the Messiah will return to Jerusalem and will sit on the throne of David."

*"Your seed I will establish forever,  
And build up your throne to all generations."*

*And the heavens will praise Your wonders, O Lord;  
Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the saints (Psalm  
89:4-5). [5]*

### Conclusion

The declaration of the council of Nicaea, like the declaration of Peter, that Jesus is the eternal Son of God will stand forever:

*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. (Matthew  
16:16).*

But the church's rejection of Israel's unique place in the kingdom will be shattered forever when He comes to rule and reign in Jerusalem:

*And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the  
nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to  
year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the  
Feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be that whichever of the  
families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship  
the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be no rain  
(Zechariah 1:16-17).*

The gospel of the kingdom will continue to be preached among the nations, but the Lord will not come to set up His kingdom until Israel says:

*"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord" (Luke  
13:35)!*

Author M.T. Wilson in his book *The Ruth-Like Church* [6] describes the relationship between Ruth and Naomi as an example of how the church should embrace Israel.

Naomi represents the nation of Israel, who in a time of spiritual famine left her land to sojourn among the nations. She was in a desperate state as her husband and two sons died in Moab. She was left alone with her two Gentile daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth. Orpah took a more convenient path and left Naomi to return to her people. Ruth, on the other hand, expressed her commitment to the old and helpless Naomi saying,

*"Entreat me not to leave you,  
Or to turn back from following after you  
For wherever you go, I will go;  
And wherever you lodge, I will lodge;  
Your people shall be my people,  
And your God, my God" (Ruth 1:16).*

It is up to the church to show mercy to Israel and provoke them to jealousy by demonstrating the life of Yeshua to them.

*Even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy (Romans 11:1).*

*For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the*

*world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead  
(Romans 11:1-15)?*

As we move closer to the end of the age, the church acting as 'Ruth' will be the only true friend that Israel has.

1. <https://www.roncantor.com/post/amazing-and-antisemitic-the-council-of-nicaea-was-both>
2. Doron, Reuven, *One New Man*. Cedar Rapids, IA.: Arrow Publications, Incorporated. 1993, 89.
3. <https://aish.com/new-research-presumes-christopher-columbus-was-jewish/?src=ac>
4. Ibid, 115.
5. Ryabinov, Alyosha, *The Hidden Elephant*. 2024.
6. Wilson, M.T., *The Ruth-like Church: Discovering the Role of Christians in Israel's Redemption within The Book of Ruth*. Marondera, Zimbabwe: Yeshua's Harvest Ministries. 2014.

## The Neighborhood Bully

Well, the neighborhood bully, he's just one man  
His enemies say he's on their land  
They got him outnumbered about a million to one  
He got no place to escape to, no place to run  
He's the neighborhood bully.

The neighborhood bully he just lives to survive  
He's criticized and condemned for being alive  
He's not supposed to fight back, he's supposed to have thick skin  
He's supposed to lay down and die when his door is kicked in  
He's the neighborhood bully.

The neighborhood bully been driven out of every land  
He's wandered the earth an exiled man  
Seen his family scattered, his people hounded and torn  
He's always on trial for just being born  
He's the neighborhood bully.

Well, he knocked out a lynch mob, he was criticized  
Old women condemned him, said he should apologize  
Then he destroyed a bomb factory, nobody was glad  
The bombs were meant for him. He was supposed to feel bad  
He's the neighborhood bully.

Well, the chances are against it, and the odds are slim  
That he'll live by the rules that the world makes for him  
'Cause there's a noose at his neck and a gun at his back  
And a license to kill him is given out to every maniac  
He's the neighborhood bully.

Well, he got no allies to really speak of  
What he gets he must pay for, he don't get it out of love  
He buys obsolete weapons and he won't be denied  
But no one sends flesh and blood to fight by his side  
He's the neighborhood bully.

Well, he's surrounded by pacifists who all want peace  
They pray for it nightly that the bloodshed must cease  
Now, they wouldn't hurt a fly. To hurt one they would weep  
They lay and they wait for this bully to fall asleep  
He's the neighborhood bully.

Every empire that's enslaved him is gone  
Egypt and Rome, even the great Babylon  
He's made a garden of paradise in the desert sand  
In bed with nobody, under no one's command  
He's the neighborhood bully.

Now his holiest books have been trampled upon  
No contract that he signed was worth that what it was written on  
He took the crumbs of the world and he turned it into wealth  
Took sickness and disease and he turned it into health  
He's the neighborhood bully.

What's anybody indebted to him for?  
Nothing, they say. He just likes to cause war  
Pride and prejudice and superstition indeed  
They wait for this bully like a dog waits for feed  
He's the neighborhood bully.

What has he done to wear so many scars?

Does he change the course of rivers? Does he pollute the moon  
and stars?

Neighborhood bully, standing on the hill  
Running out the clock, time standing still  
Neighborhood bully.

(Words & Music by Bob Dylan ©1983 Special Rider Music.)



## **Netanyahu's Speech at the UN General Assembly**

27 September 2024

Prime Minister Netanyahu's speech was a Churchill moment for Israel and the Western World. Like Churchill, Netanyahu is not necessarily loved by his people, but he is a fighter, and God has raised him up as a warrior for his nation at this hour.

This is the full transcript of his speech:

"Mr. President, Ladies and gentlemen, I didn't intend to come here this year. My country is at war, fighting for its life.

But after I heard the lies and slanders leveled at my country by many of the speakers at this podium, I decided to come here and set the record straight. I decided to come here to speak for my people.

To speak for my country, to speak for the truth. And here's the truth: Israel seeks peace. Israel yearns for peace. Israel has made peace and will make peace again. Yet we face savage enemies who seek our annihilation, and we must defend ourselves against them.

These savage murderers, our enemies, seek not only to destroy us, but they seek to destroy our common civilization and return all of us to a dark age of tyranny and terror. When I spoke here last year, I said we face the same timeless choice that Moses put before the people of Israel thousands of years ago, as we were about to enter the Promised Land. Moses told us that our actions would determine whether we bequeath to future generations a blessing or a curse.

And that is the choice we face today: the curse of Iran's unremitting aggression or the blessing of a historic reconciliation between Arab and Jew. In the days that followed that speech, the blessing I spoke of came into sharper focus.

A normalization deal between Saudi Arabia and Israel seemed closer than ever. But then came the curse of October 7th. Thousands of Iranian-backed Hamas terrorists from Gaza burst into Israel in pickup trucks and on motorcycles, and they committed unimaginable atrocities.

They savagely murdered 1,200 people. They raped and mutilated women. They beheaded men. They burned babies alive. They burned entire families alive—babies, children, parents, grandparents. It seems reminiscent of the Nazi Holocaust.

Hamas kidnapped 251 people from dozens of different countries, dragging them into the dungeons of Gaza. Israel has brought home 154 of these hostages, including 117 who returned alive. I want to assure you, we will not rest until the remaining hostages are brought home too, and some of their family members are here with us today. I ask you to stand up.

With us is Eli Shtivi, whose son Idan was abducted from the Nova music festival. That was his crime—a music festival. And these murderous monsters took him. Koby Samerano, whose son Jonathan was murdered, and his corpse was taken into the dungeons, into the terror tunnels of Gaza—a corpse held hostage.

Salem Alatrash, whose brother Mohammad, a brave Arab Israeli soldier, was murdered. His body, too, was taken to Gaza. And so

was the body of Ifat Haiman's daughter, Inbar, who was brutally murdered at that same music festival.

With us is Sharon Sharabi, whose brother Yossi was murdered, and who prays for his older brother Eli, who is still held hostage in Gaza. And with us too is Yizhar Lifshitz from Kibbutz Nir Oz, a kibbutz that was wiped out by the terrorists.

Thankfully, we achieved the release of his mother, Yocheved, but his father, Oded, is still languishing in the underground terrorist hell of Hamas. I again promise you we will return your loved ones home. We will not spare that effort until this holy mission is accomplished.

Ladies and gentlemen, the curse of October 7th began when Hamas invaded Israel from Gaza, but it didn't end there. Israel was soon forced to defend itself on six more war fronts organized by Iran. On October 8th, Hezbollah attacked us from Lebanon. Since then, they have fired over 8,000 rockets at our towns and cities, at our civilians, at our children. Two weeks later, the Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen launched drones and missiles at Israel, the first of 250 such attacks, including one yesterday aimed at Tel Aviv. Iran's Shiite militias in Syria and Iraq have targeted Israel dozens of times over the past year as well.

Fueled by Iran, Palestinian terrorists in Judea and Samaria perpetrated scores of attacks there and throughout Israel. And last April, for the first time ever, Iran directly attacked Israel from its own territory.

Firing 300 drones, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles at us. I have a message for the tyrants of Tehran: If you strike us, we will

strike you. There is no place—there is no place in Iran—that the long arm of Israel cannot reach. And that's true of the entire Middle East.

Far from being lambs led to the slaughter, Israel's soldiers have fought back with incredible courage and with heroic sacrifice. And I have another message for this assembly and for the world outside this hall: We are winning.

Ladies and gentlemen, as Israel defends itself against Iran in this seven-front war, the lines separating the blessing and the curse could not be clearer. This is the map I presented here last year. It's a map of a blessing.

It shows Israel and its Arab partners forming a land bridge connecting Asia and Europe. Between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, across this bridge, we will lay rail lines, energy pipelines, and fiber optic cables, and this will serve the betterment of 2 billion people.

Now look at this second map. It's a map of a curse. It's a map of an arc of terror that Iran has created and imposed from the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean. Iran's malignant arc has shut down international waterways.

It cuts off trade, it destroys nations from within and inflicts misery on millions. On the one hand, a bright blessing—a future of hope. On the other hand, a dark future of despair. And if you think this dark map is only a curse for Israel, then you should think again.

Because Iran's aggression, if it's not checked, will endanger every single country in the Middle East, and many, many countries in the rest of the world, because Iran seeks to impose its radicalism well beyond the Middle East.

That's why it funds terror networks on five continents. That's why it builds ballistic missiles for nuclear warheads to threaten the entire world. For too long, the world has appeased Iran. It turned a blind eye to its internal repression. It turned a blind eye to its external aggression. Well, that appeasement must end. And that appeasement must end now.

Nations of the world should support the brave people of Iran who want to rid themselves of this evil regime. Responsible governments should not only support Israel in rolling back Iran's aggression, but they should join Israel. They should join Israel in stopping Iran's nuclear weapons program.

In this body and the Security Council, we're going to have a deliberation in a few months. And I call on the Security Council to snap back UN Security Council sanctions against Iran because we must all do everything in our power to ensure that Iran never gets nuclear weapons. For decades, I've been warning the world against Iran's nuclear program. Our actions delayed this program by perhaps a decade, but we haven't stopped it. We've delayed it, but we haven't stopped it. Iran now seeks to weaponize its nuclear program. For the sake of the peace and security of all your countries.

For the sake of the peace and security of the entire world, we must not let that happen. And I assure you, Israel will do everything in its power to make sure it doesn't happen.

So, ladies and gentlemen, the question before us is simple: Which of these two maps that I showed you will shape our future? Will it be the blessings of peace and prosperity for Israel, our Arab partners, and the rest of the world?

Or will it be the curse in which Iran and its proxies spread carnage and chaos everywhere? Israel has already made its choice. We've decided to advance the blessing. We're building a partnership for peace with our Arab neighbors while fighting the forces of terror that threaten that peace.

For nearly a year, the brave men and women of the IDF have been systematically crushing Hamas's terror army that once ruled Gaza. On October 7th, the day of that invasion into Israel, that terror army numbered nearly 40,000 terrorists. It was armed with more than 15,000 rockets. It had 350 miles of terror tunnels—an underground network bigger than the New York subway system—which they used to wreak havoc above and below ground.

A year later, the IDF has killed or captured more than half of these terrorists, destroyed over 90% of their rocket arsenal, and eliminated the key segments of their terror tunnel network.

In measured military operations, we destroyed nearly all of Hamas's terror battalions—23 out of 24 battalions. Now, to complete our victory, we are focused on mopping up Hamas's remaining fighting capabilities.

We are taking out senior terrorist commanders and destroying remaining terrorist infrastructure. But all the while, we remain

focused on our sacred mission: bringing our hostages home, and we will not stop until that mission is complete.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, even with Hamas's greatly diminished military capability, the terrorists still exercise some governing power in Gaza by stealing the food that we enable aid agencies to bring into Gaza.

Hamas steals the food, and then they hike the prices. They feed their bellies, and then they fill their coffers with money they extort from their own people. They sell the stolen food at exorbitant prices, and that's how they stay in power. Well, this too has to end, and we're working to bring it to an end.

And the reason is simple: because if Hamas stays in power, it will regroup, rearm, and attack Israel again and again and again, as it has vowed to do. So, Hamas has to go.

Just imagine, for those who say Hamas has to stay, it has to be part of a post-war Gaza—imagine, in a post-war situation after World War II, allowing the defeated Nazis in 1945 to rebuild Germany? It's inconceivable. It's ridiculous. It didn't happen then, and it's not going to happen now.

This is why Israel will reject any role for Hamas in a post-war Gaza. We don't seek to resettle Gaza. <sup>[1]</sup> What we seek is a demilitarized and de-radicalized Gaza. Only then can we ensure that this round of fighting will be the last round of fighting.

We are ready to work with regional and other partners to support a local civilian administration in Gaza, committed to peaceful coexistence.

As for the hostages, I have a message for the Hamas captors: Let them go. Let them go. All of them. Those alive today must be returned alive, and the remains of those whom you brutally killed must be returned to their families. Those families here with us today and others in Israel deserve to have a resting place for their loved ones. A place where they can grieve and remember them.

Ladies and gentlemen, this war can come to an end now. All that has to happen is for Hamas to surrender, lay down its arms, and release all the hostages. But if they don't, we will fight until we achieve victory. Total victory. There is no substitute for it.

Israel must also defeat Hezbollah in Lebanon. Hezbollah is the quintessential terror organization in the world today.

It has tentacles that span all continents. It has murdered more Americans and more Frenchmen than any group except Bin Laden. It's murdered the citizens of many countries represented in this room. And it has attacked Israel viciously over the last 20 years.

In the last year, completely unprovoked, a day after the Hamas massacre on October 7th, Hezbollah began attacks against Israel, which forced more than 60,000 Israelis on our northern border to leave their homes, becoming refugees in their own land.

Hezbollah turned vibrant towns in the north of Israel into ghost towns. So, I want you to think about this in equivalent American terms. Just imagine if terrorists turned El Paso and San Diego into ghost towns.



Then ask yourself: How long would the American government tolerate that? A day, a week, a month? I doubt they would tolerate it even for a single day.

Yet Israel has been tolerating this intolerable situation for nearly a year. Well, I've come here today to say enough is enough.

We won't rest until our citizens can return safely to their homes. We will not accept a terror army perched on our northern border, able to perpetrate another October 7th-style massacre.

For 18 years, Hezbollah brazenly refused to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which requires it to move its forces away from our borders. Instead, Hezbollah moved right up to our border. They secretly dug terror tunnels to infiltrate our communities and indiscriminately fired thousands of rockets into our towns and villages.

They fire these rockets and missiles not from military sites—they do that too—but they fire those rockets and missiles after they place them in schools, in hospitals, in apartment buildings, and in the private homes of the citizens of Lebanon. They endanger their own people. They put a missile in every kitchen.

A rocket in every garage. I said to the people of Lebanon this week: Get out of the death trap that Hezbollah has put you in. Don't let Nasrallah drag Lebanon into the abyss. We're not at war with you. We're at war with Hezbollah, which has hijacked your country and threatens to destroy ours.

As long as Hezbollah chooses the path of war, Israel has no choice. And Israel has every right to remove this threat and

return our citizens to their homes safely, and that's exactly what we're doing.

Just this week, the IDF destroyed large percentages of Hezbollah's rockets, which were built with Iran's funding for three decades. We took out senior military commanders who not only shed Israeli blood but American and French blood as well.

And then we took out their replacements. And then the replacements of their replacements. And we'll continue degrading Hezbollah until all our objectives are met.

Ladies and gentlemen, we're committed to removing the curse of terrorism that threatens all civilized societies. But to truly realize the blessing of a new Middle East, we must continue the path we paved with the Abraham Accords four years ago. Above all, this means achieving a historic peace agreement between Israel and Saudi Arabia.

And having seen the blessings that we've already brought with the Abraham Accords, the millions of Israelis who have already flown back and forth across the Arabian Peninsula over the skies of Saudi Arabia to the Gulf countries, the trade, the tourism, the joint ventures, the peace—I say to you, what blessings such a peace with Saudi Arabia would bring.

It would be a boon to the security and economy of our two countries. It would boost trade and tourism across the region. It would help transform the Middle East into a global juggernaut.

Our two countries could cooperate on energy, water, agriculture, artificial intelligence, and many, many other fields. Such a peace, I

am sure, would be a true pivot of history. It would usher in a historic reconciliation between the Arab world and Israel, between Islam and Judaism, between Mecca and Jerusalem.

While Israel is committed to achieving such a peace, Iran and its terror proxies are committed to scuttling it. That's why one of the best ways to foil Iran's nefarious designs is to achieve the peace.

Such a peace would be the foundation for an even broader Abrahamic alliance, and that alliance would include the United States, Israel's current Arab peace partners, Saudi Arabia, and others who choose the blessing of peace.

It would advance security and prosperity across the Middle East and bring enormous benefits to the rest of the world. With American support and leadership, I believe this vision can materialize much sooner than people think. And as the Prime Minister of Israel, I will do everything in my power to make it happen. This is an opportunity that we and the world should not let go by.

Ladies and gentlemen, Israel has made its choice. We seek to move forward to a bright age of prosperity and peace. Iran and its proxies have also made their choice. They want to move back to a dark age of terror and war.

And now I have a question, and I pose that question to you: What choice will you make? Will your nation stand with Israel? Will you stand with democracy and peace? Or will you stand with Iran, a brutal dictatorship that subjugates its own people and exports terrorism across the globe?

In this battle between good and evil, there must be no equivocation. When you stand with Israel, you stand for your own values and your own interests. Yes, we're defending ourselves, but we're also defending you against a common enemy that, through violence and terror, seeks to destroy our way of life. So, there should be no confusion about this, but unfortunately, there is a lot of it in many countries and in this very hall, as I've just heard.

Good is portrayed as evil, and evil is portrayed as good.

We see this moral confusion when Israel is falsely accused of genocide when we defend ourselves against enemies who try to commit genocide against us. We see this too when Israel is absurdly accused by the ICC Prosecutor of deliberately starving Palestinians in Gaza.

What an absurdity. We help bring in 700,000 tons of food into Gaza. That's more than 3,000 calories a day for every man, woman, and child in Gaza. We see this moral confusion when Israel is falsely accused of deliberately targeting civilians.

We don't want to see a single innocent person die. That's always a tragedy. And that's why we do so much to minimize civilian casualties, even as our enemies use civilians as human shields. And no army has done what Israel is doing to minimize civilian casualties. We drop flyers. We send text messages. We make phone calls by the millions to ensure that Palestinian civilians get out of harm's way. We spare no effort in this noble pursuit.

We see yet another profound moral confusion when self-described progressives march against the democracy of Israel.

Don't they realize they support the Iranian-backed goons in Tehran and in Gaza, the goons who shot down protesters, murder women for not covering their hair, and hang gays in public squares? Some progressives.

According to the U.S. Director of National Intelligence, Iran funds and fuels many of the protesters against Israel. Who knows, maybe some of the protesters or even many of the protesters outside this building now?

Ladies and gentlemen, King Solomon, who reigned in our eternal capital, Jerusalem, 3,000 years ago, proclaimed something that is familiar to all of you. He said: There is nothing new under the sun.

Well, in an age of space travel, quantum physics, and artificial intelligence, some would argue that's a debatable statement. But one thing is undeniable: there is definitely nothing new at the United Nations.

Take it from me. I first spoke from this podium as Israel's ambassador to the UN in 1984. That's exactly 40 years ago. And in my maiden speech here, I spoke against a proposal to expel Israel from this body. Four decades later, I find myself defending Israel against that same preposterous proposal.

And who's leading the charge this time? Not Hamas, but Abbas.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. This is the man who claims he wants peace with Israel, yet he still refuses to condemn the horrific massacre of October 7th. He's still paying hundreds of millions to terrorists who murdered Israelis and Americans.

It's called Pay for Slay. The more you murder, the more you get paid.

And he still wages unremitting diplomatic warfare against Israel's right to exist and against Israel's right to defend itself. And by the way, they amount to the same thing, because if you can't defend yourself, you can't exist. Not in our neighborhood, certainly. And maybe not in yours.

Standing at this podium 40 years ago, I told the sponsors of that outrageous resolution to expel Israel: Gentlemen, check your fanaticism at the door. Today, I tell President Abbas and all of you who would shamefully support that resolution: Check your fanaticism at the door.

The singling out of the one and only Jewish state continues to be a moral stain on the United Nations. It has made this once-respected institution contemptible in the eyes of decent people everywhere. But for the Palestinians, this UN house of darkness is home court. They know that in this swamp of antisemitic bile, there's an automatic majority willing to demonize the Jewish state for anything. In this anti-Israel flat-earth society, any false charge, any outlandish allegation can muster a majority.

In the last decade, there have been more resolutions passed against Israel in this hall, in the UN General Assembly, than against the entire world combined. Actually, more than twice as many. Since 2014, this body condemned Israel 174 times.

It condemned all the other countries in the world 73 times. That's more than 100 extra condemnations for the Jewish state. What hypocrisy. What a double standard. What a joke.

So, all the speeches you heard today, all the hostility directed at Israel this year—it's not about Gaza; it's about Israel. It's always been about Israel. About Israel's very existence. And I say to you, until Israel, until the Jewish state, is treated like other nations, until this antisemitic swamp is drained, the UN will be viewed by fair-minded people everywhere as nothing more than a contemptuous farce.

And given the antisemitism at the UN, it should surprise no one that the prosecutor at the ICC, one of the UN's affiliated organs, is considering issuing arrest warrants against me and Israel's defense minister, the democratically elected leaders of the democratic state of Israel.

The ICC prosecutor's rush to judgment, his refusal to treat Israel with its independent courts the way other democracies are treated, is hard to explain by anything other than pure antisemitism.

Ladies and gentlemen, the real war criminals are not in Israel. They're in Iran. They're in Gaza, in Syria, in Lebanon, in Yemen. Those of you who stand with these war criminals, those of you who stand with evil against good, with the curse against the blessing, those of you who do so should be ashamed of yourselves.

But I have a message for you: Israel will win this battle. We will win this battle because we don't have a choice.

After generations in which our people were slaughtered, remorselessly butchered, and no one raised a finger in our defense, we now have a state. We now have a brave army, an army of incomparable courage, and we are defending ourselves. As the book of Samuel says in the Bible:

נֶצַח יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִשְׁקָר

"The eternity of Israel will not falter".

In the Jewish people's epic journey from antiquity, in our odyssey through the tempest and upheavals of modern times, that ancient promise has always been kept and it will hold true for all time.

To borrow a great poet's phrase: Israel will not go gently into that good night. We will never need to rage against the dying of the light because the torch of Israel will forever shine bright.

To the people of Israel and to the soldiers of Israel, I say: Be strong and of good courage.

חֲזִקוּ וְאַמְצוּ אֶל־תִּירָאוֹ וְאֶל־תַּעֲרָצוֹ מִפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ הוּא הַהֲלִיךְ עִמָּךְ לֹא יִרְפֶּךָ וְלֹא יַעֲזֹבְךָ  
עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל חַי

The people of Israel live now, tomorrow, forever."

[\(https://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-of-netanyahus-un-speech-enough-is-enough-he-says-of-hezbollah-also-warns-iran/\)](https://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-of-netanyahus-un-speech-enough-is-enough-he-says-of-hezbollah-also-warns-iran/)

1. Authors note: I strongly support Prime Minister Netanyahu's bold stand to finish the war in Gaza and Southern Lebanon. However, I do not believe Israel should surrender any territory



won in war that is part of their Biblical inheritance. When Israel withdrew from Southern Lebanon in 2000, Hezbollah set up a terrorist base from which they launched rockets on Israeli citizens. After Israel disengaged from Gaza in 2005, Hamas took control and turned it into a terrorist base from which Hamas launched its war against Israel on October 7, 2023.

## **Passing the Torch to the Next Generation**

*Even when I am old and gray,  
do not forsake me, my God,  
till I declare your power to the next generation,  
your mighty acts to all who are to come (Psalm 71:18).*

*The people served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua  
and of the elders who outlived him and who had seen all the  
great things the LORD had done for Israel (Judges 2:7).*

In the 2024 Summer Olympics more than 10,000 people participated in the passing of the torch from Olympia, Greece to Paris, France covering 3100 miles over 68 days. In the same way, the gospel message has been passed on from mentors to disciples over 80 generations.

I came to know the Lord as an 18-year-old Jewish hippie. I had been to Woodstock; I had lived in Berkely, and I had hitchhiked up and down the West Coast of the United States searching for truth, until I came to the end of myself, and He who is The Truth found me. This began a 55-year relationship with Yeshua, the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.

I came to the Lord during an era where God was moving and releasing His power upon my generation in the Jesus Movement, and the Charismatic Movement of the 70's and 80's. I have also had the privilege of knowing and sitting under the teaching of some of the great leaders of this era like Derek Prince, Art Katz, Robert Ewing and others. These great men of God are now with the Lord, but they have left us a legacy, that I have known, and have been entrusted to pass on to the next generation.

Daniel came into a position of great influence and favor with Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, at a young age, but was later forgotten by Belshazzar, the next generation king. At the opportune time though, he was brought back into prominence and service in his later years under Medo-Persian kings Darius and Cyrus.

It can be a temptation for younger leaders to put aside the advice of their elders, like Solomon's son Rehoboam who rejected the advice of his father's counsellors in favor of the advice of the young men who had grown up with him and served him. As a result, he lost his reign over ten tribes of Israel.

Like Daniel, I came into church leadership as an elder and Bible teacher at a young age. As I moved through my sixties, there were times when it seemed like I didn't fit into the plans of the next generation. I feel different now in my seventies. I am thankful for all that God did in my earlier years, but I am even more encouraged about what He is doing in my life today, and what He has planned for me to do into the future.

There is a powerful calling upon the next generation. Even if you didn't know it spiritually, you could know it by looking at the technological innovations available today that could help them reach the whole world in a generation. Satan knows this, and he has launched a ferocious attack against this generation. They need our help to prepare them for their mission, and God has a strategy for how to pass the torch.

There is a connection between the older generation and the younger. The younger generation needs the older generation, and the older generation needs the younger generation. The

younger generation needs to recognize that they are part of a continuing building of God's house and the story of His redemption through Messiah, and the older generation needs to be diligent to provide a solid foundation for the next generation to build upon.

As a young man, Joshua served his elders. In Exodus 24:13, Joshua is described as "Moses assistant," and served him faithfully for 40 years.

So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle (Exodus 33:11).

There are three unchanging principles of faithfulness in service in Scripture:

1. If we are faithful in small responsibilities, God will give us larger responsibilities (Luke 16:10).
2. If we are faithful in natural responsibilities, God will entrust us with true riches (Luke 16:11).
3. If we are faithful in serving another person, God will give us that which is our own (Luke 16:12).

There are many examples of young men serving older men in Scripture; even instances where the older men had significant character flaws.

1. Young Samuel served Eli the High Priest before he was raised up as a prophet and judge in Israel (1 Samuel 3:1).
2. Young David served King Saul before he ascended to the throne (1 Samuel 16:21).
3. Elisha served the Prophet Elijah before he received his double portion (2 Kings 3:11).
4. Timothy served Paul as a faithful son before he was raised up as an apostolic leader (1 Corinthians 4:17).

Joshua was an example of faithfulness over 40 years, and after Moses left the scene, God entrusted Joshua with the leadership of the nation for the next 50 years. In his last words to the nation of Israel, he challenged the elders to keep the ways of the Lord, and to train the next generation in the ways of the Lord:

*"Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).*

But the elders were not faithful to that call, and the next generation did not build properly on the foundation that Joshua had laid.

*When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel (Judges 2:10).*

The main calling of the older generation is to impart to the next generation the knowledge of the Lord, and we need to provide a godly example for them to follow; an example that they want to follow.

John was a disciple who came to know Jesus at an early age and was blessed to live a long fruitful life. Out of his experience and wisdom, accumulated by age, he addressed three generations of believers in his first epistle (1 John 2:12-14).

He commends youths because of their innocence: because they knew that their sins were forgiven, and they knew the Father.

He commends young men because of their strength: because they know the word of God and have overcome the wicked one.

But he commends fathers for one thing and underscores it twice: because they have known Him who is from the beginning.

I have passed through three stages of life, and as David said, “I have been young, and now I am old, and I have seen God’s faithfulness throughout my life” (Psalm 37:25). I have known Him and walked with Him through many challenges and many circumstances, and I have come to know and love more and more over the course of my life. Paul also stated, “I know Him in whom I have believed, and I want to know Him more” (2 Timothy 1:12, Philippians 3:10).

The main currency of walking with the Lord for many years is knowing Him, and the main task for our generation is passing the knowledge of God on to the next generation. This comes mainly

through mentoring relationships. Most young followers of Jesus do not want our generation to simply pass the torch to them; they want us to run together during these times, and God is turning the hearts of the generations toward each other.

*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet  
Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.  
And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,  
And the hearts of the children to their fathers,  
Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse (Malachi 4:5-6).*

We need to walk and work together in the bonds of love and mutual respect. I have seen this take place in my city where elders gather with next generation leaders to pray for unity and spiritual breakthrough. The time will eventually come to fully release the torch to the next generation.

*For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers (Acts 13:6).*

Regarding the Olympics, intergeneration prayer leader in Jerusalem, Rick Ridings states, “A friend from mainland China shared with me a revelation he had received: that the concept of ‘succession’ – passing the baton when we are at the end of our strength or life – is inherited from the pagan Greek worldview, much like runners in the Olympics pass the baton to the next runner. But the Lord showed my Chinese friend that the Hebraic worldview was for generations to learn to walk together, as seen in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This linking of three generations is also encouraged in the New Testament by the apostle John when he writes 1 John 2:12- to the ‘fathers’, ‘young men’, and ‘children’”. [1]

As the Scriptures state, we must maintain a continuity of praise as we pass the torch:

*One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts (Psalm 145:4).*

1. Ridings, Rick and Patricia, *Shifting Nations Through Houses of Prayer*. Brisbane, Australia: CHI-Books. 2019.



## **Prayers for Lebanon**

October 2, 2024

*Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed,  
Because His compassions fail not.  
They are new every morning;  
Great is Your faithfulness.  
"The Lord is my portion," says my soul,  
"Therefore I hope in Him!" (Lamentations 2:22-24)*

FR: "Today we are honored to have Nuna, one of the founders and leaders who along with her husband from the Beirut House of Prayer, and her group, have been faithfully on the wall holding up the entire nation of Lebanon during this time. We believe we've seen great answers to prayer, and there's so much more. We're honored to be able to pray with you in Lebanon for the purposes and the plans of God to succeed in your land with you. I'm just going to speak a blessing over you.

Father, we thank you for Nuna. We thank you for her courage, for her steadfastness, and for her passion. We believe that this is, particularly now, an Esther time for Nuna and for the Beirut House of Prayer, that you've called her for such a time as this. We thank you God for tremendous favor. Your favor surrounds her with a shield. We thank you God for a spirit of wisdom and revelation. You promise in James that you will give wisdom to those who ask for it, so we ask every day for great wisdom for Nuna.

We also declare renewed strength over you Nuna, over your husband, over everyone who's involved in the Beirut House of Prayer, that you would have supernaturally renewed strength.

That you would also have the shalom, the peace of God, in the midst of war, in the midst of difficulties, and most importantly that no weapon formed against you would prosper either spiritually or physically. We declare that God would protect you, protect your life, the lives of everyone in the Beirut House of Prayer, their property, that you would walk in divine health and that you would walk in divine peace, and that the joy of the Lord would be your strength in the midst of these difficulties. We love you, and we are so thankful for you in Jesus' name. Amen."

NM: Good morning, everyone. What a week! What a time we're living in! Every day we have new stories, new developments. I don't know where to begin. It's the people, we have so many refugees or IDP's (Internally Displaced People) around us. About one million people are now among us, and they're desperate. The situation in the whole land is heavy.

Last night there were so many bombings. Some nights are better than others, but it's every day. It's not only in the South, but also in the Beirut area, and in the Beqaa Valley. It's happening here. It's happening everywhere. Some people are not able to move. They are trapped inside because of the fear of being bombed. Many people have received people in their own home, like people fleeing from the South.

Personally, I lead an NGO (Non-governmental organization), and we are overwhelmed with so many people to help. Until now it was mainly Muslims, mainly Shiite people. But yesterday there was a call for all Christians to leave the border areas, so now we have a new wave of Christians that are arriving in our areas. I don't want to sound gloom and doom, but it's a very difficult situation, and it looks like it's not going to calm down now. More

targets are being hit, whether it's in the Beirut area or whether it's in the South. Many people have fled because of a message that they received that Israel, the IDF, is going to bombard in an area.

So, people are leaving, and many have no place to go. It is not obvious which shelter still has any room, so some people are sleeping on the streets. Some people are in public gardens. The situation is quite hard, but we know that on the good side, we know this is because of a change that's happening in the region. We know that anything that needs to happen will need to be with casualties.

We've been praying for open doors with Israel for a long time, but I never thought really what this implicated. I thought, yes, there would be war on the border, and then borders would open. I did not think that to have an open border, the cost would be a million people displaced. I did not think about that.

This dawned on me yesterday when I was praying. We had an Isaiah 19 watch, praying for the region, and it just dawned on me that God is answering our prayer, in a way I did not expect. I did not know the cost. I did not count the cost. Our prayers are working. Things are changing. The demography is changing. The power of Hezbollah is weakening. There's so much change in the whole region, not only in Lebanon, but also in Syria, in Iraq, in Jordan, in all these areas because God is doing something, and is changing the Middle East. Not only Lebanon, but the whole Middle East, and of course, there is a price to pay for a change.

Yes, we've been praying, realizing what the cost is. The only thing that keeps me joyful is that there is light at the end of the tunnel,

and a good change at the end of the tunnel. So, that's what I see. I know that this is for the good. I know this is not for destruction. I know this is not for doom, but it is for the good of the whole region. It is for our good, the good of our children, and the good of the region. It keeps us in the prayer room contending, but also hopeful and peaceful, knowing that God is doing something.

So, we're following the news, of course, like everyone else. Following the news daily, and all the attacks, and all the people who are fleeing, or dying, or attacked, or whatever. If I watch the news, it's hard to pray after. It's hard to pray because it's so much. This is what the news is doing. The news is keeping people under a heavy burden, and a heavy cloud. Like it's a dark cloud that is coming over the people when you're watching the news. So, I have to go to the prayer room often. I have to go because that's where I'm disconnected from the world and go into a different place.

What we're doing is having a kitchen, so we're doing food for 400 people a day, just trying to help those who have nothing. When they go to a shelter, sometimes it's like schools. So, they don't have a kitchen. They don't even have showers. They don't have anything to cook, or anything. So, we were trying to help as much as we can. So, the kitchen of the church has been transformed into a cooking place, and I'm there every day. Now I'm in between the kitchen with the cooking, and the prayer room, which is a way for me to be in the prayer house every day. So, the situation is really hard, it's really hard. And, we have hope, and we have promises.

I have seen a vision my head. I've seen a chess board, and I've seen the elimination of key players on the chess board for a

reason. Sometimes you sacrifice a player on your chess board because you had a plan. So, for those who play chess, you sacrifice even a big person, a big entity. And I saw Iran, that this was the chess board, and Iran was sacrificing players on the chess board because they have a different agenda, because they have something else that they're planning, and something else that they want to achieve. They want nuclear. I don't know what they want, but I've seen the sacrificing of major players on the chess board. This is what I felt, God is showing me this chess board. So, I believe that we will have more people being killed in the region, especially all the leaders of the Hezbollah, and many casualties of war around them.

Winter is coming soon. We had rain last night, and we had people sleeping on the street in the rain. And all night I was just thinking of all these people that are displaced. In a minute, they just left their houses, and I was just thinking of these people. They're in the rain with kids. There's no shelter, no blankets, no mattress, nothing. Some of them just sleep in cars because they don't know where to go.

So that's the situation. It's hard to explain because there's so much. There's so much. It's hard to explain, and to explain the feelings of people. So, people here are feeling in one way relief, because some Hezbollah people are dying, but they're also very angry with Israel because of all the destruction and the mass killing with heavy bombings. I understand the feeling. I understand that. When you don't have a vision, we don't know what is at the end of the tunnel, and why this is happening. I understand that. This is a legitimate feeling, but how can you change that? It will take time to change that, and it will take a lot

to change that. But we've been faithfully in the prayer house every day, every day praying for the situation."

FR: "Thank you Nuna. It's hard even for us to quite wrap our heads around the idea of a million people suddenly displaced and coming and flooding Beirut and the northern part of Lebanon."

NM: "You have to understand that this is a 5th of the population. It's not just a million people. In the States, a million people are not a huge number. It is huge, but it's not huge in comparison to a five million people population, and then one million, it's a fifth of the population that is displaced now."

FR: "Yeah, it's hard to wrap our heads around that. We just got off of an hour of praying for Israel. Right now, we need to focus our prayers, not on the IDF, not on Israel. What we need to focus on is, we need to focus on the people in Lebanon, particularly the Christians in Lebanon, and particularly Nuna and her group. I can't imagine your NGO is geared for maybe helping several hundred people, perhaps 1000 at the most, but certainly not a million, so you need absolutely supernatural help, and so we need to have people praying into that. We're honored for the little bit that we can do in terms of praying for you and for your group in Beirut. And I'm glad that God is helping you to see beyond the immediate, and give you hope for a shift in Lebanon."

DP: "As you spoke, I thought about a book that was written by Joel Richardson called *The Mystery of Catastrophe*. It's about all the displacements that happens with war, and the catastrophes of nature, and people that are displaced, and how the Lord over the centuries, over the millennia, has used that in bringing people to a place where they can hear the gospel."

I just want to pray for Nuna, and the members of her NGO and others that are coming. Father, we ask for supernatural provision. We ask for a multiplication of resources. Father, I ask for a refreshing and a refueling of your Spirit and strength into Nuna and her friends. Lord, I thank you for the wisdom and revelation you give them in this hour. Father, I thank you that you are their hope, and you are the end of the story. You are the light at the end of the tunnel. You are bringing change that will bring blessing. You are bringing change that will further the gospel, which will advance the kingdom and bring a harvest within Lebanon.

So, father, even as Christians are displaced, I pray that you would bring alongside Nuna displaced Christians that want to serve even in the midst of their great crisis and uncertainty. Father, would you build a community of believers that can be a light among the Shia, even among Sunni there. Father, that you would just be that light. And Lord, would you continue to embrace them with your shalom in the midst of this war.

Father, and would you continue to answer the prayer for Nuna that there will be a better relationship between Lebanon and Israel, and that this is breaking open the gates that will bring about that renewed relationship and renewed flow of the spirit between the two countries. And Lord, we just praise you for what you're doing even when we don't understand, and we ask for divine protection over Nuna and her people. Lord, and we just say that you would supernaturally protect those that need to hear the gospel in this hour. Lord, get your full reward Yeshua, and in your name we pray. Amen."

MF: “I want to declare Psalm 32:7 over Nuna, your house of prayer in Beirut, and also the Lebanese people.

Father, we thank you for your faithfulness to the sons of men on the earth that have been working in partnership with you. Father, we thank you for your goodness and your shelter. You are a hiding place for me. You, Oh Lord, preserve me from trouble. You surround me with songs and shouts of deliverance. Sela.

Father, I thank you for the heart of Nuna, that even in the midst of great warfare, she sees the hope, the new thing that you are doing in her midst. Father, that you would strengthen the arms of those who are laboring, to be a help, to be a source of comfort for those who are suffering. Father, thank you for your shelter. I thank you, Father, for the hiding place that is your name where the righteous have access to run into those places, Lord. And so, Father, I thank you for courage and bravery in this time of great warfare and loss. Father, I thank you that in the place where there is devastation, we declare your healing. We declare the balm of Gilead over those places where there has been much loss, for the glory of your name. Amen.”

LM: “Father, we do acknowledge you as the God, the maker of heaven and earth. You are the one who made the Middle East. You are the one who chose a people on the earth, at a location where your throne will preside, and Lebanon is part of that land. And Father, we know that you are acting in your faithfulness, and in your goodness, and in your love for Lebanon, for the people in the land. And Father, we are watching you do what is beyond our imagination, and we are going to be relentless and praying in faith that there will be a partnership and a brotherhood established, and what the enemy has intended for evil, even now



for the words and the attitude and the emotional negativity that is happening. We know Father, we're looking to you Lord that in the coming days and months, that there will be a shift in attitude, that there will be the ability, the supernatural ability, to see things from your perspective, to see clearly, Lord, from both sides. Lord, that there will be clear perspectives on the situation on what Israel is doing. Father, that there will be a partnership established that there will not be a military zone, but out of a brotherhood, out of a partnership, there will be coming together of working together of a reigning, ruling governing together.

Father, we pray for these million displaced will come back with a heart of gratitude for the shift, for the cleansing. Father, we ask that the body of Christ, the ecclesia, would arise in this hour in power. That they would arise in this hour to partner with you fully on behalf of the nation for the Christian government to be reestablished, a Christian ecclesia, and a government in the land to be established. Father, we just commit the land to you. Let your purposes go forth in the power of your name, this agreement with you to be established and to go in power. In your name we pray. Amen.”

SB: “I want to pray for Luna, and I want to declare Isaiah 29:17-20:

*Is it not yet a very little while  
Till Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field,  
And the fruitful field be esteemed as a forest?  
In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book,  
And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of  
darkness.  
The humble also shall increase their joy in the Lord,*

*And the poor among men shall rejoice  
In the Holy One of Israel.  
For the terrible one is brought to nothing,  
The scornful one is consumed,  
And all who watch for iniquity are cut off—*

Lord, we ask you that you would have mercy on the citizens in Lebanon, and that, Lord, we pray even that Israel will form some kind of connection between them. Lord God, even now, to help their struggling. We pray and ask you for multiplied help, multiplied miracles, multiplied food, and multiplied protection upon them. We declare Psalm 91 protection over Nuna, and all the workers there. And Lord, we ask that you give miracle upon miracles as they serve, and keep them protected, Lord. Don't let Hezbollah turn against anybody there. We block that, and we declare that shall not happen. In Jesus' name. Amen."

FR: It is so important for the people in Israel to be praying for the people in Lebanon. This is something that's going to bring about. I don't know how to describe this, but there's something supernatural that happens when we across nations pray for this."

AC: "Thank you for Nuna, for her involvement, that you have anointed her to stand for such a time like this. Lord Jesus, to stand for her nation, Father God, to see it delivered. And I declare, Father God, as she prayed from Isaiah 19, Lord Jesus, that that you made Lebanon the work of your hand. Assyria is the work of your hand. Do the work of your hand in them, and with them for your glory, and for your goodness. And I declare that you are bigger and mightier than any situation and any need that they have.

I pray and declare unity not only among the believers, but all the Lebanese people that are scattered and wonder what is happening. I pray for unity and to be totally aware of the situation. Father God, we declare, Lord Jesus, that soon there will come the deliverance of the goodness of the Lord over Lebanon. Your goodness like the sea to cover all the land of Lebanon. Father God, we pray, we thank you, we praise you, and we say Lord Jesus let your will be done in Lebanon as you have declared it in heaven. In Yeshua's mighty name. Amen."

CL: "Father, we remember that your son Yeshua, as a little baby, was a refugee, and he went on a donkey down to Egypt. And Father, we cry out for these refugees. We ask that as you watched over your son, you will watch over these sons and daughters of yours, sleeping in the parks, and in the rain, and so on. We thank you for your mercy. We thank you Yeshua for knowing what it was like, and so you suffer with them in all their suffering. As you said to Israel, and I'm sure to the Lebanese people too, in all their sufferings, you suffered also.

So, we thank you Father for great mercy, for great multiplied provision whether it's through Nuna and her group or through others that you'll make a way. You'll make a shelter. You'll be the rock under their feet. That you'll reveal yourself to them when they're in the pit. When we go down the mirey pit, it is you who lift us up and put our feet on a rock, who is Jesus himself. We thank you for this, and we cry out for all these ones. Multiply your salvations supernaturally, even Yeshua, the man in white, will you visit them in the rain, without any shelter. Visit them and show yourself strong on their behalf.

We thank you Lord, and I just want to declare the end of Isaiah 19:23-25:

*In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians. In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria (which includes Lebanon) —a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.”*

So, we want to release great blessings upon Lebanon now. The bride is coming out of Lebanon. We release blessings from all of us, from all our different countries. From Zion, we bless you Lebanon. We bless you the bride, and we thank you Lord, you have such a beautiful calling for Lebanon. And even in their extreme distresses now, we bless them all and ask the Lord for a merciful turn around as quickly as possible. Lord, show yourself strong on behalf of your bride in Lebanon. We pray in Jesus beautiful name. Amen,”

CG: Nuna, my heart is heavy for you and with you, and as you were sharing, several scriptures just kept coming to mind, because we all know there's such power in the word of God. And I just want to speak these words of the truth of scripture over you and your partners and over the citizens that are still affected by what is going on.

I speak from Philippians 4:19:

*And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

I speak his word over you from Isaiah 55:8-9. This is so much bigger than we can fully understand, but what we're seeing is ultimately for God's glory.

*“For My thoughts are not your thoughts,  
Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord.  
“For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
So are My ways higher than your ways,  
And My thoughts than your thoughts.”*

Father, we thank you that your ways are perfect, and you are at work. I speak your word over Nuna from Isaiah 41:10:

*Fear not, for I am with you;  
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you,  
Yes, I will help you,  
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.*

And Father your word assures us in Micah 7:7 that as we pray, you hear us.

*Therefore I will look to the Lord;  
I will wait for the God of my salvation;  
My God will hear me.*

And finally, Nuna his word in Isaiah 40:1:

*Comfort, yes, comfort My people!"*  
*Says your God.*

So, I ask you Holy Spirit, seal words of truth over Nuna's heart and her mind, over the people working with her. That rather than watching the news, as all of us are distressed when we see what's going on. Father, that we would be watching for you to perform your word. I ask you Holy Spirit bring a heavy hand of blessing and protection and comfort over Nuna, over her loved ones, over her friends, her companions, Father.

Bring your comfort to bear on the people in the region who are suffering, and who have been so horribly displaced. God, we do thank you, Lord, that ultimately, we know this will be for your glory Lord God. And while you are at work, Oh Lord, I'm asking you to pour out your great hand of mercy and comfort for Nuna and this region. I pray to you Lord Jesus Christ, our soon coming king. Amen."

FR: "Nuna I just want to declare over you as well. I'm just thinking of how Jesus gathered thousands of people, and there was not enough food. And he said to the disciples, "You feed them." And the disciples were like, "What are you talking about?" And yet all the people were fed. And so, I think it's time for that kind of a supernatural miracle that the Lord would multiply all the resources that you have supernaturally.

I just want to speak a blessing over you, that people would have their physical needs met, but also, they need hope and you and your group are able to provide that. So, may God give you wisdom and favor that you would do that, and that you would see in the midst of this difficulty a harvest like has never

happened before in Lebanon. May the Lord bring you supernatural grace to do his will and his work.

I just feel so strongly that God has called you for such a time as this, and he's going to give you the strength to meet every single need that you have. By man, it's completely impossible, but with God, nothing is too difficult. So, we declare that over you in Jesus' name."

NM: "I want to add one thing. One thing that I've been praying in the prayer house is that the Lord will shorten the time. We know it's tribulation, but that the Lord will shorten that time. First, we know that it is Rosh Hashanah today, and it's a new year, but it's not just a new year, but a new era. And I read somewhere that it's also a Jubilee year, which is the 70th jubilee. So, I'm just declaring this for us, a new era, a jubilee of jubilees, where the captives will be set free. Those who are in darkness will see the light. Those who are captive under a spirit of deception and their eyes veiled will be freed to see the truth. That it will be a year of the release of the captives, a year of change. I just believe it, and that's what I've been proclaiming and praying in the prayer house."

VM: "I'm so thankful for what's been shared, the powerful, powerful prayers. And I pray, Lord, that you would take up these prayers into your incense bowls, and that you would hear. That you would answer because you are indeed overturning many things in this region. You are reaching out to the people in this region. And I pray that every prayer will be answered, and every heart's desire toward you be fulfilled, for a profound move of your Holy Spirit among the people of Lebanon, especially those who are in the streets. Lord, show yourself, reveal yourself to the

Lebanese people. And we come with expectation because you have heard these powerful prayers. We look to you for how you will answer them. Amen.”

*Is it not yet a very little while  
Till Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field,  
And the fruitful field be esteemed as a forest (Isaiah 29:17)?*

(Update: As of January 17, 2025, Lebanon has elected a new President and seated a new Prime Minister. Hope has arisen in the Lebanese people for a new start and a time of fruitfulness in the nation after 40 years of war and oppression.)



## Redrawing the Map of the Middle East

We are living in a time when God is redrawing the map of the Middle East. It is a time of tremendous shifting, and a time of tremendous change. It is a time of sudden surprises where evil rulers and systems of evil are being brought down. It is also a time of huge storms. A storm exposes roots of a tree, but a huge storm uproots the tree. It is a time of great shaking.

*Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.” Now this, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain (Hebrews 12:26-27).*

It is a time when God is shifting and uprooting governments on the earth, as well as establishing his unshakable government. God not only told who will sit on the throne (Yeshua, the son of David), but where his throne will be established (Jerusalem).

*Yet I have set My King  
On My holy hill of Zion” (Psalm 2:6).*

God told the Prophet Jeremiah that he would play a part in establishing God’s rulership in the nations:

*See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms,  
To root out and to pull down,  
To destroy and to throw down,  
To build and to plant” (Jeremiah 1:10).*

We as God's people also play a part in bringing his government to bear in the earth, and preparing for the day of his return.

*If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land (2 Chronicles 7:14)*

When he returns, he will judge between the sheep and the goat nations.

*When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left (Matthew 25:31-33).*

So, how should we pray for the nations of the Middle East? The Lord God of Israel establishes the boundaries and the times of nations. It's not determined by the United Nations. In Isaiah God says:

*Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket, And are counted as the small dust on the scales; Look, He lifts up the isles as a very little thing. (Isaiah 40:15).*

God is the one who sits in the heavens and establishes the times and boundaries of the nations, and there are moments in history where boundaries begin to change.

*And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him (Acts 17:26-27).*

Why does he change boundaries? So that people would seek him. As people come through the boundaries of the Lord, he begins moving in that place in a special way. For example, several years ago a tsunami erupted from the date line in the Pacific all the way back to Jerusalem, and certain countries along that pathway since that volcano erupted are radically beginning to experience a shifting of the Lord. Recently 300,000 people in Papua New Guinea were baptized in one day.

So, there are certain moments when God begins to shift and turn and move, and people begin to seek him, and they begin to see him do something extraordinary in their city, in their state, in their province, or in their nation. We wait on the Lord to come by the power of his Holy Spirit like he did on the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem that has affected all the nations. We're here again waiting for another outbreak of his Holy Spirit.

*When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations,  
When He separated the sons of Adam,  
He set the boundaries of the peoples  
According to the number of the children of Israel.  
For the Lord's portion is His people;  
Jacob is the place of His inheritance (Deuteronomy 32:8.9).*

Somehow what he is doing in this land, and what he's doing in the Jewish people affects the boundaries of the nations. From the

very beginning God knew that he was going to have a nation and a people through whom he would work to bring forth the Messiah, to bring forth the Bible, and to bring forth the knowledge of the one true God. The nation's boundaries and inheritance is somehow tied into Israel's inheritance and Israel operating in its inheritance. So we are praying for Israel to come into all that God has planned for them.

According to Romans 11, when they come alive again, when they begin to be grafted back, when they come into spiritual restoration, it be life from the dead for the whole world. If we think we see the move of God in Papua right now, what will happen if there is a mighty move of God here in Israel? Something will go out that will affect all the nations and bring the great harvest before the Lord returns.

Many modern conflicts arose from colonial powers when England, Portugal, Spain, France or Germany were ruling over colonies. This is especially true in the Middle East and in Africa. Many modern conflicts arise from colonial arbitrary borders that put historically warring tribes and peoples into the same modern nation, and other types of people who were a tribe, were divided into two modern nation states.

You see these big problems in Rwanda where peoples were put together that were traditionally warring people and forced into the same nation. We need to realize when the Bible is talking about nations, it's not talking about our modern nation states, it's talking about people groups, because the word in the Greek for nations is *ethnos*. It's the word from which we get ethnic. He created families, and families becomes tribes, and tribes becomes

a people group that are brought together by certain common factors.

God loves every ethnic group, every people group in the whole world. He created each one, and each one has special gifts. In the end in the Book Revelation it says that all the kings will bring the honor and the glory of their people into the New Jerusalem, where there's no sin and no darkness. Every nation will have been refined, purified, and able to bring a beautiful sacrifice. Each one has something of the honor and glory that no other nation or other ethnic group has. Those of us who are mixed blood have the heritage of each of those groups.

The empire spirit is a different spirit that tries to build evil systems of control. Look at the empires and the evil they have done. When you think of the evil that the Babylonians did, and the Greeks did under Alexander, the Romans and Nero and different emperors, and the empire Hitler was building. There's something about the empire spirit that wants to stop true ethnic identity. So, there's something very powerful as we pray for a group to come into their inheritance to be who God made them to be.

We right now in a season of war and of shifting boundaries. Almost every time you historically have a war, boundaries begin to shift. For example, after the war in Yugoslavia there were Serbians, and Croats and Bosnians, and they all had their stories. There was so much pain of all the things that had happened, and they came into a place of spiritual unity afterwards. The Christians began to forgive one another, and they began to pray, and God sovereignly overruled so that these very different people groups were no longer one Yugoslavia, but they

became their own nations. He changed the boundaries, and since then they have a good relationship with each other. Things began to change when people were in their own ethnic grouping rather than artificially forced together.

God is unraveling and pulling apart systems of evil in the world in different countries and in different regions. When we talk about the Middle East and what is God doing there since the beginning of October 7<sup>th</sup>. God is not just exposing roots, but he is uprooting. He said, "I want you to press in and keep praying until Hamas is no longer just exposed, but they're uprooted." He said, "I don't want you to stop short and pray that Israel will not stop short." This means that in order to do that, we need to pray that the governmental leader Prime Minister Netanyahu will stand up against the world's pressure to stop, and he'll say, "No we're not going to stop short of victory."

Can you imagine in World War II if the leaders of the West had stopped short because a lot of people were being killed by bombs in Germany. We can't feel sorry for these Nazis. This was a system of evil, and if the Western powers had not destroyed the Nazis and if they had not taken down Hitler then eventually Hitler would have won. You can just compromise and have a have a nice detente and cease fire with each other. Hitler was not into cease fires, he was into total victory, and the only way he could be taken care of was to totally uproot him. Then love could pour into the German people and help the German people to rebuild a country free from the Nazis.

We love Gaza so much that we prayed for years that Hamas would be uprooted out of Gaza. God loves Gaza, and he wants it to be free. We are in a war, and we need leaders who will stand

up to pressures and will not let those pressures make them stop short of victory. That's what has happened in the past with Hamas and Hezbollah. They would attack, send missiles, do all kinds of terrorist actions, and then Israel would begin to respond and the nations would say, "OK, it has to be proportionate. You stop now and let's do ceasefire." And what did that do? All it did was to prune the plant. What happens when you prune a plant, it grows stronger, it grows bigger! So, every time Israel would lose precious soldiers in these wars and yet the nation's would force Israel to stop. And Hamas would built more tunnels, they would get more rockets, and Iran would supply them with more rockets and more weapons. The same with Hezbollah.

We need to pray for wartime leaders in Israel and in the nations that will not make Israel stop short and just prune Hamas, and just prune Hezbollah, but they will uproot them for the sake of the people of Gaza because God loves the people of Gaza. It's not just for Israel that he's doing this, he's also doing it for the people of Gaza to be set free from the evil system. Lebanese leaders have said, "Do not stop praying, and don't stop short. Pray that Israel will finish. We have lived as slaves of Hezbollah for over 20 years, and they ruined our country. We had a beautiful prosperous country, and they destroyed it. Our only hope right now is that Israel will set us free from Hezbollah."

As ethnic boundaries are reestablished, there must first be an unraveling and pulling apart of evil systems that stand in the way. So, we need to pray for Churchill type leaders who stood up to the Nazis. He stood up to Hitler whereas the man before him Chamberlain who was Prime Minister kept saying, "All they want is peace," so I'll go to another conference, or we'll sign another cease fire and then they take one more country. He just kept

being led astray believing lies, and by that time Hitler's military had grown very strong and powerful.

If he had been stopped a lot earlier, it would have been a lot easier. Actually a lot of lives were saved because a leader grows up like Churchill. He was not a perfect man. He's not someone you would want as an elder in your church, but God used Winston Churchill because he was not going to stop, and he would never give up. So, they kept on fighting until they saw Hitler defeated. And that's what Israel needs now. And as imperfect as a Prime Minister Netanyahu is, and I'm not trying to say everything he does is right or perfect, but God put him in this place at this time to stand up to others.

The major turning point in Lebanon with Hezbollah was the whole thing with the pagers and the taking out of Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah. And with both of those things Prime Minister Netanyahu's main defense minister and generals who were counseling him said, "We can't do this. The whole world will turn against us. This is way too far. We can't do these things. We've got to do it the way it was always done before." But he stood up and went with what would really work, and there was minimal civilian casualties and we're beginning to see some border changes with Lebanon.

What's happened along Mount Hermon in the Golan Heights is not the end of all that we will see. The borders of Israel will be stretched into southern Lebanon. I didn't know how far it would be at this time, but definitely something is changing and we need to pray there will be new borders, that we will have a buffer zone that is Hamas free, a buffer zone that is Hezbollah free, but more than just a buffer zone we need to see Hezbollah and the Iranian regime uprooted. This is a time for these systems of evil to be



taken out, but first there has to be an unraveling of these evil systems. This is the time to persevere to receive the grace of God, the strength of God to set back the enemy in battle in order that there might be a mighty move of the Holy Spirit.

An example of what I'm talking about right now is the Kurdish people in the Middle East versus the Ottoman Empire spirit. The Ottomans were the people of Turkey who ruled for 400 years in Israel. Israel was occupied not by the Jews, but it was occupied by Islam, and for 400 years they ruled there. At the end of World War I there was an amazing thing when the Calvary charged, and it should never have worked, but these horses went right into the guns and the Turks were defeated and the Ottoman Empire fell apart.

But it is like the Ottoman Empire spirit is trying to rise again now in Turkey. The Kurds are an ethnic people that most believe are the ancient Medes in the Bible. The Kurdish people lived in the north corner of Iran and Iraq and the northeast corner of Syria and the very southern part of Turkey. And again, modern things divided up everything's after the Ottoman Empire fell apart, and they put these Kurds with people in Iraq who like Saddam Hussein committed genocide against them. They were put together with people like Assad in Syria that used chemical weapons against them. The Kurds just kept getting it from every side, but there's something very special about the Kurds.

Rick Ridings described two visions he had about the Kurds. The first one was in 2014 about a new season of the Middle East defined by the redrawing the borders. He saw angels being released who were being sent to reset borders according to their original ethnic calling. They focused on a Kurdish autonomous

area of present-day Iraq. There was a big artificial lake being created like a crater. There were angels with bulldozers and they were digging and digging for a lake, but there was no water. Then he saw an altar began to arise to the Lord and stone after stone was put on this altar. And as the altar rose, prayer rose, worship rose, and suddenly it started to rain. And it rained and it rained and it rained until it filled up that whole lake and then it began to overflow into Iran, into Syria, and into Turkey.

Rick has prophesied of a future Kurdistan which will be one of the great centers of revival in the Middle East. It will be one of the great centers of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Middle East. These people who have been so persecuted, who have been so destroyed at certain times by leaders in Iraq and Iran and Turkey and Syria, God is going to come on these people who have been so oppressed. And the amazing thing is when you get to know a Kurdish person and talk with them, they just love Israel. They're Muslim, but they have something in their hearts where they love Israel.

God is getting to plant. We want to uproot things like ISIS, Al Qaeda, Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Iranian regime, but we want to plant things like this revival and the move of the Holy Spirit among the Kurdish people. For that to come fully, something has to change in terms of the borders. We need to be praying for God send the border angels toward the Kurdish people. Lord, give them a unity together. Give them courage when they're so tired of battling for decades and decades. They're the ones that defeated ISIS. It was the brave Kurdish soldiers that defeated ISIS. Some of those who fled away are now popping up again in Syria and they're coming toward the Kurdish. That's why we need to pray that for protection over the Kurdish people especially of

northeast Syria who are being targeted by evil former members of ISIS and former members of Al Qaeda. who want to destroy the Syrian Christians and the Kurdish people of Northeast Syria.

It would be advantageous for Israel to have an ally right in the middle of the Middle East in this northern area where there's so many that are against Israel. Pray that God will raise up the Kurdish people and that the rains and the waters will overflow. That there be a mighty move of God among the Kurdish people, and that they will move toward a Kurdistan and having their own country of their ethnic group, being able to be together, and freely able to open full relations with Israel.

Because of the civil war in Syria, they have had self-rule in that little corner of Syria where they already recognized the rights of women, the rights of Christians and the rights of Muslims that are there. They want to live in peace, and they're not going to put up with terrorism, and they've established a stable government and a stable economy. If anybody should be rewarded with the nation state right now, it's not the terrorists like Hamas or Hezbollah, it's the Kurdish people who have proven that they able to self-govern there.

The other vision Rick had on 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2024 where President Erdogan of Turkey was using the cover of darkness. It was night, but there was no moon no stars, just totally dark, and he was using the darkness to do something nefarious. He was giving nets to his army, and he was telling them to throw these nets over the Kurdish people in Northeast Syria, to capture them and take them for his empire.

As he began to move on that, suddenly a spotlight came up like the spotlight in a prison when they try to break out of prison, and suddenly he was caught, and this net that his soldiers had thrown over the Kurdish people was in the air and the Holy Spirit wind of God came up and blew the net back on Erdogan's troops, and they were caught in the net that they were trying to throw.

Satan knows that if the Kurdish begin to grow in strength, if they're kept free, if they begin to have their own country, they're going to become a strong country. They'll see a mighty move of God with millions of Muslims coming to Jesus, and there could so easily be of a mighty move of God in Kurdistan that it would block Turkey and this empire spirit.

So, we proclaim over Turkey, over President Erdogan and all who are in this Ottoman Empire spirit that tried to destroy the Kurdish people and the Syrian Christians of northeast Syria:

*The nations have sunk down in the pit which they made;  
In the net which they hid, their own foot is caught (Psalm 9:15).*

*The nations have sunk down in the pit which they made;  
In the net which they hid, their own foot is caught  
Let destruction come upon him unexpectedly,  
And let his net that he has hidden catch himself;  
Into that very destruction let him fall.  
And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord;  
It shall rejoice in His salvation.  
(Psalm 35:7-9).*

It is also important to remember that the Israeli war since October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, is not against the people of Gaza or of Lebanon or of Yemen or Iran. Israel is not at war with Gaza. Israel is at war with Hamas, an evil terrorist system. Israel is not at war with the people of Lebanon. Israel is at war with an evil demonic system ruled by Hezbollah. Israel is not against the people of Iran. They love the people of Iran, but they are fighting against the evil demonic rulers of an evil system. So, we pray for the anointing of the Holy Spirit to uproot not just to prune, but to uproot, and the anointing of the Holy Spirit to plant what God is doing, the anointing to tear down evil strongholds and to build up the Kingdom of God in these places. God will ultimately prevail, and the nations North of Israel will be called, “the work of my hands” (Isaiah 19 25).

(Taken from a message by Rick Ridings on 12/30/2025  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVIHfuMspKE&t>

## Refugees

In the spring of 2022, I had a very distinct dream. In the dream, I was standing in front of a hotel and a black van drove by and took a right turn. Afterwards, another black van stopped in front of the hotel that was going to Hamburg, and then drove off and took a right turn.

After pondering the meaning of this dream for a few weeks, I determined that I was supposed to go to Hamburg, Germany. There is also a city of Hamburg in my home state of Minnesota, but I did not feel a calling to take the easier route.

My oldest daughter has lived in Berlin for the past 15 years, so I contacted her to see if she was available to meet up in Hamburg for what has become our annual meet up in various European cities. So, we booked a hotel and planned an adventurous trip.

I also contacted my friend Juergen Kramer who lives in Hamburg. Jurgen and his wife Monica are part of All Nations International (ANI), a ministry with a vision is to see Jesus worshiped by all the peoples of the earth. They focus on giving those who have not yet had access to the gospel the opportunity to get to know Jesus. Many who have not yet heard the gospel are refugees from Muslim nations who have fled to the West to escape war and persecution.

Since January 2015, 71,000 refugees have arrived in Hamburg, and 39,000 are still living in the city. Most refugees came from war-torn Syria, and from the troubled areas of Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and Eritrea. During my time visiting Juergen, I learned more about the plight of refugees, and I had the opportunity to share a meal with two men from Iran.

Branded by the government as an activist, Nima took his 7-year-old daughter and fled his country, walking 3000 miles to freedom. Likewise, Mohamed left friends and family, passing through eight countries to reach freedom.

They met each other at a refugee camp, and I met them at a Farsi Welcome Café in Hamburg. Nima spoke fluent English, so he brokered our three-way conversation. Mohamed showed me the bullet wound in his abdomen, and the bullet that was still lodged in his forearm.

I prayed with Nima for a quick and safe reunion with his wife, and I asked God to bless them in their new homeland. Mohamed, a self-described agnostic, also requested prayer.

My daughter and I went on to take a walking tour and a boat tour of Hamburg, as well as a modern jazz concert at the magnificent Elbphilharmonie concert hall. On our way back to the hotel that evening, I noticed that the front of the hotel looked vaguely familiar. When I saw a van take a right turn just past the hotel, I knew I was in the right place.

# **The Road to Armageddon: An Intercessory Adventure**

By Glenn and Coralie Robotham

The screen in front of me shows an aeroplane slowly approaching Bangkok enroute from Amman, Jordan. This is the final leg home of what is my ninth journey to Israel since May 2015. When I first heard the still small whisper of the Spirit..."You will be there at Armageddon," I had no expectation that, 35 years later, I would be embarking on an apostolic intercessory adventure to the other side of the globe from the ends of the earth.

My relationship with Israel had spanned the course of my Christian life, but the understanding I needed for this strong word about Megiddo (the Hebrew word for Armageddon) had somehow alluded me.

In 2015, we were in Jerusalem with the Daylesford House of Prayer team, when one of our prophetic people saw an Australian House of Prayer in the spiritual realm and encouraged me to bring it down. Although I was not sure how to respond to this 'out there' revelation, her words intrigued me. I also began to get stirred for the understanding that I needed to move forward. A time of earnest prayer followed, where I exclaimed to the Lord, "Either cause this word to die or fulfil it right now."

Within 24 hours my prayer was answered when this same prophetic person burst through the door of the café. We were sipping our lattes, declaring with confidence that the Lord had revealed to her that the House of Prayer was not to be in Jerusalem as we had at first thought, but it was to be close by a place called Megiddo. Now, Megiddo is a strategic location within the Jezreel Valley of Northern Israel. The Jezreel Valley is also



known as the Valley of Armageddon. This new prophetic word seemed to speak directly to the word of 35 years earlier... “You will be there at Armageddon.”

These events grabbed my full attention! I was intrigued and sensed that the Lord was speaking. We pulled together a very small team of faith leaders and prophetic intercessors and travelled back to the Land in September 2015, to pray and submit our word to the House of Prayer leaders and Messianic leaders in Israel.

Our first stop was at Succat Hallel, a 24/7 House of Prayer in Jerusalem, where the Director, Rick Ridings had a clear witness that our vision had authenticity, even 'spiritual legs'. Giving us the 'big thumbs up', he suggested we share our vision with David and Karen Davis who were the long term Messianic Senior Pastor's from Kehilat HaCarmel, a very large and significant Messianic congregation in northern Israel.

Through an amazing turn of events the Lord opened a door to meet and share our vision with David and Karen. They also gave a clear witness to our vision, and going a step further, they invited us to establish our House of Prayer on Mount Carmel close by their congregation overlooking the Megiddo Valley.

As we continued to share our vision for a House of Prayer with other visionaries, prayer leaders and lovers of Israel, we connected with a passionate vision held by many from Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific Islands of a special call to the Great Southlands to take our place among the nations in support of Israel. To many, our vision seemed to convey a fresh call from the Spirit to be spiritual Anzacs! Just like the Anzacs at Beersheva

in 1917 whose daring charge on the Turks helped free Israel from the enemy's hands, many of our partners were now sensing a renewed call to come from the ends of the earth to help bring fresh spiritual breakthrough to Israel as part of Israel's restoration.

With this kind of inspired flow, we named the house to be 'The Great Southlands House of Prayer'. This was later changed to Elohim House of Prayer or ELHOP. The Bible is rich with references to the islands and coastlands at the ends of the earth.

*He will not fail nor be discouraged,  
Till He has established justice in the earth;  
And the coastlands shall wait for His law (Isaiah 42:4).*

*Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,  
And declare it in the isles afar off, and say,  
“He who scattered Israel will gather him,  
And keep him as a shepherd does his flock” (Jeremiah 31:10).*

It is clear that here in Australia and in the islands of the South Pacific we have a special call to bless and stand with God's burning zeal for Israel. Could it be that here and now in our day the Lord is intensifying His call to the South Pacific region to come join with Him to see His heart purposes for Israel fulfilled? The answer is a resounding “Yes,” and that ELHOP is one key in His hands that He will use to renew our call from the ends of the earth.

Our journey, both spiritual and geographic had taken us from 'the ends of the earth' to Israel and now had us combing the high

places on Mount Carmel and the cities of the mighty Jezreel Valley for appropriate properties. We were way out of our comfort zones — 'talking turkey' with prospective, mainly Arab landlords in search for the elusive House of Prayer. It took another four intercessory adventures to Israel, and much searching both of the land and of our hearts before we found the perfect property.

On our fourth intercessory journey, in November 2016, we had taken a group of 'sharp' intercessors with us but again, by the end of the trip, despite our best efforts the elusive house had still not emerged. Our 'crack team' of intercessors flew back to Australia, leaving my wife, Coralie, and I back in Israel. The expectations of our many prayer partners and financial supporters weighed upon us. We began to question whether God had actually called us or whether in fact, we had just been making the whole thing up. Feeling flat and uncertain, we attended the Kehilat HaCarmel Shabbat service the next morning. The preacher at the Shabbat service concluded his message by inviting those who needed to hear the word of the Lord to come to the altar. I was up front in an instant!

While at the altar, Holy Spirit whispered into my heart very clearly a verse from the prophet Joel saying that "There were multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision" (Joel 3:14). I knew without a doubt He was talking to me about the inhabitants of the Megiddo Valley. I felt His resolute and zealous heart that burned with purpose for this valley that He had spoken to me about so long ago. Spirit spoke again, "My plans do not change." I was encouraged! Spiritual oxygen for the vision returned. This fresh encounter with Holy Spirit led me to conclude that since we had not been able to land a house on Mount Carmel,

that maybe Holy Spirit was calling us to locate our HOP further down in the valley.

I have to say that Coralie and some of my reference group members were not totally convinced, but for me it seemed the Lord had confirmed his call but was just redirecting our efforts slightly. Coralie has been my 'heart partner' on this adventure, whose encouragement and support I could not have done without. However, at this point I wanted to leave Mt. Carmel and redirect our efforts into the Valley, and Coralie was not quite as ready to make such a change. Therefore, it was important for us to lay our vision down for a time. “Unless a seed falls to the ground” (John 12:24) became the operative scripture at this point.

The last day of our trip, with heavy hearts and tears of grief, Coralie and I drove to Muqraka—the Elijah memorial location where it is said Elijah confronted the false prophets of Baal and the Lord brought down the true fire from heaven consuming the sacrifice and thus restoring the altar of the Lord on Mount Carmel.

As we got out of the car, we were greeted by a Druze man spruiking <sup>[1]</sup> the delights of visiting his restaurant, which he told us was the best in the local village (all the local restaurant owners tell you that). He then added enthusiastically that his 'epic restaurant' even had a Prayer House. Talk about adding insult to injury — it seemed like the enemy was now poking fun at us. A false religion had a prayer house, but we had none! We climbed up to a cliff, to a point that hangs high above the valley. What happened next, at that high place, was beyond words. The Spirit showed me an open vision of a mighty warrior angel

standing ten stories high, in the middle of the Megiddo Valley, with his sword at his side. I took this to be a sign to us of the Lord's strong resolve to do something very powerful in that valley and that sometime in the future that warrior angel would be activated for His kingdom purposes.

By late January 2017 we sensed the Lord telling us to pick up our vision for the HOP again. So, with everyone on board to refocus our search for the right location for the HOP, I returned to Israel in May 2017 to visit hilltop locations adjacent to the Megiddo Valley. This led me to new prayer adventures looking in new locations, towns and cities and meeting Messianic believers from places like Afula, Tivon and Migdal HaEmeq.

It was very evident from my meetings with Messianic leaders in these valley locations that the believers there felt isolated, rejected, and forgotten. They were hungry for more, but no-one comes to the Jezreel Valley. Instead, the thousands of gentile Christians from the nations who travel to Israel every year prefer to give their time and support in the 'go-to places' such as Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and the Kinneret/Galilee. The Christian tourist buses drive right on by Afula and Migdal HaEmeq. As a consequence, we were welcomed with open arms by Messianic leaders into the valley community.

I was now almost convinced that the Lord would open up our HOP in one of these alternative locations. As I searched, houses abounded and there was no shortage of offers. Prayerfully however, I sensed not to jump in too hastily. With at least two suitable houses in the valley ready for us to enter into a lease agreement, I drove my small rental car onto the early slopes of Mount Carmel. As I ascended Holy Spirit whispered to me

"Welcome home." I thought that it was very nice of Him to speak to me in this way. Thinking nothing more of it, I attended the Shabbat Service at Mount Carmel.

One of my connections from the congregation informed me that the Israeli Ambassador (who lived with his family just down the street, in Isifya) was planning to go away for a few years and that they would possibly like to rent their house. I took the opportunity to check it out further, never sensing for a moment that the Lord would direct my footsteps back to Mount Carmel. This house located just five minutes' walk from Kehilat HaCarmel in the 'best street in Isifya' was a huge and breathtakingly beautiful three-story Mediterranean villa.

We arrived and exchanged pleasantries at the front door with the Ambassador's wife. When we entered, Holy Spirit immediately whispered to me, "This is My gift to you." Two steps into the entrance hall the Spirit declared, "I save the best to last." As we walked through the house, we were encountered by simply stunning views of the Megiddo Valley below. Again, I heard His voice, "I can do it from here." Wow, wow, wow! Could it be? I rang Coralie and excitedly shared the happy news. Coralie was delighted, having always held out for the House of Prayer to be located on Mount Carmel in close proximity and relationship with Kehilat HaCarmel.

This breakthrough moment occurred on the day of David Davis passing, May 13th, 2017. David's long held vision was to establish an international house of prayer on Mount Carmel—where the true altar of the Lord would be restored as in Elijah's day—through night and day worship and prayer. Another profound confirmation of the vision was not lost on the Kehilat leaders.

They could see that even at this incredibly sad moment, the departure of David, their apostolic leader, visionary, mentor, friend and father, the Lord Himself was bringing this vision to life.

In early August we sent a small team to take possession of the House and to help prepare for its work which was to begin shortly. While at the Kehilat at a 7-day Korean worship event, I had an amazing encounter. In this encounter the Lord Jesus came to me in long white robes and put something in my right hand and something in my left hand. I said, "What is it, Lord?" So, he opened my left hand, which revealed a key and then He opened my right hand, uncovering another key. He then said to me, "These are the keys of My divine authority for this house (GSHOP) to be here and nothing or no-one is going to take this house out until it has fulfilled the assignment (the word) I brought it into being for."

Like Ezekiel, as a result of his visionary encounters, I was totally overwhelmed and seeking to take a break and process what had just happened. I headed out of the room, and as I was leaving, an American intercessor I had never met before stopped me. She said, "I have a gift for you, which comes from apostolic leaders in the USA who have prayed over it." When outside she opened her bag of gifts and presented me with a key, which she said represented divine authority to bind and loose, to open and shut doors.

This was so amazing I had not told her about the open encounter I had just had a few minutes earlier. When I told her, she was more overwhelmed than me and proceeded to give me a second key. What was the point of all this? Well, I believe the Lord knew times would come where I would be tempted to doubt in the

vision and the call to Mt. Carmel, and that I needed some supernatural and tangible encounter, in addition to all the confirming scriptures we had received, that I could go back to during times of doubt, fear and contention.

How kind of God to encounter me in this special way! I am so thankful to Him for this heavenly encounter that has given me faith and impetus many times afterwards, especially when entering or leaving Israel.

Fast forward to October 1st, 2017, the 100 years anniversary of the ANZAC Beersheva victory, when we held our official opening of the Great Southlands House of Prayer and where we celebrated together with Messianic and prayer and church leaders from Israel and the nations. Great heavenly joy filled the house and our hearts as we gave praise and thanks to God for His glorious love. The tangible signs of His presence and the God-given unity we experienced as friends and invited guests gave further testimony to the faithfulness of God to bring about His plans.

*For I know the plans I have for you says the Lord (Jeremiah 29:11).*

On our road to Mount Carmel to establish the House of Prayer we had one word from God, spoken many years earlier to place our faith in. This word combined with the confirmation of prayer and prophetic leaders and the many scriptures the Lord gave us along the way helped dispel our fears and doubts and gave us the strength to keep going.



One of my most often visited scriptures during this period while looking for the right house to establish the House of Prayer ministry was Zechariah 4:7.

*What are you mighty mountain before Zerubbabel you shall become level ground and then he shall bring out the capstone to grace to grace to it.*

We also had a mighty reference group of fellow intercessory adventurers, whose friendship, wise counsel, and prayers were integral to the fulfilment of the vision. We give thanks and glory to God for each and every one of them.

The plane has moved on now touching down at Bangkok International Airport. We have journeyed far and so too has the GSHOP, with the Lord sending His angel armies before us preparing the way, fighting our battles for us and establishing the House of Prayer's presence and work on Mount Carmel and in the Megiddo Valley far below. Without a doubt, the Armageddon call of this House and its work is an end times call, and we are doing our bit in lifting up holy hands, night, and day, in worship and prayer to proclaim Yeshua, King of the mountain and King over the Valley.

As I write now, a night and day communal prayer and worship rhythm has been established in the house and an on-line community has been developed with the heavenly vision as we seek to position the house for the next stage of its outworking. House-hosts from the nations including Australia, New Zealand, Germany, and Great Britain have been recruited, and people from the great Southlands and the nations are coming to partner with the Lord and His Messianic people for His end times

purposes on Mount Carmel, Armageddon and in the Jezreel Valley.

As we step further into the vision, doors of favour and doors of blessing are opening wide, resulting in encouragement for the saints, spiritual support and shifts in the atmosphere. All of this supports and strengthens the hands of the Messianic believers on Mount Carmel, helping to prepare the Valley for new waves of Jewish Aliyah.

We expect new kingdom works to be established in cities and places in the Valley where there is currently no witness, through a great and mighty outpouring of the Spirit. The Spirit and the bride say "Come." Truly in such a short time we see the footprints of God as we follow behind in childlike faith. We are seeing that this HOP, which was birthed by Elohim Himself, is already making a mighty difference. All glory and praise to God. His faithfulness reaches to the heavens.

We touch down in Australia! Back home in our beloved Daylesford, our hearts ask, "Will we ever be the same again?" No! This intercessory journey has marked us for life.

(Glenn and Coralie Rowbotham are the Founders and Directors of the Elohim House of Prayer (ELHOP) on Mount Carmel.)

1. Spruiking is an Australian and New Zealand slang term that means to give a speech, especially a long or elaborate one.

## **Serving the Needy in Israel**

Kehilat Ha Maayan is a local Messianic congregation comprised of Jewish and Gentile believers in Yeshua. They are located just one mile from the West Bank, in the foothills of Samaria. Pastor Tony Sperandeo and his congregation are actively engaged with displaced families and provide essential support to those who are experiencing trauma and heartbreak.

They serve a large number of needy families, new immigrants, and single mothers. Some of the needy families are new immigrants coming from different countries. Usually broken-hearted, they feel abandoned and lonely, as they often deal with unemployment or legal issues. The congregation provides practical, financial, spiritual, and emotional support. In addition, they provide special courses and pay for their studies, giving them a profession, thus being able in due time to stand on their own.

The goal is to help the needy families know God as their Father from generation to generation. In addition, they help them go to the summer camps where they can be built up in their faith and learn to have a deeper relationship with Yeshua.

Now, due to the war, the government is not able to take care of the widows and orphans as it should. The Bible is full of commandments exhorting the nation of Israel to take care of the needy and says that God will withdraw his blessings from the nation who withdraws justice from the widows (Deuteronomy 27:19). God blesses those who care for widows but curses those who do not. “The widow who is within your gates, shall come, and eat and be satisfied, that the Lord your God may bless you” (Deuteronomy 14:29). We must support the widows and the

orphans and do what we can to bring their justice to light. As believers, we want to demonstrate to them the same compassion and protection that God has for them.

They also help the holocaust survivors of Kfar Saba, now in their twilight years. Meeting with them on a one-on-one basis as well as get-togethers during the holidays, they are able to practically share the love of Yeshua with them.

A whole year has passed in what has become the longest war in Israel's history. Since their independence in 1948, the nation has encountered wars with the Arab nations around them. On October 7, 2023, Israel was invaded in 63 kibbutzim and towns in the south and joined by five other proxies from Iran. In total Israel was fighting on seven fronts.

The impact on the nation was devastating. More than 800 soldiers have fallen in battle, with over 12,000 wounded. If you calculate the number of families impacted on these facts alone, you have almost 13,000 families, thousands of widows and orphans who will never be the same again. Sadly, this does not include the civilians that were killed, wounded, or kidnapped since October 7. Israel is a nation grieving:

*"A voice was heard in Ramah,  
Lamentation and bitter weeping,  
Rachel weeping for her children,  
Refusing to be comforted for her children,  
Because they are no more" (Jeremiah 31:15).*

Ever since October 7, 2023, the nation has been under immense pressure financially and emotionally. Thousands of families have

been displaced, unable to return to their homes now for over a year. When they return home, it is either demolished or severely damaged due to the war. The congregation provides them with food coupons, furniture, school materials etc. They also organize creativity workshops to help them heal from trauma. Soldiers who have to go to war leave behind families who are now having to balance life with only one parent. Worse yet, if that soldier falls in battle, the family then becomes a single-parent home. In addition, the country is now overwhelmed with shock and trauma from the war.

Pastor Tony recently shared more intimately about the needs in the Land with a group of intercessors:

“Every day there is a lot of mourning, a lot of sorrow, and a lot of tombs of young people. The hospitals are full of wounded people, and also in the psychiatric wards. People are sick, and we visit them, and hear their stories. It’s really moving our heart to see the pain; they're not getting over the shock and trauma, and we are reaching out to them.”

*They shall come with weeping,  
And with supplications I will lead them.  
I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters,  
In a straight way in which they shall not stumble;  
For I am a Father to Israel,  
And Ephraim is My firstborn (Jeremiah 31:9).*

We are comforted that God promises to be a father to those who no longer have a father or mother because of this war. We are encouraged that God prompted us to expand our Betzel El creative healing center for those who need a deep healing touch

from the Lord. Bezel-El (Hebrew for “Under the Shadow of the Almighty”) was opened for creative-healing workshops for Israeli families displaced during the 2023 Swords of Iron War.

The first floor of the building has been beautifully renovated and has become a place of healing and creativity. The center is designed for people to receive a deep healing touch from the Lord, through expressing themselves artistically. As people come to the Lord, there is a need for inner healing. Creativity can be one of the tools to achieve this. With God’s help this center is giving them the ability to heal from their past hurts and live in freedom and forgiveness, able to live whole, healed lives and in time, be able to extend the same freedom to others.

Since October 7, 2023, this ministry became so much more vital, as the entire nation was overcome by the on-going shock and trauma. Currently, they are conducting workshops to help overcome shock and trauma or past trauma triggered by the war. The goal is to develop and strengthen the self-image and personality of broken people, to give them opportunity to create and develop the godly gift of creativity, to give fewer wealthy people the chance of creative expression, to be a source of encouragement and support and to give the opportunity to people to glorify and worship God by the works of their hands.

Pastor Tony shared more.

“We were so blessed to visit some of the kibbutzim in the south. We visited people that we had some personal connections with. Just to be there, to take the hands of the people who suffered through the 7th of October, telling their stories. We stayed for hours, and they were so blessed just to be able to express

themselves. They feel a little abandoned after one year, and we started to pray for them, and they accepted prayer in the name of Yeshua.

They're agricultural people, strong tough people, and the Lord showed us through suffering, the hearts were starting to melt. The heart of stone will be turned into a heart of flesh. And the Lord is able to minister compassion as we stand with them and pray with them.

There is a lot to do in the land. You can visit people. You can visit people in Tel Aviv, the families of the hostages. You can go there and spend hours with them, days with them. They all need someone to talk to. They'll be happy to talk to you, and then you can go to the kibbutzim. There's so much to do, and the Lord is calling us to comfort those who mourn in Zion, to bind the brokenhearted, to set the captives free, and to stand in the gap and to put our trust only in the Lord."

The harvest is plentiful, and the workers are few, so pray for those who have been wounded in their spirit, in their souls. and in their body; that in medical hospitals and psychiatric hospitals the Lord will reach out to them, that there will be comfort in Zion."

*I will return again to My place  
Till they acknowledge their offense.  
Then they will seek My face;  
In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me" (Hosea 5:18).*

*Come, and let us return to the Lord;  
For He has torn, but He will heal us;*

*He has stricken, but He will bind us up.  
After two days He will revive us;  
On the third day He will raise us up,  
That we may live in His sight.  
Let us know,  
Let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord.  
His going forth is established as the morning;  
He will come to us like the rain,  
Like the latter and former rain to the earth (Hosea 6:1-3).*

We know that after the day of judgment there will be mercy, there will be restoration, and we are waiting, we are standing, we are putting our trust in the Lord. We will wait to be revived, and we will be raised up with him, our Lord. The heart of the matter is the matter of the heart. The Lord is looking for our heart. He wants our heart to belong to him, and he's going to use the pain, he's going to use the sorrow and the mourning.

There is so much politics and sickness in our land. People are divided and fighting and there is hate without a reason. Of course everybody has their say in Israel. Everybody is a prime minister. Everybody has opinions about how things should be, but we believe that as we humble ourselves like the Lord says in 2 Chronicles 7:14:

*If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

Our hearts need to be in the right place to worship you and to acknowledge you as the God of creation, as the God of



Salvation, as the God who can do all things. We need to go back to the old paths, the old ways, and to what the scripture is teaching us. As we humble ourselves before him, he will raise us up on the third day. Lord, make it soon, make it soon the third day, and that you will bring us back to yourself, Lord. In Yeshua's name, have mercy upon us, upon our people, and that you will bring protection and salvation, Lord. And reveal the Messiah, reveal Yeshua. May the Spirit of supplication come upon us. Open our eyes, open our ears, and melt our hearts, Lord. in Yeshua's name. Amen”

Only through Yeshua can our nation be restored to God our Father. Yeshua is using each one of us to be a light to our friends and family who have been deeply affected by this horrific war. While the need is great, our God is greater! Our motivation is to obey our Lord Yeshua who said: “I was hungry and you fed Me, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was lonely and you visited Me,” (Matthew 25) and our vision is: "From guilt to forgiveness, from despair to hope, from shame to honor."

(For more information visit: <https://kehilat-hamaayan.org.il/home>)

## Six Weeks in Israel

I spent six weeks in Israel last year during the war with Hamas and Hezbollah, and I was not bored for one minute during my time there. These were the weekly updates that I sent to my friends and family.

### Woodstock 5784

My first week in Israel has been quite an adventure! I connected with friends in Jerusalem for two days, then I joined Carolyn and Richard for several days of prayer assignments. On the first day, a group of us went to the city of Petach Tikveh (Door of Hope) for a time of prayer and communion. Petach Tikveh was the first Jewish settlement in modern Israel. However, today it could be said, "Can anything good come out of Petach Tikveh?" We prayed that God would bring a spiritual cleansing to the city and release His living water to the residents. Afterwards, we had a time of fellowship with a family who lives in the area.

The next day we went to a park in Tel Aviv, where the next Super Nova Music Festival will be held. The first Super Nova Music Festival was the site where 346 people were brutally murdered by Hamas on October 7. Over 50 survivors of this horror have subsequently taken their own lives. As a young person who attended Woodstock, I could have been among these victims before I knew Messiah. Instead, I am thankful that God rescued me from my lost state and revealed the way of salvation to me through Messiah Jesus. We prayed that God would powerfully reveal Himself to many lost Israelis today.

On the way to Tel Aviv, we had the opportunity to share the gospel with Mayan, a young Jewish guy seeking the truth in all

the wrong places. We prayed for him to be healed of M.S. and put him in touch with Carolyn's son Ariel.

Later that night we celebrated the Second Passover (as recorded in the days of Hezekiah in 2 Chronicles 29 and 30). We had a powerful time of worship, sharing from the Word, and what the Lord was revealing to us. We also blessed the next generation, who, like young King Hezekiah at 25-years-old, led the nation through a time of profound sanctification and re-dedication to the Lord.

### The People of Israel

I have met many people in Israel.

I met Yerachmiel on the flight from Minneapolis to Paris. We navigated the Charles de Gaulle Airport together to catch our flight to Tel Aviv, then he took me to the train station to get to my destination in Jerusalem. He blessed me, so I did a mitzvah for him by putting on the tefillin and praying together (Deuteronomy 6:8).

I met Tevye (his actual name is Zeb, but he reminded me of Tevye from *Fiddler on the Roof*) in the city of Safed, in Northern Israel. Tevye is a world class chef, but like many merchants in Northern Israel, his business has dried up due to the war. He keeps busy making his delectable dishes for soldiers serving in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF).

Then there is Dalia! Dalia is a native Israeli Jew who moved to East Asia to study Buddhism. Yeshua visited her in a powerful encounter, and she committed her life to Him. After being

discipled in East Asia, and serving in outreach for a number of years, God directed her to return to her homeland. God showed her that many Israelis would be drawn to her. After October 7th, she got to work importing and distributing high-quality uniforms to Israeli soldiers. Many Israelis have been drawn to her during this time, including a 19-year-old combat soldier.

Then there's Shiri Bibas, who I haven't met. She and her infant child are being held hostage by Hamas terrorists in Gaza.

### A Rhythm of Prayer

*Continue earnestly in prayer (Colossians 4:2).*

What a blessing to be living in the presence of the Lord, as part of the Elohim House of Prayer! The Elohim House of Prayer (ELHOP) was founded in 2017 by Australians Glenn & Coralee Rowbotham. They contend for the prophetic destiny of Israel, with a particular focus on the Jezreel Valley through times of prayer, worship and blessing from its community-based prayer house on Mount Carmel.

In addition, I have been involved with Kehilat HaCarmel (Carmel Congregation), a Messianic community of Jewish, Arab, and other Gentile worshipers positioned on the top of Mount Carmel, where the prophet Elijah once confronted the false gods of his age. Their mission today is to restore the altar of the Lord on Mount Carmel.

I have also had the opportunity to participate in outreaches. Today I will be part of a team, led by my friend Eric Benson, who ministers to the homeless, drug addicts, and prostitutes of Tel

Aviv. Eric is the director of House of Victory (“Beit Nitzachon” in Hebrew) located in the city of Haifa which is a Bible-based residential rehabilitation center for men with backgrounds of substance abuse.

### The Jezreel Valley

The Jezreel Valley, also known as the Valley of Megiddo, is a large fertile plain located in the Galilee region of northern Israel. It is a huge fertile valley which produces all kinds of agricultural produce for Israel.

This valley is so geographically strategic that it has been the scene of over 30 major battles throughout history. It is also the location where the ‘final battle’ of Armageddon will take place between the Lord and the forces of evil.

Joshua conquered Megiddo around 1400 B.C.

*“And these are the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel conquered on this side of the Jordan ... the king of Megiddo” (Joshua 12:7,21).*

God has been watching over this land throughout history.

*“But the land which you cross over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven, a land for which the LORD your God cares; the eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year” (Deuteronomy 11:11-12).*

Jezreel in Hebrew means 'God sows.' Mt. Carmel is situated above Jezreel Valley. The Kehilat HaCarmel Worship Center is located on the top of Mount Carmel.

During my first Shabbat service at Kehilat HaCarmel, I saw a very clear picture of rivers of living water flowing to the valley below. This is the valley where God sows. God will release living water to the thirsty people in the valley below.

Let the rivers flow!

### The Ordinary and the Extraordinary

My wife Cheryl and I spent six weeks in Jerusalem in 1976. Life in Jerusalem became very ordinary for us, so we didn't take many pictures. 48 years later, I wish we had taken more. Thank God for lessons learned, and an iPhone, which has enabled me to do a better job of recording memories this time around.

Now that I am four weeks into my journey, I can divulge to my wife that I saw the Iron Dome defense system intercept a Hezbollah rocket during my trip to Safed three weeks ago. Safed is currently the northern edge of Israeli habitation, as more than 80,000 people have been forced to vacate their homes in the towns on Israel's northern border. This is out of the ordinary for me, but it has been the way of life for my friend David who grew up in the northern town of Kiryat Shmona.

I am living with Glenn & Coralie Rowbotham and other guests at the Elohim House of Prayer (ELHOP) located in the Druze village of Isifya on Mt. Carmel. We meet in the mornings and evenings for prayer five days a week, and each gathering has been

extraordinarily unique.

We also meet twice a week for worship gatherings at Kehilat HaCarmel (The Congregation of Carmel). I have met and built relationships with many extraordinary people there. Everyone has a unique story of how the Lord led them to make Aliyah (immigration) to Israel. The word 'Aliyah' literally means ascent. Although life is challenging here, no one descends to the Land of Israel; it is an ascent, an upward calling.

I have met native Israelis Arabs like Johnny (formerly called Jihad) who was delivered from hatred and addictions and is now serving other men seeking deliverance in the House of Victory. And native Israel Jews like Dani Sayag, lead pastor of Kehilat HaCarmel, who encountered Yeshua while serving in the Israeli military.

Although I am a sojourner in the Land of Promise, I have been on a journey of ascent. To quote Alex Haley, author of the book *Roots*, who said when he discovered his tribal roots in Gambia, "Kunta Kinte, I found you!" I too have found my roots in Eretz Yisrael, and they have grown deeper in this Land.

And, I have met other sojourners from the nations. Like 21-year-old Natan whose father is an Ethiopian Jew, and his mother is from South Africa. They all live in Sweden. After completing his military service, Natan decided to spend several weeks in Israel volunteering before beginning his studies at the university.

Lorena was born in Chile and moved to Australia when she was three years old. She has four sons with her husband Ian. They now live in Thailand where they serve God in worship and

outreach ministries. They were moved by God to sojourn in this land for several months.

We are all walking this journey and worshiping together in these extraordinary days at the Elohim House of Prayer.

### Re-Entry

I am in the final countdown till my departure from Israel and re-entry into life in the United States. When a spacecraft re-enters the Earth's atmosphere, it faces several challenges. If they hit it too steeply or too fast, they risk making a big 'splash,' which would mean a fiery end. If their impact is too shallow, they may literally skip off the atmosphere and back into the cold of space. This subtle dance between fire and ice is the science of atmospheric re-entry.

I will be transversing two different environments in a state of gratefulness and peace and returning from the epicenter of battle to my home base.

Due to high prices, and our shallow budget, Cheryl and I only ate red meat once in the six weeks we lived in Israel in 1976. So, upon landing in Minneapolis, we headed straight to McDonalds. While we were in Israel, paper resources were precious. I remember the flimsy napkins that were provided in restaurants. At McD's we were loaded with a dozen napkins, paper wraps for our burgers, cardboard boxes for our fries, and tray covers that were soon discarded. I remember thinking, "What a waste!"

Luke 1:8 speaks about Zachariah, the Father of John the Baptist, who served as a priest before God "in the order of his division." In



ancient Israel, Aaron's descendants were grouped into 24 "divisions," who rotated duties in the temple throughout the year.

I believe God has called me to serve in the house of worship and prayer on Mt. Carmel on a rotating basis, so I have booked my re-entry to Israel for next April. I am particularly drawn to the Tent of Healing that God is raising up on Mt. Carmel for the many who are hurting in this Land. This is our calling, as spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

*“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,  
Because the Lord has anointed Me  
To preach good tidings to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives,  
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;  
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,  
And the day of vengeance of our God;  
To comfort all who mourn,  
To console those who mourn in Zion,  
To give them beauty for ashes,  
The oil of joy for mourning,  
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;  
That they may be called trees of righteousness,  
The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified” (Isaiah 61:1-3).*

I am looking forward to my re-entry home, but I am still enlisted in His service wherever I am. Israel is on my heart as I return to Minnesota, and 48 years later, I still don't waste paper products.

## **A South African Pastor Discovers God's Heart for Israel**

By Sheldon Kidwell, October 2024

*Along the banks of Babylon's rivers  
we sat as exiles, mourning our captivity,  
and wept with great love for Zion.  
Our music and mirth were no longer heard, only sadness.  
We hung up our harps on the willow trees.  
Our captors tormented us, saying, "Make music for us and  
sing one of your happy Zion-songs!"  
But how could we sing the song of the Lord  
in this foreign wilderness?  
May my hands never make music again  
if I ever forget you, O Jerusalem.  
May I never be able to sing again if I fail to honor Jerusalem  
supremely! (Psalm 137:1-6 TPT)*

I get quite emotional reading that Psalm because you can hear and feel the longing and the sadness in the people's hearts as they cry for their beloved city of Jerusalem. We now all understand the slow restoration of Israel finding independent in 1948 and Jerusalem placed back into the hands of Israel in 1967 and since 2017, again regarded as the capital city. There is a song called 'Jerusalem of Gold' written initially as a lament and a longing for Jerusalem, just as in Psalm 137, but for these modern times. The song was adapted and lyrics changed to become a song of rejoicing, because Jerusalem was again in Israel's control so was no longer a lament. Jerusalem was now back in Israel's hands and on the 15th of May 1967 this song was sung and performed on Mount Zion.

I say all of that because it was never always that way for me. I never felt a longing for Jerusalem as in Psalm 137, I never understood the relevance of Israel being regarded as a nation in these modern times and quite honestly never felt it mattered. I grew up in a lively charismatic church that loved the ways of the Lord and pressed into the expression of the gifts being manifest. If we look back over the last forty years and more, we see a clear maturing of the church across the nations as gifts like the prophetic sharpened, the apostolic office arising with authority and many more facets of the body, which included the community I've been a part of for thirty years, being strengthened for the age we're now living in and essentially preparing for the return of Christ.

However, if I reflect on this time growing up, I never once heard a sermon speaking about Israel and the relevance of this nation. Even in wider circles, with the family of churches across the nations, this conversation was never preached or discussed. In hindsight, I now understand that the underlying belief was one of replacement theology. The arising of the glorious church was the main focus as God was restoring and bringing life back to his church. Moments I recall in preachers and conversations over the years, was how 'the Jews had missed it' and the church was the culmination of the restoration of David's Tabernacle. This was not from a place of arrogance but rather gave me insight into the underlying thinking and unspoken belief that essentially had bred an ignorance in my heart.

With that backdrop, when the invitation to travel to Israel in January 2012 was presented to me, there was an instant resonance in my spirit that I needed to go on this trip. In that moment, my wife and I looked at each other and instantly our

eyes had a collective yes in our gaze. However, having no understanding or insight into the nation of Israel, I arrived in January 2012 with an open heart along with a caution to keep anything or any teaching forced upon me. Little did I know that the teaching and traveling across the nation planted seeds into my heart.

On that trip we traveled all around the nation and without being able to pinpoint an exact moment, something happened in my heart as I traveled through Israel. The reality of the Bible became acutely real and the pieces of the puzzle just seemed to click into place. The big picture of the whole Bible story suddenly began to make sense. When I returned home people literally said to me, “There's something different about you, you've changed.” At home going through the photos of the trip and telling the journey to my wife, I remember her looking at me saying, “There's something different about you.”

This was the start of a very personal journey where I slowly allowed the revelation of what started in my heart in Israel, to become an expression of my faith. As I journeyed, I didn't fully understand everything but I kept my heart open and started to grasp the Lord's heart for this nation and his people. It was a journey of many years, I didn't talk about it to people and I didn't profess that this was now something we needed to understand as a church community. As this revelation kept unfolded to me, I went on my own private journey to keep learning and applying these truths to my heart. This came through being associated with those who had gone before and fully grasped the relevance of Israel, as well as being exposed to authors who taught on this subject with conviction and authority.

Along the journey I had the honor in 2014 of taking over the leadership of the church community my parents had planted and led since 1993. It was never my intention to make Israel a forefront topic in conversation or preaching, but as the conviction of the revelation became real, I had greater understanding to articulate this truth. In October 2022 I started preaching into the end times through an eschatological series but to understand the end, you need to understand Israel. I needed to lay the foundation of Israel first and started preaching and explaining replacement theology, antisemitism and the relevance of the church in relation to Israel. This all started as my own personal journey of being assured that we as the church have not replaced Israel, we as the church are now the true Israel and we are true spiritual Israel that carry the heart of the Father around the world for his people. The response from the community was overwhelming as many thanked me and in that moment I realized, many had been on their own journeys, but also never talked out it. Bringing this conversation to the forefront has been freeing and stretching as some needed to adapt years of understanding, as their journey of revelation had just begun. In a conversation with an older gentlemen who had questions and wanted a deeper understanding, he commented that he was so upset he didn't know this truth earlier in his life. The key to this topic being embraced and understood as a community was because it wasn't preached from a place of necessity but from a place of personal conviction that people were ready to hear. It was truly divine timing as I allowed the spirit to lead me and have the courage to speak with boldness.

Again in hindsight, laying this foundation as a community in October 2022, prepared us for the atrocities of 7 October 2023. What's playing out in Israel today is a leading toward a revival

that we believe will happen with the Jews turning to Yeshua as the Messiah. What I am very aware of though is, I'm still a gentile and not a Jew. There is a tension as the church to hold the Biblical balance between the two. In our nation we have extreme expressions of, us as Gentiles being grafted in, that swing the pendulum so far one way, many struggle to relate. Then other groups who ignorantly do not engage or raise the conversation swing far the other way. We need to find a balance that honors our Jewish brothers and sisters who are also in Christ. When we allow the spirit to lead us and are not driven by an agenda, we gently take our people along a journey of revelation into this truth. In October 2024 I started preaching into the biblical rhythms of the feasts God has set in place for his people. This could only be done because we understand Israel and as we build on this foundation. Our vision for 2025 is *'Spiritual Rhythms - we're not adding Christianity into our busy worlds, we're allowing Christianity to shape our busy worlds'*.

As a church leader it has been a joy to see a people respond to this truth but the weight of responsibility to teach our people the full counsel of God is a conviction I trust many will embark on. If I reflect since 2012, where God captured my heart for his people, their land and all future prospects relating to Israel, it was a slow but timely process. Never once did I feel God was annoyed that I wasn't understanding or catching his heart quickly enough. In hindsight the timing for our community was just perfect in light of the world events that have played out over the last years. It's amazing that God will intertwine your own personal journey, your church community and worlds events.

In light of this journey of revelation my heart is very tender in the hope that the leadership of our nation would genuinely

understand this truth and understand that one day, when Yeshua reigns, we will all be going up to the Feast of Tabernacles to celebrate, bow to him and worship him. Jesus is a Jew, and as a government we've got this hatred towards the Jews in this anti-Semitic stance that comes from a complete lack of understanding. It has also come to light that there is funding from the Middle East supporting our government, hence the position we find ourselves. Having said that, we have a large group of people across this nation who stand with Israel. Let's pray we stand in unity and see the Lord work in and through us to speak this revelation of truth relating to Israel.

The scriptures remind us that when we bless Israel, we will be blessed (Genesis 12:3). Part of our conviction to this passage, along with our prayers, as a community we sow financially into a ministry in Israel every month. It is just a small seed we trust will bear much fruit for the gospel of the kingdom to be preached in Israel. Knowing for sure that the covenantal promises of God for his people never change and his grace to me as a gentile, to be grafted into this great story, has forever changed me. I'm so thankful I yielded to the prompting of the Holy Spirit to travel to Israel and now fully understand the saying "you get invited to Israel by the Lord."

I am glad to report that this journey is still unfolding with a deeper love and greater yearning in my heart to see the return of Jesus to Jerusalem.

Maranatha...

*“May they prosper who love you.  
Peace be within your walls,  
Prosperity within your palaces.” (Psalm 122:6,7)*

(Sheldon Kidwell is the lead pastor of Bay City Church in Muizenberg, South Africa, and a respected apostolic leader in the body of Christ.)



## **Surrounded**

*You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance (Psalm 32:7).*

I grew up in a predominantly Jewish area of the Bronx, near 170<sup>th</sup> Street and the Grand Concourse in the 1950's. As our friends moved out of the area, my family moved to a different neighborhood when I was 11 years old. This area was more ethnically diverse, with the Irish and Italians collectively outnumbering the Jews.

Most Bronx boys in that era had one thing in common – we loved to play sports! Since there weren't many public parks in the city, we usually played in the school yard. My school yard was P.S. 88, and my sport of choice was stickball. It was the early 1960's, life was good, and everything felt safe.

There was a group of kids who attended a parochial school in the neighborhood, and they also played in the school yard. Everything was fine between us; we all minded our own business and got along well. I attended public school, and when I wasn't playing in the school yard, I was in Hebrew school reading Bible stories, learning the Hebrew language, and praying.

I don't know what was in the air on that particular day in 1964, but out of nowhere, a group of about 10 kids from the parochial school surrounded me, and the smallest of them, a redhead kid, started pushing me around and calling me "a dirty Jew," "a Christ killer," and other expletives. I didn't say a word, nor did I (dare to) fight back, and after a few minutes it ended.

I came to know and love the same Jesus who was taught and worshipped in that parochial school some years later. I don't know what motivated these kids to conduct a childhood 'pogrom' against me, but I lost my sense of safety and a little of my innocence that day. I completed my bar mitzvah a year later, but I became a man that day in the school yard.

## **Syria in Scripture**

Some translations of the Bible use the word '*Syria*,' and others use the word '*Aram*,' but both names refer to the same nation. The borders of Syria or Aram are much the same as they were in biblical times, with a central location being its capital, Damascus. Syria/Aram plays a significant role throughout the Bible.

Following the worldwide flood mentioned in Genesis, Shem became the father of Aram, whose descendants became the people known as Arameans (Genesis 10:22), who settled in the area of Mesopotamia. Later, God called Abraham from that area. In Canaan, Abraham sent his servant to find Isaac a wife, and he sent the servant to his brother's family, who lived in Aram Naharaim, near the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (Genesis 24:10). Rebekah and her brother Laban both lived in Aram, and Jacob is later recorded as fleeing to Paddam Aram (Genesis 28:5). Because of Jacob's long stay in the area of Aram, he is later referred to as a "wandering Aramean" (Deuteronomy 26:5).

The Arameans also fought against Israel frequently in the Old Testament. One of the earliest conflicts with Aram was during the time of the judges, when the king of Aram Naharaim was used by God to subject the Israelites for eight years because of their idolatry (Judges 3:7–8). Once the Israelites repented, God raised up Othniel, Caleb's younger brother, to free them from the Arameans (Judges 3:9–11).

During the times of the kings, the Arameans often fought against Israel, especially in David's reign (2 Samuel 8:3–10; 10:6–8; 1 Chronicles 18:3–4). Ben-Hadad, one of the more powerful rulers of Aram, fought against the northern kingdom of Israel, but he

failed in his attack because the Lord promised to give the vast Aramean army into King Ahab's hands (1 Kings 20:12–13). Furthermore, it was at the hand of the Arameans that the wicked Ahab met his ruin, as the prophet Micaiah had prophesied (1 Kings 22:28, 37–38).

Interestingly, Paul's conversion experience happened in the geographical location of Damascus in Syria, controlled by the Romans at that time. Paul saw the resurrected Lord Jesus on the road to Damascus, where he was traveling to persecute Christians (Acts 9:1–6). On the Damascus Road, Jesus commissioned Paul to be the Apostle to the Gentiles, stating, "I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:17–18).

It was also in a Syrian city, Antioch, that believers in Christ were first called Christians (Acts 11:26). Barnabas had taken Paul to Antioch to spend time at the church there, and they both taught "great numbers of people" during their stay (Acts 11:25–26), and "the church at Antioch was destined to become the base of operations for Paul's missionary journeys." [1]

1. Stanley Toussaint, Bible Knowledge Commentary, John Walvoord and Roy Zuck, ed., David C. Cook, 1983, p. 383.
2. This chapter is taken from GotQuestions.org (<https://www.gotquestions.org/Syria-Aram-in-the-Bible.htm>)

## The Healing of the Nations

*In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations (Revelation 22:2).*

While there are almost 200 countries on the map today, Jewish tradition refers to global humanity as the “70 nations.” This enumeration comes from the biblical account of the Tower of Babel, when the people of the world gathered together to build an enormous structure that would reach the heavens and challenge God.

As punishment for their rebellion, God destroyed their powerful unity by spreading them throughout the earth and “confusing their language” (Genesis 11:1-9). According to rabbinic tradition, this act led to the development of the seventy nations – each with its own language. The 70 nations can also be traced to the 70 direct descendants of Noah's sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

It was after the dispersion of the nations, that God called Abram, later renamed Abraham, as the father of a unique redemptive nation on the face of the earth. It is believed that Abraham's forefathers through Eber (from which the word ‘Hebrew’ is derived) did not participate in the building of the Tower of Babel. God promised to bless the other nations of the earth through the descendants of Abraham.

*Now the Lord had said to Abram:  
“Get out of your country,  
From your family*

*And from your father's house,  
To a land that I will show you.  
I will make you a great nation;  
I will bless you  
And make your name great;  
And you shall be a blessing.  
I will bless those who bless you,  
And I will curse him who curses you;  
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed"  
(Genesis 12:1-2).*

God has used the descendants of Abraham to bring unparalleled blessings to the earth. Although the Jewish people represent about .2% of the world population, they have won about 20% of all Nobel prizes awarded. That's one hundred times the mathematical percentage of their population! The Jewish people's contributions in science, medicine, technology, and numerous other fields have saved millions of lives, and improved billions.

Former President John Adams said of the Jewish people: "I will insist that the Hebrews have done more to civilize men than any other Nation. They are the most glorious Nation that ever inhabited the earth .... [They] have influenced the affairs of Mankind more, and more happily than any other Nation, ancient or modern.

The Hebrew Scriptures tell of the development of the redemptive history of the Hebrew nation. This is summarized by the Apostle Paul, a devout Jew who came to know Yeshua, the Jewish Messiah.

*who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen (Romans 9:4-5).*

The ultimate blessing to the world was God sending his son Jesus as the Savior of the world through Abraham's descendant. God confirmed his promise to bless the nations of the earth through Abraham's seed after he was willing to offer his son Isaac on the altar.

*In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice (Genesis 22:18).*

This act of faith prefigured the ultimate sacrifice that God the Father was to make in sending his Son to pay the price for the redemption of mankind. Paul makes it very clear that this "seed" is the Son of God, Messiah Jesus, who was born into this world as a descendant of Abraham.

*Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ (Galatians 3:16).*

God chose the descendants of Abraham to be a redemptive people. They were prepared throughout their generations to be the initial recipients of God's New Covenant salvation through Jesus. But it was always God's plan to bring redemption to the nations of the earth.

*Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.' (Isaiah 49:6)*

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).*

According to Joel Richardson, "The Lord's purpose from the very beginning was to bless 'every tribe and tongue and people and nation' (Revelation 5:9). The reason that God called Israel and made them special is because he loves every nation. One may thus quite rightly say, in agreement with Anglican scholar Christopher J.H. Wright, that God so loved the world that he chose Israel.' They were called to serve as a priestly nation, as YHVH's special ambassadors and representatives." [1]

This redemptive plan for the nations was prefigured during the Biblical Feast of Tabernacles as 70 bulls, representing the nations of the earth, were offered each year as a temporary atoning sacrifice for the sins of the rest of the world.

Jesus plainly stated that He was born to be a King. And He will return to earth to be a King to reign over the entire earth (Revelation 17:14; 19:16). The Bible contains dozens of scriptures and prophecies about these events.

God's plan in creation for mankind was to live in a pristine environment in the Garden of Eden. When man sinned, he was thrust out of the garden, but God who knows all things, had a



plan to send his Son to redeem mankind. God initially revealed this plan in the Garden of Eden.

*And I will put enmity  
Between you and the woman,  
And between your seed and her Seed;  
He shall bruise your head,  
And you shall bruise His heel (Genesis 3:15).*

Jesus was the seed of the woman that fulfilled all of the requirements to redeem mankind. He will physically return to Jerusalem at the end of this age to set up his thousand-year reign on the earth. This will be a restoration of the Garden of Eden for all of his redeemed people.

*And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11).*

*Now it shall come to pass in the latter days  
That the mountain of the Lord's house  
Shall be established on the top of the mountains,  
And shall be exalted above the hills;  
And peoples shall flow to it.  
Many nations shall come and say,  
"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
To the house of the God of Jacob;  
He will teach us His ways,  
And we shall walk in His paths."*

*For out of Zion the law shall go forth,  
And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.  
He shall judge between many peoples,  
And rebuke strong nations afar off;  
They shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
And their spears into pruning hooks;  
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
Neither shall they learn war anymore.  
But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree,  
And no one shall make them afraid;  
For the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.  
For all people walk each in the name of his god,  
But we will walk in the name of the Lord our God  
Forever and ever (Micah 4:1-5).*

First, there will be a judgement of the nations that will separate the sheep from the goats.

*All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:32).*

There is some debate about the criteria that God will use to judge the nations, but it is clear that Jesus is not speaking a parable in Matthew 25:31-46, he is speaking about a literal upcoming judgement. Some have suggested that when Jesus is speaking about the least of these his brethren, he is speaking about the Jewish people.

*And the King will answer and say to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (Matthew 25:40).*

The Prophet Joel speaks of another criteria God will use to judge the nations: whether they participated in dividing the land of Israel:

*I will also gather all nations,  
And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat;  
And I will enter into judgment with them there  
On account of My people, My heritage Israel,  
Whom they have scattered among the nations;  
They have also divided up My land (Joel 3:2).*

After the judgement of the nations, God will gather together all the redeemed people from the nations as one people in Messiah.

*That in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him (Ephesians 1:10).*

After the judgement, the redeemed will reign with him for one thousand years.

*Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection.  
Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years (Revelation 20:6).*

Later, there will be a new heaven and a new earth for the redeemed.

*Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells (2 Peter 3:13).*

1. Richardson, Joel. *Sinai to Zion*. Leawood, Kansas: Winepress Media, 2020.