

A Call to Get Back on the Walls of Jerusalem

June 24, 2006



The nation of Israel is undergoing a shaking of biblical proportions. Her strength has been sapped and her clear thinking has been muddled by a constant rain of body blows. These include terror attacks; the election of *al-Qa'eda*'s Islamist twin-sister *Hamas* in the Gaza elections; unswerving world pressure to establish an Islamist Arab Palestinian state within the God-given biblical borders of the Jewish homeland; and various attempts to de-legitimize Israel's very existence

(see <http://www.washtimes.com/functions/print.php?StoryID=20060621-085648-9557r>).

The fog of war has meshed with the Stockholm Syndrome (see our February & March 2006 newsletters at www.davidstent.org), catalyzing an incredible about-face in Israel's leaders. The government of Israel has adopted as policy some of our mortal foes' goals – specifically, the step by step shrinking of Israel, while armed terror simultaneously presses toward its goal of destroying the Jewish state.

Israel's leaders have responded to both global pressure and to the veiled threat of economic or political boycott by enacting and overseeing a unilateral retreat from Gaza in August 2005, and now are getting ready to carry out another retreat from portions of the mountains of Israel (see Ezek.34:13-14; 36:1-8; 37:22; 38:8; 39:17) – if PM Olmert's plans succeed. ***Israel's government seems to be in the process of fulfilling one of global jihad's wildest dreams – the Jewish people handing over our own territory to our sworn enemies on a silver platter*** (see Psalm 83; Ezek.35, 36).

When the I.D.F. retreated from Gaza in August 2005, the vacuum it left was instantly filled by Islamist *jihadi* forces. Since then advanced weapons and millions of greenbacks have flooded into the Gaza Strip, while Islamist terror groups openly train for murderous attacks on Jewish civilians – all this on top of the ruins of bulldozed Israeli farms and homes. Global *jihadi* forces gleefully declare that Israel's retreats in Lebanon and Gaza were the result of unceasing terror attacks. Iran's Ahmedinejad, Hezbollah's Nasrallah and Hamas' Haniyeh proclaim that Israel is now on the retreat, and that continued steadfastness will soon lead to total victory – a Palestinian Islamist state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Many intercessors are grieved about all that has been described above and are distressed about the present policies of Israel's government. One or two voices might look at the above situation and say something like, "It's not an easy situation but we Israelis are doing the best that we can. The retreat is not necessarily a bad thing. Most people in Israel support what PM Sharon was doing and what PM Olmert is doing. Don't criticize or second-guess or even voice disagreement with Israel's leaders. Father knows best!"

Such words can have the unintended effect of chilling desperate intercession. Years ago the prophet Jeremiah was confronted by a similar situation. He explained, "*They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. 'Peace, peace,' they say, when there is no peace*" (Jer.8:11)

Yet Jeremiah's own response was far more emotional and black and white. "*Since my people are crushed, I am crushed; I mourn, and horror grips me. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people? Oh, that my head were a spring of water and my eyes a fountain of tears! I would weep day and night for the slain of my people*" (Jer 8:21-9:1).

As Israel's cabinet prepares for further retreats, whether big or small, what are believers to do? How can we all make sense of these traumatic days? ***How are we to pray? How can intercessors stand "on the walls of Jerusalem," especially if the war trumpet's blast is tentative (Isa. 62:6-7; 1 Cor.14:8)? And how can Gentile and Jewish believers express their prophetic and strategic concerns to the nation of Israel and to its leadership?***

Quashing free debate

Years ago an American TV commercial asserted that "even your best friends won't tell you" about bad breath. It is certainly true that friendships are tested when unpleasant situations get addressed. It is true that telling your neighbor about halitosis might ruin a friendship. But let's keep matters in perspective. Sharing the gospel with friends could create even more social disturbances than that!

A few years ago, a prophetic friend of ours had a dream in which some tall black-clothed Orthodox Jews challenged her faith in Yeshua the Messiah. "What right do you, a Gentile and a woman, have to make such a declaration or even to hold these opinions?" they demanded, towering over her with much intimidation. Then all of sudden the radiance of Holy Spirit broke through the darkness and shined directly upon her face. In the dream the belligerent unbelief of these men was instantly transformed into a child-like curiosity as a result of the striking supernatural sign.

Defenders of Rabbinic Judaism sometimes try to quash debate about the Messiahship of Yeshua by intimidation, or by appealing to the rabbis' superior knowledge, spirituality or stock. ***These tactics are simply an attempt to invalidate the individual's right to even have an opinion.*** This strategy has often caused believers to shy away from communicating the gospel to Jewish people. For the black-clothed men in the dream, intimidation was their strategy, but muzzling the gospel was their ultimate goal.

Among secular Jews who love Israel, similar dynamics and tactics can occasionally be found. When Israelis Jews disagree with Diaspora Jews about Israeli government policies, the debate can get quite hot. An Israeli will often try to end the debate by delivering the following rebuke to his Diaspora counterpart, "You have no right to express your opinions or convictions on these matters unless you actually live in Israel."

There may certainly be some merit to this argument, for Israeli Jews bear the brunt of wars and their government's policies in a way that Diaspora Jews simply do not. ***But the attempt to shut down discussion or prohibit debate*** between Jews is not healthy for everyone concerned – especially if both sides in the debate truly care for the survival of Jewish people and the well-being of the State of Israel.

Silencing one's friends

At a recent Christian Zionist conference, it was announced from the platform that unnamed powers-that-be in the ***Israeli government had just warned conference organizers against expressing any opposition to or disagreement with the disengagement/ realignment/ retreat policy of Prime Minister Olmert's Kadima party.***

It seems that some Israeli government representatives are saying, in ever so nuanced a manner, "Christian Zionists, we appreciate your material and political support. We want it and actively solicit it. We know that you love us because of what the Bible says. We ourselves may not believe the Bible, but we are happy for your support. But don't take this Bible stuff too far. We don't want to hear about what you feel the Bible says concerning the disengagement or Trojan Horse peace treaties! And of course, we certainly don't want to hear about your Messiah Yeshua! Hush up, be silent or we may give you the cold shoulder. . ." Silence, some sage once declared, is golden. Are these demands for silence a sign that a new 'golden age' is upon us . . .

Even though some nameless Israeli government official may be exerting pressure on Christian Zionists to 'stuff' their concerns about disengagement, most Israelis have no problem expressing their own opinions about Olmert's disengagement plan. And in spite of what one or two hopeful people might opine, according to the most recent poll by Ha'aretz-Dialog, ***56 percent of Israelis oppose Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's convergence plan***, and only 37 percent of Israelis support the plan, which calls for a massive unilateral withdrawal in the West Bank (*Ha'aretz* Fri., June 16, 2006).

When a government is unable to muster the people's faith in the major plank of its electoral platform, standard political wisdom is that heads need to roll. It seems that Christian Zionist heads are an easier target than are the heads of Israel's electorate.

What are the watchmen saying?

Intercessors are sensing a clear and present danger to Israel on the horizon. It is the nature of the prophetic to cry out and to warn. Even if some Israeli government 'spin doctors' or even one or two Messianic leaders in Israel insist that all is as well as could be under the circumstances, and that we "all just need to come along quietly" – *we want to encourage the intercessors: your anguish of spirit is real, and the threats you see are all too real.*

Do not be afraid! Your concerns for Israel are not a sign that you are either critics or arm-chair critics. Your support for Israel is hidden in God's heart, is conditioned by His love, and that it flows from His throne. Your concern for Israel is biblically based.

Now is the moment when *informed* intercession is desperately needed. We need to have our antennas up, listening for the watchmen's prophetic alarms, and we need to hear their warnings – not shut them down!

Let us remember that when Israel finds itself in a beleaguered situation facing a clear and present danger, only her true intercessory friends will cry out in anguish and ring out a warning. The need of the hour is for us to listen to the watchmen! (Ezek.33:1-10)

Isaiah declares that our Gentile friends who truly love us and choose what pleases the Lord will find their desperate prayers and heartfelt offerings accepted in God's future house of prayer, for His house will be called a house of prayer for all nations (Isa.56:6-7). In the next breath he cautions Israel's watchmen, exhorting them not to be blind or like hoarse dogs who have forgotten how to bark and warn of approaching judgment (v.10).

As Messianic believers we must make every effort not to silence the believers in the nations or to indoctrinate them, but to disciple them by leading them into mature discernment through the God-given exercise of their facilities (see Heb.5:14).

The season of dividing the Land

Any dividing up of the land of Israel throughout history has always been considered by the Bible to be a sign of judgment on Israel. Whether it is the EU, the Quartet, the G-8, the U.N., the U.S.A. or *even an Israeli government* that encourages the dividing up of the land of Israel, it is a tragedy. It compounds that tragedy when any nation, whether a friendly superpower or even the Jewish nation, encourages or participates in such actions.

It is true that the Scriptures teach that a temporary division of Jerusalem and of the land of Israel will be a brief last-days event directly before the return of Messiah Yeshua (Zech.14:1-2; Joel 3:1-2; etc.). But none of us wants to be found facilitating the division of the land of Israel or Jerusalem, or even acting as a defense attorney for forces (even Jewish forces!) who would carry out that retreat and the dividing up of the land.

The Bible states that those who curse Israel will themselves be found under the curse of Abraham's covenant (Gen.12:3; Jer.30:15-16). Woe to the nation, organization, church or individual who lends a hand to God's judgment of Israel, and to the division of the land (see Isa.10:5, 12; Matt.18:7).

The question at hand is biblical. It is not whether Israel's leadership is making the best of all possible choices. The question we all need to ask is this: *should any nation set their hand to tearing away portions of the land of Israel from Jewish control, and granting those portions to an Arab entity which actively seeks to destroy all Jewish people living in Israel?* There is only one answer to that question which is consistent with the whole counsel of Scripture "No, we are not supposed to advocate for, to facilitate, to defend or help to establish such a state!"

As the world slowly moves in the direction of Joel 3:2 (the forced division of the land of Israel), intercessors need to quickly discern events and know how to pray about these life and death issues. The watchmen need to speak out – to men and to God.

How should we then pray?

Pray for Israel's leaders, that the Lord God of Israel reveal Himself to them in His glory and holiness. Pray for their salvation and for open hearts to the revelation of Yeshua as their Messiah and the only Hope of the nation of Zion.

Pray that both Israel's leaders and the whole nation of Israel will speedily wake up to the strategic dangers of handing over land to Islamist mortal enemies, who openly and boldly declare their goal of destroying the Jewish nation.

Pray that God's angels will frustrate and stop all terror attacks against the Israeli nation, and that He would grant instead repentance and salvation to the terrorists.

Pray for the safety, discernment and accuracy of all those involved in local counter-terrorist work, in the Israeli army and security forces or as undercover workers in the Palestinian areas.

Pray that God will give Israel those leaders who have the faith and vision to believe Him for the security, victory and salvation of the Jewish nation (www.danielpipes.org/article/3667).

As believers mature in expressing their love and support for Israel, there will be increasing manifestations of discernment, boldness and sacrifice. Love for Israel will not come at the expense of shame about the gospel. Believers will also speak clearly to Jewish people in Israel and in the Diaspora about the seriousness of violating God's covenant regarding ownership and stewardship of the land, and about embracing a heart of thankfulness for possessing that land. Believers will speak the truth in love to Israel about threats to that nation's security, about giving in to ungodly international pressure and (when necessary) about making rash and injudicious security decisions. Believers will strengthen their support for Messianic Jews and for the work of the gospel among the Jewish people. Believers will clearly manifest God's heart and love not only for Israel God's firstborn, but also for the Arab and Muslim world as well. Let that day come soon!

Thank you for laboring in prayer with us for Israel, the apple of God's eye. A reward is in sight, so let's keep pushing forward! We bless you in the name of Messiah Yeshua.

Avner Boskey

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