



HOPE for ISRAEL

O Israel put your hope in the LORD... Psalm 130:7

Is (Man-made) Peace Possible? A WORD FROM MORAN

Shalom!

May the grace of our God give you peace and strength in Messiah Yeshua until the day of His return! It seems that the "birth pains" that Yeshua foretold have grown to a new level. Almost daily, we hear about wars and rumors of war; we hear of famines, earthquakes, and other devastating natural disasters throughout the world. All this is yet one more sign of the times in which we live today.

As for wars, lately I hear speculations (and perhaps wishful thinking!) that if the issue between Israel and the Palestinian people can be solved, then the conflict between Israel and the Arab nations as a whole will cease, and we will see "world peace. I believe that, as followers of the Messiah, we need to have a biblical perspective of the situation, and form our opinions accordingly.

A few weeks ago, during one of my teachings on the topic "Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:6), I said that, in my opinion, when we pray for the peace of Jerusalem we are actually praying for the second coming of our Messiah. For we know that true peace cannot rule amongst men until our hearts have been changed by the Prince of Peace, Yeshua. The world - and sadly, many well-meaning believers - think that they can "fix" the problem at hand by forcing Israel to make more and more concessions and to give up more of the Land that God has given her. If only it were that simple.

In this issue of our newsletter we will deal with two main questions: 'Is man-made peace possible?' and, 'What do we need to do as believers?' In Tamar's article you will find many of the answers to the first question, as well as some important facts that I



believe each of us needs to know.

It is important for me to state that, while I believe that the false peace will come as God's Word says, our focus as believers must be on proclaiming God's truth, without compromise. As it was in my life, only God can take the heart of stone and replace it with a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 11:19). Only God can bring true and lasting peace to the Middle East, and any human efforts will continue to fail, even in the time of the ifalse peace of which the Bible speaks.

As for the second question, regarding what we as followers of the Messiah need to do, I would like to propose that we are to:

1. Pray for the return of our Messiah (the true peace).
2. Learn what the Bible has to say about this issue and stand for this alone.
3. Learn the facts about the situation from reliable sources and share them with others.
4. Pray for the redemption of all the people who live here.
5. Pray for the local Body of Messiah – Jew & Arab alike – to stand firm and in unity during these times.
6. Support the local Body of Messiah in Israel.

May the Prince of Peace give you His peace and bring peace upon us all.

Moran



Two-State Solution: Breaking New Ground?

By Tamar Afriat

On June 4th, 2009, US President Barack Obama arrived at Cairo University in Egypt where he was to deliver a much-anticipated address to the Muslim world. He had already expressed in his inaugural address his intention to embark on a new direction with the Muslim world, stating, “[W]e will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist.” The choice of Cairo as the speech venue was no accident as it is regarded as the cultural capital of the Middle East. When asked what issues Egyptians were expecting Obama’s speech to address, Lara Logan, CBS foreign correspondent on location in Cairo on the eve of the speech, replied, “Well, first and foremost, is the Israeli/Arab/Palestinian question... [The Egyptians] want some concrete signs from Obama that there is a real commitment to resolving this process... And they believe that none of the other problems in the Middle East can be solved unless you first deal with the issue of a Palestinian state.” Logan’s comment echoed the comments leading politicians in the world had been openly making the last several years, which identified the Israeli-Palestinian problem as the root of the matter for all that ails the Middle East today. The connection: solve the problem between Israel and the Palestinians, then all the other problems are solved. Israelis were anxious to hear what Obama had to say knowing that if the new American president wanted to get on the good side with the Muslim world, he would have to come down hard on the Israeli side.

In the end, however, the speech Obama delivered on June 4 of this year offered no new ground shaking proclamations. He actually succeeded in confronting the Muslim world on one of its most enduringly counter-productive positions: denying the Holocaust. He also challenged them on hiding behind the Israeli-Palestinian issue to avoid dealing with the real issues in their own countries. In the final analysis, his speech was, for the most part, balanced, fair, and drew mainly optimistic and cautious reactions from both sides of the issues. Its call to action to both the Israelis and Palestinians was also balanced; on the Palestinian side it placed the onus to end to violence, acknowledge Israel’s right to exist,

and to invest genuinely in the practical development of their society. On the Israeli side it placed the onus to recognize a Palestinian state and cease all settlements. None of these statements were new. Former President Bush made identical

Israeli-Palestinian problem must first be solved, placed a new energy and urgency behind the resurrected rhetoric that have the chance of making it a reality.

TWO-STATE SOLUTION: TWICE OFFERED, TWICE REFUSED

On July 5th of 2000, President Clinton invited then Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat to convene a peace summit at Camp David with the goal of reaching agreements on all the outstanding



U.S. President Obama at Cairo University.

statements at one time or another over the past seven years. So what is different now about Obama’s statements regarding the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and Bush’s identical statements made over the last seven years? What has changed is the atmosphere in which they were made, and clearly the atmosphere in the world has changed considerably. President Bush had his energies committed to the “War on Terror”, and the Israeli-Palestinian issue would never receive his full attention. He saw his predecessor, then President Bill Clinton, squander his last year in office desperately trying to reach final status agreements between the Israelis and Palestinians, only to meet miserable failure. Obama, on the other hand, in agreeing with the growing consensus in his Cairo speech that to solve any of the wide-ranging problems in the Muslim world, the

issues in the peace negotiations, called the “final-status issues”. During the summit, the Israeli and Palestinian sides were to negotiate essentially on the details of a



Barak, Clinton and Arafat at Camp David.

Palestinian state, which included territory, Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, and the Palestinian demand for the right of return (the return of all Palestinians and their descendants who fled or were evacuated during the 1948 war between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq for the land

that was then called British Mandate Palestine). Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered an eventual 91% of the West Bank, all of the Gaza Strip, and Palestinian control over East Jerusalem as the capital of a new Palestinian State. To everyone's amazement (including some of the Palestinian negotiators), Arafat refused all the offers and made no counter-offers. Subsequently, President Clinton and Mideast Envoy Dennis Ross, who both participated in the negotiations, wrote books (*My Life* by President Clinton and *Missing Peace* by Dennis Ross) which squarely placed the blame for the failure of the summit on Yasser Arafat's refusal to negotiate or compromise on any of the Palestinian demands.

Up until the failed Camp David Peace summit, most Israelis lived in the euphoric hope of the peace process that marked the atmosphere of Israel in the nineties. The average Israeli had an undaunted optimism that peace could be achieved if they worked hard enough at it. Israelis, however, were rudely awakened from



Suicide bomber attack in Israel.

the stupor of the peace process years by the explosion of almost daily suicide bombers in their midst during what is now called the Second Palestinian Uprising, or the Second Intifada, which began in 2000 after the failed Camp David Peace Summit. Apparently, the unprecedented amounts of money that was being given to the Palestinian Authority to improve their society and the oft repeated commitments to peace made in English to the foreign press never quite trickled down to the average Palestinian. The average Palestinian was still fed a steady diet of regaining all the land "from the river to the sea", that is, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean, by their educational, media, religious and political institutions. Generous foreign grants to the families of suicide bombers from Muslim leaders also helped make "martyrdom" a lucrative Palestinian industry.

The equation for Israelis was simple to make, "We are willing to make painful concessions, agree to almost every demand of the Palestinian side, and we get carnage in our streets in return." The Palestinian side, however, was to discover another formula: "Wait and they'll end up offering you more." After Arafat's initial refusal at Camp David, President Clinton made a last-ditch effort to reach an agreement and win for himself a political victory in the final moments before he was to leave office. In January 2001, the Taba Summit was convened during which the Palestinian side was offered even more territory for their state than was originally

offered six months earlier, and more concessions on other issues. An agreement at Taba couldn't be reached as the Palestinians continued in their unwillingness to budge on their demands, and both Clinton and Barak were limited in what they could do as they were both poised to leave office in less than two weeks.

The Palestinians would have to wait another eight years to receive another offer from the Israelis, this time from Prime Minister Ehud Olmert in 2008 who was then on his way out of office and looking to establish a political legacy. In a meeting with Washington Post Deputy Editorial Page Editor, Jackson Diehl, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas confirmed that former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert "had shown him a map proposing a Palestinian state on 97 percent of the West Bank" and accepted in principle the "right of return", agreeing to a token amount of refugees returning to Israel proper, something that no other Israeli Prime Minister was willing to do. (Washington Post, 29May09) Abbas ultimately refused Olmert's offer, publically stating that "the gaps were wide." (Ibid) However, in his interview with Washington Post editors Jackson Diehl and Fred Hiatt, Abbas revealed his real motivation for refusing the most generous offer the Israelis had made the Palestinians to date: according to the Washington Post editorial, the Palestinians "plan to sit back and watch while U.S. pressure slowly squeezes the Israeli prime minister from office." (Ibid)

Because Abbas correctly perceives that US President Obama is on his side, he refuses the notion that he should have to make any concessions to the Israeli side, especially recognizing Israel as a Jewish State: doing so would "imply renunciation of any large-scale resettlement of [Palestinian] refugees": that is, an end to the Palestinian pre-condition of the right of return. (Ibid) The right of return means this: the demand that all the Palestinian persons and their subsequent descendants from the wars of 1948 and 1967 be allowed to return to Israel proper. Today their estimated number exceeds four million. If four million Palestinian displaced persons and their descendants were allowed to settle in the state of Israel, Palestinians would automatically become the majority, and the state of Israel would cease being a Jewish state. The message that the Palestinians are clearly sending is, "We want a two-state solution, one Islamic Palestinian state in the West Bank, side by side with a democratic state of Israel in which there is a majority of Palestinians." Thus the perennial Palestinian slogan of possessing all the land "from the river to the sea" is realized. No more Jewish State. No more Israel. Just Palestine. That is what the two-state solution means to the Palestinians.

The question then arises whether President Obama or any other past American President, for that matter, who labored on the Israeli-Palestinian issue also shares the Palestinian leadership's view and goal when discussing the two-state solution. The answer is, "Absolutely not." Obama joined with Bush's past statements in recognizing Israel's right to exist as an absolute: "American leaders of both parties for half a century have agreed that Israel's right to exist is not a negotiating position, is not an issue to be haggled over..." (National Review, 12Nov07). President Obama went even further than President Bush when stating America's friendship with Israel and commitment to Israel's right to exist in his Cairo speech in June of this year. It is still questionable whether President Obama can stand up to incaltrant Palestinian positions: that is, persuade them to relinquish the subterfuge of the "right of return" and agree to a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip living side by side in peace and security with the Jewish state of Israel.

IS ISRAEL A BIBLICAL ISSUE OR NOT?

Before believers – Gentile & Jewish alike- continue down the road of grappling with, discussing, and forming opinions about the Israel and the Palestinian issue, there is one thing that must



be established first and foremost. The issue of Israel is a biblical one. If believers who have rejected replacement theologies want to get a grasp on the difficult and confusing issue of Israel, they must first establish what the Bible has to say about the final status of the land of Israel as God sees it. The secular media has established the rhetoric, tone, and lens through which people view, think about, and discuss the

issue of Israel. It's hard to imagine, on the other hand, that believers would allow themselves to be influenced in such a way by secular world perspective on issues like abortion, homosexuality, and immorality. Most are informed on what the Bible says on these important and widely discussed moral issues. Why would it be any different when discussing Israel? And yet, it seems that many believers put their discernment on hold and lack the biblical knowledge on this one issue and allow highly biased world opinion set the terms and conditions in their minds.

Those who profess belief in the Bible – Christians and Jews alike – must get their minds and hearts settled on the question, "What does a Palestinian state in biblical Judea and Samaria actually mean?" It means the establishment of an Islamic state, where no Jew would be allowed to live, in the heart of the land that God covenanted to Israel. It is essential to understand that the term "West Bank" that the media uses is biblical Judea and Samaria where God had Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob build alters to Him (in Jerusalem, Shechem, Bet El, Hebron) and where He made eternal and unconditional covenants with the people of Israel for the land. There are countless places in the Bible this covenant is expressed. Psalm 105:8-11 is just one of those places:

"He remembers His covenant forever, the word He commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant He made with Abraham, the oath He swore to Isaac. He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant: 'To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit.'"

If anyone has any doubt of God's unwavering commitment to Israel and His promises to Israel, this passage should settle it for sure. This passage combines all the language used throughout

the first five books of the Bible that describes God's covenants to Israel. These are the terms God uses when speaking of His covenant with the Jewish nation and the covenant land of Israel: covenant forever, a thousand generations, oath, swear, confirm, decree, everlasting covenant. Anyone who would argue that God did not really intend to give the people of Israel the land would get into a bind defending their argument in the light of this verse, and countless others, for that matter, that state the exact same thing. One might argue, however, that because of Israel's disobedience, it lost its "right" to the land of Israel. Well, the Bible has something to say about that too. When the Lord established His covenant with Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai, He clearly set out the terms and conditions for what would happen to Israel if it obeyed the Lord's commandments or broke them. If Israel persisted in its disobedience, even after receiving a long list of harsh punishments from the Lord, He says in Leviticus 26:33:

"I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie



in ruins. Then the land will enjoy its sabbath years all the time that it lies desolate and you in the country of your enemies..."

Israel suffered that very punishment for the last two thousand years. But that wasn't the end of the story. Leviticus 26:42-45 says:

"...I will remember my covenant with Jacob and my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land... They will pay for their sins because they rejected my laws and abhorred my decrees. Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them or abhor them so as to destroy them completely, breaking my covenant with them... But for their sake I will remember the covenant with their ancestors..."

The Lord says the exact same thing again in Deuteronomy 30:1-5. In the light of these passages, there can be no doubt whatsoever that the Lord brought the Jews back from their exile and gave them back the land of Israel in the war of Independence in 1948 and the Six Day War in 1967.

COMING TO TERMS WITH A DIFFICULT REALITY

The fact of the matter is, however, that a two-state solution seems the only option humanly imaginable. Most Israelis and their leadership do not want to rule over another people. They want the Palestinians first and foremost not to be at war with them, but then to be able to have a good and free life with dignity.

In the final analysis, there is no human solution to the quandary: hang on to Judea and Samaria as they are and perpetuate the untenable situation of millions of Palestinians living without citizenship and rights in Israel, or give up the covenant heartland of Israel to the Palestinians to establish an independent Islamic state there, thereby breaking

the unconditional covenants that God made with Israel and the land. The first option is morally bankrupt, the second is terrifying and unconscionable. In all the history of ancient Israel, the Israelites never once willingly handed over the land they knew the Lord had promised to them. They knew that they would lose possession of the land due to their sinfulness or disobedience. After two-thousand years in exile, the Lord gathered the children of Israel in the land of Israel. In less than sixty years in the land, less than thirty for controlling Jerusalem, the people of Israel are willing to carve up the little bit of land they now have and give it away because it seems the only option.

In his book, "God's Abrahamic Covenants with Israel and the Church", which examines the covenants the Lord made with Israel and the land, Tom Hess comes to this conclusion: "The only way there is going to be real shalom/salaam in Israel before Messiah's coming is if the Jews and the Arabs in these places both recognize and trust in the God of Israel and the Bible, and then recognize

each other in Him." (Hess, 56) God has blessings to release to both Jews and Arabs, both being the sons of Abraham, if they recognize the God of Israel and become reconciled to each other in Yeshua. Indeed, we have personally seen Jews and Arabs, who have come to faith in Yeshua, personally experience the power and freedom in being released from the hatred and un-forgiveness from years of conflict, violence, and bloodshed. They realize that in God there is no partiality, just the desire to bring all the nations to the knowledge of Him, which is ultimate peace. God's plan for peace will come to pass, and it will be a unity of peace between Jew and Arab that the world hasn't even imagined:

"In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth.

The LORD Almighty will bless them, saying, 'Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance.'" Isaiah 19:24-25

Being enlightened with Biblical knowledge, the final question we should ask ourselves is: "Are we going to trust in the Word of God

and His peace plan or are we going to buy into the false peace that the world has to offer?" We know that the government in Israel will agree to some sort of two-state solution in Israel since the Bible says that Israel will make a covenant with the antichrist, which will bring a false peace for a time, but then ultimately utter destruction. If we want to see peace in the Middle East,



Jerusalem

we should pray and be actively involved so that many Jews and Arabs will come to a saving knowledge of the greatest peace negotiator of all, the Prince of Peace: Arabs recognizing and accepting that God made covenants with Israel and the land; Jews treating the Arabs who are ready to live at peace with them as native-born Israelis according to God's command in Ezekiel 47:21-23. The fullness of this will come to pass when the Messiah reigns from Jerusalem as the Bible promises. But, we can work toward it and beseech Heaven for a partial fulfillment even now. If we actively partner with the Lord in His peace plan, we will also be ensuring that as many Palestinians as possible escape the wrath that He has stored up for Edom described in Ezekiel 35 :10 because of their envy for the land intended for Israel: "Because you [Edom] have said, 'These two nations and these two lands will be mine, and we will possess them...'" His is the only peace plan that I am willing to sign onto, even though it requires me to take a leap of faith and go against the wisdom of the world, remembering that "the wisdom of the world is foolishness in God's sight." (1 Corinthians 3:19).

Ner Yah

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you..." Matthew 28: 18b-20a

Discipleship is the center of Hope for Israel's heart for Israel and Jewish people throughout the world. Indeed, Yeshua did not instruct his followers to proclaim the gospel alone, but to make disciples and to teach them to obey all that He commanded. We want to highlight one of our projects that focuses on discipling young believers in Jerusalem: Ner Yah.

Ner Yah Youth is a group of high school age believers who come from various congregations in Jerusalem whom we are raising up to be the future leaders of the Body of Messiah in Israel, as well as to prepare them for service in the IDF and the daily pressures they will face in life. Living in a culture that is ignorant of and often hostile to their faith, it is vital that the youth have a place where they can receive encouragement and support from believers their age. Following the model of the disciples in Acts



Ner Yah Youth Bible study.

2:42, we meet weekly for bible study, fellowship, the breaking of bread, & prayer. Our goal is to equip them, challenge them to grow in faith, and cause them to be bold witnesses of Yeshua in their every day lives.

Please pray for these youth – the future of Israel – to grow firm in their faith and to affect change in their generation.

Adventure in Israel



Join us for an exciting, one-of-a-kind adventure in Israel, the Land of the Bible!

For more information, contact us at tourisrael@hope4israel.org or call (818) 448-9818

CELEBRATE HOPE FOR ISRAEL'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY!

Final Word

In order to accomplish the great work the Lord has for us, we do need your prayer and financial support.

Please prayerfully consider supporting the Hope for Israel ministry.
Please make all checks payable to Hope for Israel.