

Yom Ha'atzmaut { יום העצמאות } (Israeli Independence Day)

By Hannah Nesher www.voiceforisrael.net

Standing with Israel



The Israeli flag is being raised all over the Land of Israel as we prepare to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut {Hebrew: **יום העצמאות**, *yōm hā- 'ašmā 'ūl* } Israel's Independence Day. This joyous occasion, commemorating Israel's Declaration of Independence on the Hebrew date of Iyar 5th, 5708 (May 14, 1948 on the Gregorian calendar) is always preceded by the more somber day of Yom Hazikaron, Israel's Remembrance Day for Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terrorism.

Before we can rejoice over the miraculous survival of the nation of Israel, we must first pay tribute to those who paid such a high price - the young Israeli men and women of the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) who sacrificed their very lives; and the innocent victims of terrorist attacks – in the continuing struggle for the survival of the nation of Israel.

Our Messiah Yeshua said, **“Greater love has no one than this; to lay down one's life for one's friends.”** (John 15:13) Most Israeli men, women and children carry deep sorrow in their hearts over loved ones who laid down their lives either as a casualty of war, or as one of the many victims of vicious terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians. The Bible tells us, however, that though **“weeping many endure for a night, joy comes in the morning.”** (Psalm 30:5)

As the sorrow of Israel's Remembrance Day ceremonies wind down at dusk, the rejoicing of Independence Day festivities are just beginning with an official ceremony and torch lighting on Har (Mount) Herzl. Twelve torches are lit to represent the twelve tribes of Israel.



Torch lighting ceremony on Mount Herzl (photo by Amit Shabi)

This is followed by colorful fireworks displays and people coming together to celebrate with joy and gladness - with singing and dancing - especially to the traditional folk song, '[Am Yisrael Chai](#)' (The nation of Israel lives!). **"I will build you up again, and you, Virgin Israel, will be rebuilt. Again you will take up your timbrels and go out to dance with the joyful."** (Jeremiah 31:4)

Streets around public squares are closed to traffic so that the people may freely rejoice and dance in the streets of Jerusalem. The ancient Hebrew prophet Jeremiah foretold the coming of this day:

"Yet in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are deserted, inhabited by neither people nor animals, there will be heard once more the sounds of joy and gladness." (Jeremiah 33:10)



Israelis watch fireworks (photo Motti Kimchi)

Yom Ha'atzmaut is an official day off work during which Israeli families, regardless of religious observance or denominational affiliation, celebrate with annual spring picnics and barbecues. These are called, in Israeli slang, a '*mangal*' – from an Arabic word meaning 'stove'.



Israeli style mangal

Balconies, parks, schools and buildings all over Israel are decorated with Israeli flags; and most vehicles display a small Israeli flag as well hanging from their windows or attached to their side view mirrors.

An exciting part of Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations are the fantastic aerial displays by the Israeli Air Forces.

The Presidents' Residence hosts a reception, special prayers are recited, and the Israel Prize ceremony takes place on this day as well.



Israeli Air Forces Yom Ha'atzmaut flypast 2011

Israel – A Miracle Nation!

Yom Ha'atzmaut, is not just a time to celebrate and rejoice for Israelis and Jewish people in the Diaspora, however; but for Bible Believers in all the nations. The fact that Israel has been reborn and continues not only to survive, but also to thrive, is a modern day miracle!

A leading Israeli newspaper wrote:

“Even if there are moments when we think we've never had it this bad, even if the political situation is a source of doom and gloom for many, we should remind ourselves once a year that the reality we live in far exceeds all our dreams and expectations... The State of Israel is a miracle.”¹

What exactly is a miracle? The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines 'miracle' as ‘an extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs.’

'Am Yisrael, the nation of Israel, was established, called and formed by the express intervention and initiative of the LORD. A miracle nation indeed!²

Mark Twain, in 1867, described the Land of Israel thus:

"There is not a solitary village throughout its (the Jezreel Valley) whole extent - not for thirty miles in either direction. There are two or three small clusters of Bedouin tents, but not a single permanent habitation. One may ride ten miles hereabouts and not see ten human beings ... (in reference to the Galilee) these unpeopled deserts, these rusty mounds of barrenness, that never, never, never do shake the glare from their harsh outlines, and fade and faint into vague perspective; that melancholy ruin of Capernaum; this stupid village of Tiberias, slumbering under its six funereal palms... Nazareth is forlorn... Jericho the accursed lies in a moldering ruin... Bethlehem and Bethany, in their poverty and their humiliation.... Bethsaida and Chorzin have vanished from the earth, and the "desert places" around them ... sleep in the hush of a solitude that is inhabited only by birds of prey and skulking foxes"³



http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fa/Jerusalem_panorama_early_twentieth_century2.jpg
Jerusalem Early Twentieth Century

¹ <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4649829,00.html>

² <http://cryforjerusalem.blogspot.co.il/>

³ Twain, Mark "The Innocents Abroad" Oxford University Press, NY, 1996 pp. 485,508,520,607-608.



Jerusalem 2011

In 1948, at the establishment of the state of Israel, the population stood at only 806,000. This Yom Ha'atsmaut, in April of 2015, the population of Israel has grown to 8,345,000 – a thousand fold increase in only 67 years.⁴ Wow!

Here is the Word of the Lord:

“But you, mountains of Israel, will produce branches and fruit for my people Israel, for they will soon come home. I am concerned for you and will look on you with favor; you will be plowed and sown, and I will cause many people to live on you—yes, all of Israel. The towns will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt.

I will increase the number of people and animals living on you, and they will be fruitful and become numerous. I will settle people on you as in the past and will make you prosper more than before. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

I will cause people, my people Israel, to live on you. They will possess you, and you will be their inheritance; you will never again deprive them of their children.” (Ezekiel 36:8-12)

⁴ <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4649494,00.html>



Tel Aviv in 1909



Tel Aviv Today⁵

The re-birth of the nation of Israel after centuries of its people being scattered in exile and its land completely dry and barren is undeniable evidence that God's Word is true! Just as three of our foremothers, Sarah, Rebecca, and Rachel were all barren until God supernaturally opened their wombs⁶, so too did God supernaturally bring forth new life in Israel after lying barren for centuries. Even our Messiah Yeshua was conceived in a miraculous way; is it any wonder that the re-birth of Israel is also a miraculous, supernatural event?

⁵ http://israelvalley.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/files/000/010/781/original/tel_aviv_3.jpg?1396947420 If you want to see more photos of this modern miracle nation, take a look at this website: <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4650018,00.html>

⁶ Genesis 11:30; Genesis 25:21 and Genesis 29:31,30:22

Can a Nation be Born in a Day?

The Prophet Isaiah asked, “**Can a nation be born in a day?**”⁷ The obvious answer is, “Of course not!” This is an impossibility; and yet with God all things are possible.

Israel was, indeed reborn in one day, on May 14th 1948, as Israel’s first Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, read Israel’s declaration of Independence.

“Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment? For as soon as Zion was in labor she brought forth her children.” (Isaiah 66:8)

God is not a man that He should lie (Numbers 23:19). He faithfully keeps His Covenantal promises to His people. Although He punished Israel for their sins by sending us into exile, He also promised that one day we would return and rebuild this land.

“I will bring Judah and Israel back from captivity and will rebuild them as they were before.” (Jeremiah 33:7)

God, who scattered His people to all four corners of the earth, vowed to one day gather them back to their own land. **“He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.”** (Jeremiah 31:10)

That day is now. The set time to favor Zion has come. Am Yisrael Chai! Halleluyah!

“You will arise and have compassion on Zion, for it is time to show favor to her; the appointed time has come.” (Psalm 102:13)



Declaration of the State of Israel

⁷Isaiah 66:8

Since 1948, in spite of all the odds, Israel has flourished. Here is a list of just some of the accomplishments of modern Israel as compiled by Rabbi John Rosove two years ago:⁸

- *Israel is the only country in the Middle East that based its principles of government on both democratic liberal values and on the values of the Biblical prophets.*
- *Israel is the largest immigrant-absorbing nation on earth.*
- *Israel has the world's second highest per capita rate of published books.*
- *Israel is the only nation on earth that resurrected an ancient language, Hebrew, as its national language.*
- *Israeli poets and song writers are regarded as heroes.*
- *Israel is the only country in the world that entered the 21st century with a net gain in its number of trees.*
- *Israel has more museums per capita than any country.*
- *Israel developed the cell phone, Windows NT and XP operating systems, Pentium MMX Chip technology, the Pentium-4 microprocessor, the Centrino Processor, voice mail technology, and AOL Instant Messenger ICQ.*
- *Israel has the highest per capita rate of home computers in the world.*
- *Israel designed the airline industry's most impenetrable flight security system.*
- *Israel designed and implemented the Iron Dome Defense system.*
- *Israel has the highest ratio of university degrees in the world.*
- *Israel produces more scientific papers per capita than any other nation, and one of the highest per capita rates of patents filed.*
- *Israel has the third highest rate of entrepreneurship in the world.*
- *Israel is second in the world in the number of start-up companies behind only the U.S.*
- *Israel has the world's largest per capita number of biotech start-ups.*
- *Israel has the third largest number of NASDAQ listed companies, behind the U.S. and Canada, and is ranked second for venture capital funds.*
- *Israel has the highest average living standard in the Middle East.*
- *24% of Israel's workforce holds university degrees, ranking third in the industrialized world; 12% hold advanced degrees.*
- *Israel leads the world in the number of scientists and technicians in the workforce.*
- *Israel is a world leader in water renewal, recycling, desalination, and solar heating.*
- *Israel invented the drip irrigation system used around the world.*

⁸ <http://cryforjerusalem.blogspot.co.il/> (Talía Good)

- *An Israeli company is developing a toilet that needs no water and generates its own power to turn solid waste into sterile and odorless fertilizer in 30 seconds, thereby affecting 1.1 billion people who do not use a toilet.*
- *An Israeli scientist has developed a way to preserve 50% of every grain and pulse harvest lost to pests and mold in the developing world.*
- *Israel won international praise for the speed and expertise with which it responded to a 7.0-magnitude earthquake in Haiti that killed 300,000 by sending a team of 240 Israeli doctors, nurses, rescue and relief workers to set up an advanced field hospital to work in search-and-rescue missions.*
- *An Israeli company developed a water purification system that delivers safe drinking water from contaminated water, seawater and even urine thereby addressing the tragedy of 1.6 million children under the age of five who die annually from untreated drinking water in developing nations.*
- *Israeli scientists developed the first fully computerized, no-radiation, diagnostic instrumentation for breast cancer.*
- *Hadassah medical researchers found the gene that causes liver disease, thus paving the way for new treatments for alcoholism.*
- *Tel Aviv University Scientists say a nutritional supplement commonly sold in health food stores can delay the advance of degenerative brain disorders such as Parkinson's disease.*
- *Israel's Given Imaging developed the first ingestible video camera, so small it fits inside a pill that can view the small intestine from the inside to detect for cancer and digestive disorders.*
- *Israeli researchers developed a device that helps the heart pump blood that is synchronized with a camera that helps doctors diagnose the heart's mechanical operations through a system of sensors.*
- *An Israeli company developed a computerized system for ensuring proper administration of medications, thus removing human error from medical treatment.⁹*

If you are thinking about boycotting Israeli products or academics, think twice!!! You may be shooting yourself in the foot (you would have to throw away your cell phone and computer - just for a start!). Modern Israel is truly fulfilling her God-given calling to bless the world.¹⁰

Yet, all this is nothing compared with what will be. For as the Apostle Paul said of his brethren, Israel: "I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.¹² **Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!** Romans 11: 11-12.

Party Poopers

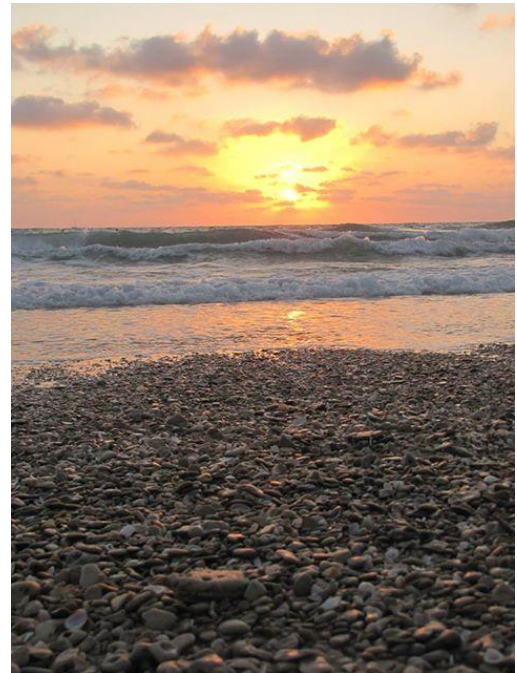
“The older brother became angry and refused to go in (to the party).” (Luke 15:28)

Just as the elder brother did not want to join the party to celebrate the return of his younger brother, the ‘prodigal son’,¹¹ not everyone wants to rejoice with Israel and the Jewish people. There are those who consider Yom Ha’atzmaut a tragic day in their people’s history, calling it ‘al-Nakba’ (“the catastrophe”).

We know there are enemies of Israel who are determined to see Israel’s destruction – to drive her into the sea – but God promises that the nation of Israel will always exist before Him – as long as there are stars and a moon in the sky.

This is what the LORD says,

he who appoints the sun to shine by day,
 who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night,
 who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar –
 the LORD Almighty is his name:
 ‘Only if these decrees vanish from my sight,’
 declares the LORD,
 ‘will Israel ever cease being a nation before me.’”
 (Jeremiah 31:35-36)



Surprisingly, there also exists a fringe element of Jewish society that also does not see Yom Ha’atzma’ut as a happy occasion. Some ultra-orthodox, anti-Zionist Jews go so far as to display a black flag and wear ashes and sackcloth as symbol of grief. Some sects even fast and seek God’s forgiveness for what they see as the sin of creating a Jewish state without the Messiah.

But these are the exception. For the overwhelming majority of Jewish people, both in Israel and around the world, this is one of the happiest days of the year. Some Christians, however, seem to be uncertain about whether or not they should be joining the party.

They are not completely sure if Israel is the ‘good guy or the bad guy’, especially when the media presents such a biased and distorted perspective. There are Christians who do not know the Word of God and therefore become confused about the issue of Israel’s right to the Land,.

The one indisputable fact that needs to be established on the basis of God’s rock solid word is Israel’s right to the Land by Divine Covenant.

¹¹ Luke 15:11-32

Seeing Israel through the Word of Truth (D'var Emet דבר אמת)

“So I will have an answer for him who reproaches me, For I trust in Your Word. And take not the word of truth (D'var Emet) utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in Thy judgments.” (Psalm 119:42-43)

In these volatile times, especially with regards to Israel, it is vital that we have answers for those who reproach us. In order to have these answers, we simply must view the situation through God's eyes, and not judge by what we see taking place in the natural realm.

As God's people, walking by faith and not by sight, it is imperative that we evaluate the conflict in the Middle East using the truth of God's Word (D'var Emet), rather than human reasoning fueled by emotions (and oftentimes biased or even completely false) media reporting.

The other day, I took a car ride on the highway with the two children in the back seat. It was not an easy drive from the very beginning and everyone was feeling stressed (a complete understatement). At one point I had to pull over to the side of the road and unbuckle them to get a bee off of one of them and wipe the spit up off the other (they were younger than the teenagers they are now, you understand ☺).

When we resumed our trip, one of the children, Liat, was obviously struggling with latching her seatbelt. *“I have tried and tried and I know it is in the right one, but it just won't do up!”*, she cried. Knowing that in the back seat of this particular vehicle (my Mom's Honda), the seat belt buckles were crossed, I instructed her to try the other buckle.

“You want me to put it in the wrong one?!” Liat exclaimed, obviously exasperated.

She couldn't believe that I wanted her to do something that was, in her eyes, totally wrong; but the fact was that I knew information she did not have. I knew the belts were crossed but she didn't. Still, I expected her to obey me.

God also knows things that we have no idea about and he also expects us to obey Him ‘just because He said so’, even when we don't understand and even when it seems not right or fair in our eyes. We are exhorted to, **“Trust in the Lord with all our heart and lean not on our own understanding.”**

To comprehend the situation in Israel and the Middle East today, we must not lean on our own understanding of the situation but trust in the Word of God that abides forever. This kind of unconditional obedience to the Holy Spirit will be crucial to our survival through the coming crisis. He may ask us to do things that seem completely misguided to our human, limited understanding; but we need to learn to obey in spite of how things look. In fact, our lives may depend on it! We are in a season of training and preparation for the times that lie ahead.

When did this covenant with Israel begin? The covenant for the Land of Israel began with Abram; and it was for this reason that God called him out of Ur:

“The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.”
(Genesis 12:1)

We may note that this land was not uninhabited when God promised it to Abram and his descendants, but that Canaanites were in the land.

“Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” (Genesis 12:6-7)



A painting of Abraham's departure by [József Molnár](#).

The hard fact that there were other people groups living in the Land when God called Abram does not nullify God’s covenant with Israel for the Land.

When God commanded Joshua יהושע

When God commanded Joshua (Yehoshua) to lead the children of Israel across the Jordan into the Promised Land, it was also inhabited - and yet God expected Israel to do battle with and drive out the former inhabitants of the land in order to take possession of their inheritance – just as He does to this very day.

‘Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel... Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I swore unto their fathers to give them.’ (Joshua 1:2,6)



The Battle of Jericho, James Tissot

Look Up at the Stars

The primary purpose for which God brought Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees was to give Him the Land; and so that his descendants would take possession of it. **“I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.”** (Genesis 15:7)

The Lord took Abram out and commanded him to look up:

“Then the LORD took Abram outside and said to him, 'Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have!'" (Genesis 15:5)

We too can look up at the sky and know that as long as there is a moon in the sky and stars to shine, the nation of Israel will never cease to exist!¹² This is God's promise. Halleluyah!

God then sealed this promise to Abram and his descendants in a blood covenant. God caused Abram to fall into a deep sleep while the Spirit of the Lord, as smoke and fire, passed through the cut pieces of the sacrificial animals.



The Vision of the Lord Directing Abram to Count the Stars (woodcut by [Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld](#) from the 1860 *Bible in Pictures*)

“As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him... When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces.” (Genesis 15:12)

The fact that Abram lay unconscious and unaware in a deep sleep while God alone passed through the pieces of the animals demonstrates the fact that the Covenant for the Land is based solely on God's faithful promise; rather than Abram or his descendants' merit or lack thereof.

This covenant for the Land of Israel is clearly everlasting and forever

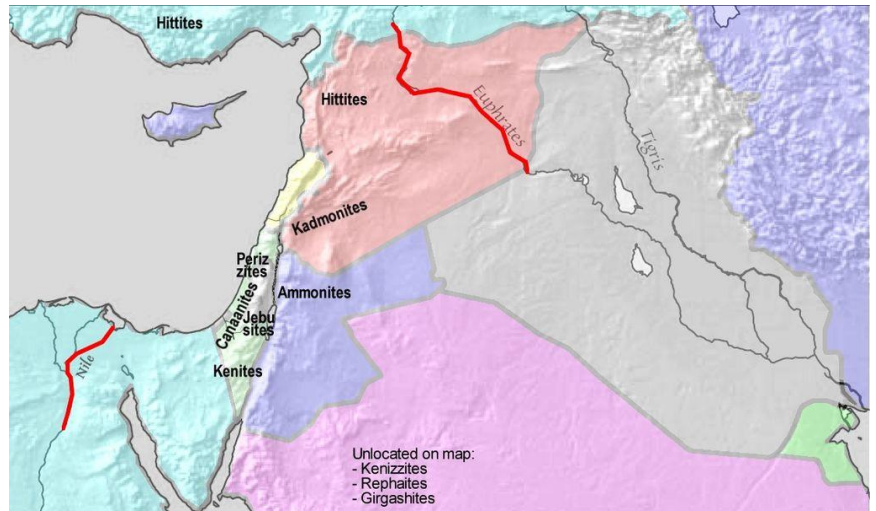
"In that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: 'Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates; the Kenite, and the Kenizzite, and the Kadmonite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Rephaim, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Girgashite, and the Jebusite.' —[Genesis 15:18–21](#)

God repeats this covenantal promise over and over again. We know that when God says something more than once, we had better sit up and take notice!

¹² Jeremiah 31:36

“I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.” (Genesis 17:7-8)



The boundaries of the region which was promised to Abraham's descendants in the covenant of the pieces as defined in [Genesis 15:18-21](#)

What about Ishmael and Esau?

What then, some may ask, about the descendants of Ishmael and Esau, the Arabic people of today, who also came from the lineage of Abram? Wasn't Ishmael also Abram's son? What about Esau – Isaac's son? Don't their descendants also have a right to the Land?

If we trace the lineage of this covenant we find that it follows through Abram to Isaac (Yitzchak), the child of Promise, not Ishmael, the child of flesh. Even Abraham was temporarily fooled into believing that Ishmael would inherit the Land; but God corrected Him:



Arab family of [Ramallah](#), [Jerusalem District](#) in early 1900s

“O that Ishmael may live before You”, Abraham said to God. But God answered, “No – My covenant I will establish with Isaac.” (Genesis 17:21)

When it comes to Jacob and his twin brother, Esau, the inheritance followed the line of Jacob - Yaacov - whose name was later changed to Yisrael (Israel). God said, **“Jacob have I loved and Esau I have hated.”** (Romans 9:13)

Who are we to argue with God's election? He is the potter and we are the clay. It is God who passes the inheritance of the Land to Jacob and not his twin brother, Esau (Genesis 28:13).

Standing With Israel

This is not just ‘doctrinal game-playing’. Our unconditional commitment to stand with Israel, based on the truth of God’s Word may be crucial to our very survival! Before the day of the Lord’s return, all nations will turn against Israel.¹³

“On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” (Zechariah 12:2-3)

For a while, it will look like it is all over for this tiny country. – until God supernaturally intervenes with the coming of the Messiah who will fight for us against all our enemies.



Israeli children trying to move stone on display at Bloomfield Science Museum in Jerusalem

Something will have to spark this turning of the entire world - all the nations - against Israel. We can already see a steady rise of anti-Semitism in the nations after the recent war in Gaza in which, rather than showing Israel as simply defending herself against an offensive attack by terrorists in Gaza, the media portrayed Israel as ‘baby-killers’ and ‘Nazis’.

When seen in this way, it looks very bad for Israel. The photos of the unfortunate civilians suffering in Gaza because of the conflict in Israel look terrible. Even though Israel is only defending herself from years of being bombarded by enemy rockets which have been killing and terrorizing her citizens for years, the photos and news reports make Israel look like the villainous aggressors.

Palestinian women and children are being used as human shields for an enemy that does not value human life; however, as people of God, we must not be ignorant of what is truly going on. We cannot allow ourselves to be swayed from our standing with Israel, no matter how bad the situation looks in the news. This must come to pass in order that prophecy be fulfilled!

When it looks like it is all over and all the nations surround Jerusalem - that is when the Lord will battle for Israel and destroy all her enemies.

¹³ Zechariah 14:2

Do we really get this? The Lord will save Israel; but all the enemies of Israel and all those who ally themselves with the enemies of Israel will be destroyed!

“The Lord will save the tents of Judah first...In that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem...I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.” (Zechariah 12:7-9)

What a time this will be – the time of Jacob’s trouble will be terrible – but they will be saved out of this and they will recognize their Messiah – the one whom they pierced – and they will mourn for him (Zechariah 12:10).

From the description in Prophetic Scriptures, it appears as if the destruction upon the enemies of Israel will be nuclear in nature. This is what will happen to all those who fight against Jerusalem: **“Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths...”** (Zechariah 14:12)

Finally, all nations will celebrate Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) and there will be no more mocking or accusations from some Gentile Believers about being ‘*under the law*’ for wanting to celebrate the Biblical feasts.

I fear for the portion of the Gentile Church that is being deceived into allying themselves with the enemy, just as they sided with Hitler during World War II. The red dragon, Hasatan, will lead the whole world astray with regards to Israel, but the people who know their God should not be following them into the pit.



Christian gathering at Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem (Photo David Nesher)

We must warn those in our congregations and fellowships who are being led like sheep to the slaughter by the blindness of their own pride, arrogance or ignorance. Any trace of anti-Semitism must be repented of now by individual Christians and Church leadership. We can expect that with this Israeli crisis, world-wide anti-Semitism will rise even further.

My son, Timothy, celebrated his Bar mitzvah, a coming of age ceremony for a boy when he turns thirteen years old. It was at this age that Yeshua became lost from his parents in Jerusalem. At least his parents thought he was lost, but the child was where he knew he now must be – in His Father’s house. Yeshua had come of age and knew he now had to be about His Father’s business.



A Bar Mitzvah boy at the kotel (Western Wall) in Jerusalem holding the Torah scroll

In Hebrew, Timothy is called Shmuel (Samuel). His birth parashah (Sabbath portion of scripture) was from the book of Samuel and also Numbers (Bamidbar) chapter 16. The bar mitzvah boy is usually called upon to read from the Torah and also give a D’var Torah (Word or message). His dealt with the rebellion of Korach, Datan and Aviram against Moses and Aaron. It was not the riffraff of the congregation who joined the rebellion, but the elect – 250 well-known men of renown.

What was God’s word to His people? **“Get away from the tents of the wicked men! Touch nothing of their or you too will be consumed in all their sins!”** (Numbers 16:26)

All the rebels and everything that belonged to them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly. Then a fire came out from the Lord and consumed the men who had joined the rebellion.

This contains a powerful lesson for the people of God. If Israel is the apple of His eye; if His covenant with her is forever, then all those who ally themselves against Israel are fighting against God and will be destroyed. May those who have ears to hear listen to this message.

The one indisputable fact that needs to be established is **Israel’s right to the Land by divine covenant**. We seem to forget that it was God who commanded Joshua to lead Israel into the Land, battle for it, drive out the former inhabitants and take possession of it.

Today, our humanistic mindset and wimpy kind of attitude tries to label “battle” as something intrinsically evil – as if a country has not right to battle for its survival! Why do we even read the bible then if we don’t accept it as legitimate Truth? There is a time for peace and a time for war. Often, the time of peace is not established until we have gone through a time of war.



10,000 Palestinian teens training in terror camps – close combat, terror tunnels



<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4619982,00.html>

We often fail to confront difficult issues or people in our lives and think we have peace; but this is not peace – this is cowardice, this is living a lie and a false peace that will never last. God is raising up warriors who will not back down from the battle ahead:

“He teaches my hands to make war ...For You have armed me with strength for the battle; ...You have also given me the necks of my enemies.” (Psalm 18: 34& 39).

We, as Believers, have so spiritualized everything that we don't take these scriptures seriously. Our enemies are mostly unseen, spiritual entities; but if we read the Bible, there have always been physical enemies and real battles for the people of God.

Where is the spirit of the warrior in the Church? In the Last days, scriptures will be fulfilled literally and many of our battles for survival may also be physical and our enemies very much flesh and blood, even if those driving them are spirits of darkness.

Israel has a legitimate right to fight for and defend her existence and her Land. We must stand beside her and voice our support.



Israel You are Not Alone

Vengeance is Mine says the Lord

When Yeshua returns, he is coming, not for peace; but for vengeance – **for Zion's sake**. When He came the first time, He quoted from the 61st chapter of the scroll of Isaiah to the congregants in the synagogue, declaring Himself to be the fulfillment of those scriptures.¹⁴ We may notice, however, that He stopped just short of reading the entire prophecy. He ended with, **"...to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."**

If we look at the original quote, it continues with these words, **"...and the day of vengeance of our God. To comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion..."** (Isaiah 61:2)

Why didn't Yeshua quote these words as well? It is because this was not the purpose of His First Coming. He came first as the Lamb of God led to the slaughter – to make atonement for our sins; but **vengeance and comfort** are the purposes of His Second Coming.

As the **Lion of Judah** (Yehudah) Yeshua will pour out His wrath upon the enemies of Israel and provide comfort, consolation, beauty and joy for the survivors of Israel – the remnant who will call upon the name of the Lord in truth and righteousness.



The **Lion of Judah** on a Bezael ceramic tile.

¹⁴ Luke 4:16-19

A line is being drawn in the sand and people are needing to choose where they stand. How are so many well-meaning, sincere, even devout people who call themselves by the name of the Lord, being led astray into siding with the enemies of Israel?

Part of the misunderstanding among Christians, comes from an ignorance about 'Edom'. In Hebrew, the word '*Adom*' means red. It is a kind of '*nickname*' for Esau, who was born red and hairy. "**Adom is Esau**" (Genesis 36:1). "**Esau is father of the Edomites.**" (Genesis 36:43)

As painful as it may be, we must face the truth of the prophecy against Adom (Edom) in the book of Obadiah: **"For violence against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you and you shall be cut off forever."** (Obadiah 1:10)

In fact, the Word says that not a single survivor will be left of the house of Esau. **"Jacob will be a fire and Joseph a flame; Esau will be stubble, and they will set him on fire and destroy him. There will be no survivors from Esau."** The LORD has spoken. (Obadiah 1:18)



Arabs throwing firebombs on Jewish balconies in Jerusalem

How very sad. ... but they also have every opportunity to repent and turn to God and be saved. May we pray for God's mercy on the soul of every enemy of Israel and every anti-Semite in every nation on earth that they will come to a saving knowledge of the truth before it's too late.

"For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish and those nations shall be utterly ruined." (Isaiah 60:12)

This is not about Israel worship or about placing the Jewish people on some kind of pedestal where they don't belong. But it is about respecting and honoring God's purposes and destiny for a nation and a Land.

The prophet Isaiah saw a time when the "glory of Lebanon would come to Israel..." **"The sons of those who have afflicted Israel shall come bowing before her and those who despised her shall fall prostrate at the soles of her feet."** (Isaiah 60:14)

All those who hate Zion will be put to shame. We must make a firm decision now, before the crisis breaks out in full force – where do we, individually, as a family, and as the Body of Messiah, stand? And what will we be willing to sacrifice in order to hold onto this bold stance?

Peace, Peace....What about the Two State Solution?

“They have treated My people's brokenness superficially, claiming, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace.” (Jeremiah 6:14)

Most of us, Arabs as well as Jews, are just regular people who want to live our lives in peace; but the question is, “What is the path to peace?” Is the ‘two-state solution’ a real solution to the conflict in the Middle East?

Many well-meaning people, including a majority of Israelis, have come to accept the ‘two- state’ solution as the path to peace in the Middle East. This assumes the right of the Palestinian people to establish their own, official, independent state within the nation of Israel where they have openly stated that Jews will be forbidden to enter.

The goal of the Palestinian leadership is not to establish a state that will exist along-side Israel; but one that will replace Israel. Hamas, an avowed terrorist organization and others like it, have fired thousands of rockets into Israel, threatening the lives of Israeli men, women and children. These Islamic terrorist entities have never cancelled or even amended their charter which openly calls for the annihilation of Israel.

Creating a Palestinian state in these areas of Gaza and the West Bank would put missile squads adjacent to an area containing seventy percent of Israel’s population – three miles from Israel’s airport and a mere five miles from Tel Aviv.

A recent article by Giulio Meotti, a journalist with Il Foglio, and the author of the book, A New Shoah: The Untold Story of Israel's Victims of Terrorism, reveals the trauma that many Jewish children suffer because of being under continual bombardment by Arab Palestinian terrorists in Israel.

"Sderot represents the siege on the Jewish people and the resistance of Israel, but it also reveals the rest of the world's indifference to the genocidal hatred that is Jihadism. Some 70% of Israeli children in the Negev show symptoms of trauma, while thousands of children carry physical disabilities from Palestinian bombs. "There are children who want to constantly stay inside the bunkers, or in the secured rooms of their homes. There are children who don't get out of bed anymore."

No other nation on earth would be expected to live under such a continual threat to its citizens! Obviously, two nations can only exist side-by-side when each desires genuine peace, not when one is determined to destroy the other.

Israel’s Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, spoke at the American Congress said, *“Peace cannot be imposed. It must be negotiated. But peace can only be negotiated with partners committed to peace, and Hamas is not a partner for peace. Hamas -- Hamas remains committed to Israel’s destruction and to terrorism. They have a charter. That charter not only calls for the obliteration of Israel, it says: Kill the Jews everywhere you find them.”*

Establishing a Palestinian state would create a terrorist entity in the Middle East that would not only mean disaster for Israel, but for the entire free world!

The question we must ask ourselves is, *“Do we really understand the history behind this issue? Or are those who support the creation of a Palestinian State within the Land of Israel just being swept along, through ignorance, on a tidal wave of biased journalism and popular opinion that has little of no foundation in fact?”*

What is today called the Land of Israel was for the last 2000 years called ‘Palestine’ – a name given to Judea by the Roman Emperor Hadrian. Fast forward to 1917 when British Foreign Secretary Lord Arthur Balfour issued the famous Balfour Declaration, giving Jews the legal right to re-establish their homeland in what had once been their country and inheritance by divine decree.

Once Jews began to emigrate from European and Arab countries into Israel, and to improve conditions in the land, many Arabs from Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon, and other Arabic nations began to immigrate to Israel as well. They were not part of the ‘inhabitants of the Land’ but new immigrants from Arab states. This has been well documented by Joan Peters in her book "From Time Immemorial" ¹⁵

Out of fear of offending the Arabs, Britain sought to restrict Jewish immigration in the White Paper of 1939. This cruel and unjust document forced Europe’s Jews, seeking to flee Hitler’s gas chambers and ovens, to be deported back to Europe to their certain deaths, or to be held in concentration camps in Cyprus.

In 1947, the United Nations voted in favor of a Partition Plan which stipulated that half of Palestine would be allotted to the Jews (most of which was in the inhospitable Negev desert) and the other half, including the ancient Biblical Jewish land of Judea and Samaria, was allocated to the Arabs.

But the Arab nations said NO! The Jews accepted the offer but the Arabs rejected it and immediately after Israel was proclaimed the Jewish national homeland in May 1948, the Arab nations attacked, directing the Arabs living in Israel to flee until they had totally annihilated Israel.

Complete destruction of Israel has always been the goal of the Muslim Arab leaders. A democratic Jewish State has no right to exist in a ‘purified’ Muslim world.

Miraculously however, like David overcoming the giant Goliath, tiny Israel emerged the victor over their Arab attackers, even though vastly outnumbered. As God was with young David, God has been with Israel time and time again, defending her from her enemies and giving the victory.

¹⁵ Re-Published by JKAP Publications in 2001

The mountains of Israel, Judea and Samaria, are there our forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaacov walked in ancient days. It is the place where the Holy Temples stood, housing the Shechina glory presence of God, where all the prophets made their proclamations to the nation of Israel, and where Yeshua (Jesus) lived, died, and rose again!

The truth is that there has never existed a Palestinian Arab state! This is a lie that has been repeated so often that today it is believed by the whole world, including many Israelis. It is that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who is leading the nations astray.

“The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.” (Revelation 12:9)

But true followers of Yeshua Hamashiach (the Messiah) do not need to be led away into deception if we will stand on the Truth of God’s Word. According to God’s word through the Prophet Joel, those who attempt to **divide up God’s Land** are only bringing judgment upon themselves. (Joel 3:1-2)

Scripture makes these truths abundantly clear; but it is up to each person to choose what they will believe. A line is being drawn in the sand in these last days and the decision of where to stand on this issue can mean the difference between life and death; for our God has promised to bless those who bless His people Israel and to curse those who curse us (Genesis 12:3).



“Hear my cry, O God; Attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I call unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a **refuge** for me, **A strong tower from the enemy**. I will dwell in thy tabernacle for ever: I will take **refuge in the cover of thy wings**.” (Psalm 61:1-4)

Finally – how can the Gentile Church respond to show their support of God and His purposes for Israel? Here are some suggested places to begin ‘doing’ and not just ‘hearing’:

- 1) Repent individually and as a Body for anti-Semitism and for all sins committed by the Christian Church against the Jewish people. The Jewish people must come to know that, rather than being their worst enemy, which some misguided Christians have shown themselves to be over the centuries, they want to be her friend. Ask God to examine our hearts and give us a clean heart, renew a right spirit within us.
- 2) Stand on the Word of God about Israel – know the Word and proclaim it to others; gently trying to correct those in opposition that they may come to their senses and escape the snare the devil has set for them. Don’t stay silent on this issue. Be willing to suffer persecution for righteousness’ sake.
- 3) Give materially to Jewish ministries and Israeli Believers. Paul gives a clear and direct word to the Gentile Christian Church that since they have received so much spiritually through the Jewish people – the Word of God, the Messiah, a place in the covenants – they are under an obligation (duty) to give materially. **“For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews’ spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings”¹⁶**

This means that if the Church is not devoting a portion of their offerings to the ‘saints in Jerusalem’, then they are not making payments on their debt! Even visa demands a minimum monthly payment. Shouldn’t we, as the people of God, be willing to give financially to see the Jewish people reached with the gospel?

Many Christians are giving their money to the Orthodox or secular ministries in Israel while completely bypassing the Believers. This is totally contrary to scripture which commands us to support our families - household of faith should come first.

What good will it do a Jewish person to go to hell with a blanket or a sack of groceries? Many ministries in Israel sign agreements not to share the gospel with the Jewish people. Get to the grassroots level. Find Believing families in the Land who are sharing the Lord with their neighbors and enduring much hardship as a result.

- 4) Pledge your unconditional support for Israel and the Jewish people, whether Believers in Yeshua or not. Remember Ruth’s beautiful pledge to Naomi – old embittered, obnoxious Naomi, who wanted to be called Mara (bitter). Ruth stuck with her through thick and thin. And through her kindness to Naomi, she gained the favor of Boaz, her redeemer. Don’t think that the kindness you show to Israel goes unnoticed by our Redeemer. You will be given your full reward by the God of Israel under whose wings you have taken refuge. Remember that the only one saved out of Jericho was a prostitute (Rahab) who helped Israel by hiding spies.

¹⁶ Romans 15:27

- 5) Be prepared to give food, shelter, clothing, and medical assistance to Jewish people attempting to escape the persecution. Righteous Gentiles who tried to help the Jews escape Hitler's death and destruction in WWII are honored at Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem. But when Yeshua returns, he will separate the sheep from the goats. The honor and rewards given to those who help even the least of Yeshua's brethren (the Jews) will be so great – these righteous Gentiles will inherit the kingdom – eternal life.

On the other hand, the punishment of those who refuse to help or those who stand by passively out of fear or apathy will be terrible – everlasting punishment of eternal damnation. (Matt. 25:31-46) Perhaps God is giving the Church a chance to redeem itself – to show itself strong and courageous this time around by helping the Jewish people in their coming hour of need.

- 6) Become educated – read, study, take classes – even take a tour! Familiarize yourself with Jewish culture, Hebrew language, the feasts of the Lord – in order to be a worker qualified to reap the end time harvest of Jewish souls. Yeshua of Natzeret is not returning as a pastor or deacon but as a Jewish rabbi. Gentile Christians have been grafted into the commonwealth of Israel; isn't it about time to get to know the family? We welcome you with open arms and shalom!

Thank you so much (todah rabah) for being among those in the Gideon's army who will take a strong and courageous stand for the nation of Israel and the Jewish people in these end times. For those who know their God will be strong and do great exploits.

On this Yom Ha'atzmaut and every day, please pray fervently that God will continue to defend Israel from all those who rise up against her, based on His everlasting covenant to give this land to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob forever!

Thank you for standing with Israel, and on the solid Rock of God's Word about her right to this Land. May we all weep with Israel as she weeps for her losses on Yom Hazikaron and rejoice with her as she rejoices on Yom Ha'atzmaut.

About the Author:

Hannah Nesher grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home and received her education in a religious Hebrew school in Canada. During a crisis pregnancy, she came to know Jesus (Yeshua) as her Messiah and Savior. She now lives in Israel with her children and grandchildren, teaching Christians about the Jewish roots of their faith.



For more information, additional teaching materials, or to send your offering to Israel, please see website: www.voiceforisrael.net

e-mail: nesher.hannah@gmail.com

Or write to:

Voice for Israel Hannah Nesher
Suite #313- 11007 Jasper Ave.
Edmonton, AB T5K 0K6 Canada



Your donations and offerings are greatly appreciated!

It is through your generous financial and prayer support that we can continue to send the Word forth from Zion and Jerusalem.