

ISRAEL'S RESTORATION

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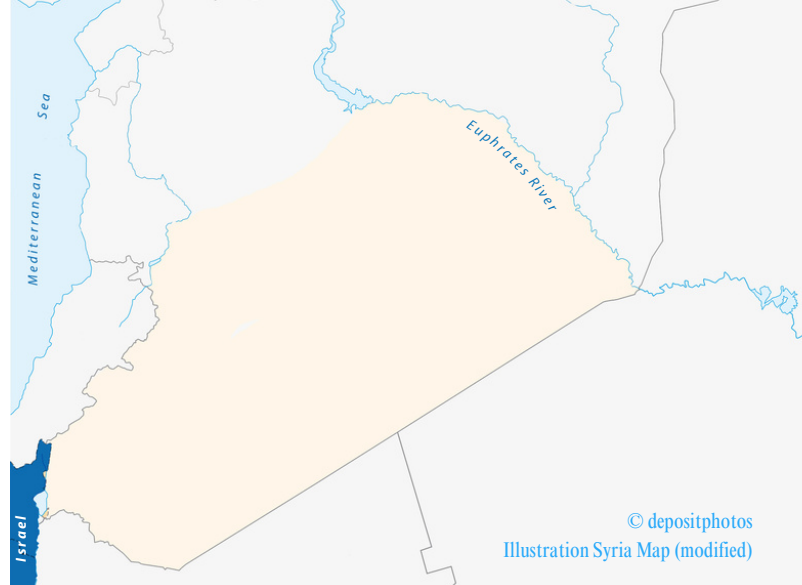
Seeing the *Light* of *His Love* — a testimony

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From the River to the Sea



By Ariel Blumenthal



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Illustration Syria Map (modified)

“From the River to the Sea... Palestine will be free.” Many of you have heard that rallying cry of the Palestinian narrative from the far left politically and from Muslims around the world, especially in Europe and America. They are chanting to see a Palestinian state established not just in the pre-1967 borders of the “West Bank” and Gaza, but from the Jordan River in the East to the Mediterranean Sea in the West.

Even American congresswoman Rashida Tlaib was caught using this phrase which is essentially a call for the destruction of the state of Israel and a call to send all 7 million Israeli Jews for a big, long “swim” in the Mediterranean Sea. Do you know where the phrase comes from originally? The first chapter of Joshua.

*“Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them – the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. **FROM** the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, **THE RIVER** Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and **TO THE** great **SEA** toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.”* (emphasis added, NKJV)

So here’s God saying to Joshua that the Israelites are going to take possession of the land from the river to the sea, but the river is not just the Jordan River; it’s the Euphrates River which flows through modern day Syria and Iraq. This is one of the broadest biblical definitions of Israel’s inheritance – between the Euphrates River and the Mediterranean Sea to include what today would be sections of Jordan, Syria and Iraq. I’m not saying that this is what’s going to happen as a result of this war, but God is shifting things, and I believe we’re going to see some major changes in the boundaries.

Let’s use this, all of us as believers, to point people to the Bible, to say:

“Hey, do you know where that phrase comes from? It comes from the Bible, in the Book of Joshua. Do you know that God promised the land to the children of Israel, the Jewish people, more than 3,000 years ago before there was ever such a thing as Palestine or the Palestinian people?”

According to every modern historical record the first mention of a Palestinian national identity just started in 1920. We can argue about who should have a state and where it should be and Palestinian people today, but it’s a fairly new thing. That doesn’t automatically make it right or wrong. Kuwait is a new thing. Jordan is a new thing. The boundaries of a lot of nations in the Middle East come from the early 1900s, but we want to point people to the Bible.

“From The River to the Sea” – it’s all in the Bible. Come and see!

8 significant prayers we can all pray for our dear Arab friends and neighbors at this time:

- Blessings over Arab believers
- Freedom from demonic jihad
- Protection for the innocent
- Highest moral values to prevail
- Right governmental solution for Gaza after the war
- Light of Yeshua to shine
- Salvation to be poured out
- Cooperative relationships with moderate Arab nations going forward





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Trusting in *Shields*?



By Hannah Tekle

***“But You, O LORD, are a shield around me,
My glory, and the One who lifts my head.”*** (Psalm 3:3)

In a field not far from our house sits a tiny mobile military outpost, part of the “Iron Dome” defense system. Its position is adjusted from time to time in order to maximize its chances for success against aerial threats from the north.

This remarkable technology was developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, to detect, intercept and destroy short range enemy rockets fired into Israel. [The Rafael campus happens to be just around the corner from our congregational building – if you close your eyes you can see our faces beaming with pride.] The Iron Dome was first deployed in 2011 and has improved its success rate over the years so much so that it now has a reported effectivity of over 90% interception.

Having this dome of protection is more than a stellar innovation for Israel’s own safety. It is a multi-million dollar defense system that protects all those living in areas that come under rocket fire, no matter their religious or ethnic backgrounds. The very fact that it exists and receives the extent of funding that it does; is evidence Israel’s commitment to **defense**, to the saving of lives, to peace. Israel is not a violent, hungry war-machine that seeks to wipe out neighboring people groups.

According to the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, over 10,500 rockets have been fired on Israel since October 7th. This is almost as many rockets as have been fired before that, going back to 2005. Even with the phenomenal success rate of the Iron Dome, hundreds of rockets still slip through to hit Israeli soil, causing destruction, physical and mental trauma and even death.

After food and shelter, physical safety is a primary basic need. It is even the new first step in traumatic first aid – to check that the

person is in a safe place before administering help. If safety is compromised, then other life-saving steps are pointless. We learned this in the congregational First Aid course we did last month after the onset of the war.

The communities that were attacked in the South on October 7th, in addition to the tragedy of lives lost, felt **ABANDONED** and **UNPROTECTED**. *They had TRUSTED in the IDF and its high-tech defenses. When these failed, they were UNSHIELDED from the real and present danger that had succeeded in penetrating the fences of protection.*

Indeed, after the shock, betrayal and horror of that day, more than ever, **Israelis are asking who is shielding them, protecting them, in whom can they put their trust, their hope?!**

In whom are we putting our hope? In politicians? In the military? In savvy defense tech? Even in a committed, devoted and sacrificial society? None of these can guarantee protection.

King David the psalmist was a man who knew battle, with natural predators and national predators. Psalm 119:114 says, “*You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word*” [NIV]. The Psalms teach us to put our hope in God, in the shield that His word, His presence, His Glory are for us. The prophet Isaiah wrote, “*...Then you will know that I am the LORD; those who hope in me will not be disappointed*” (49:23).

The community of Israeli believers is heartbroken for the state of our people and our country. We intercede for the situation and put our hope and our trust in our gracious Heavenly Father who Alone is a sun and a shield and the lifter of our heads.

Now more than ever, we ask you to join us in prayer for this nation, that our people would turn to God, place their trust in Him, and call out to Yeshua who is the HOPE of generations.

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Why do the Nations Rage?!



By Guy Cohen



For the last week I have been hearing the words from Psalm 2:1 in Hebrew, “*Lama Ragshu Goim?!?*” (Why do the nations rage?!)

Psalm 2 can be broken down into four parts.

A. Rebellion of the nations

B. God’s response

C. God’s plan

D. Warning and call for the rulers of the world to surrender to the Son.

The Spirit of God led me to this verse as I saw many nations around the world coming against Israel. The nations who refuse to see or understand God’s calling for Israel (Zion) will find themselves standing against God.

Clearly, there is a remnant of believers in most countries. However, no earthly government or national leader reflects the Kingdom of God. Unless they kiss the Son (Psalm 2:12) and He is the head of that nation and its government, they are standing on sinking sand.

A. Rebellion of the Nations (vv. 1-3)

*“Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying,
Let us break Their bonds in pieces
And cast away Their cords from us.”*

The ancient rebellion of mankind against the righteous rule of God is pictured here. We must understand the geopolitical landscape. Though we are grateful for Israel’s current allies (as few as they may be), ultimately all heads of state will reject Israel (Zechariah 12:2,5). Why? Because Israel is God’s statement of sovereignty over human affairs.

B. God’s Response (vv. 4-5)

*“He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;
The Lord shall hold them in derision.*

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*Then He shall speak to them in His wrath,
And distress them in His deep displeasure.”*

God’s response is clear. The rebellion of the nations against Him is so absurd that He’s actually laughing. But then He will judge them.

C. God’s Plan (vv. 6-9)

*“Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion.”
“I will declare the decree: the Lord has said to Me,
You are My Son; today I have begotten you.
Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth for your possession
You shall break them with a rod of iron;
You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel.”*

There’s good news! God does have a plan. That plan is to install Yeshua as the King over all the earth. He will reign from Jerusalem (Zion’s hill). He is God’s son, who will receive the inheritance of the entire earth and ALL nations.

D. Warning and Call for the Rulers of the World to Surrender to the Son (vv. 10-12)

*“Now therefore, be wise, O kings;
Be instructed, you judges of the earth.
Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way,
When His wrath is kindled but a little.
Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.”*

Finally, the Lord provides “advice” that the world leaders had better heed. They are to serve and honor the Son of the Most High. If not, it will be their end.

Our response. We call the godly remnant in Israel and in all nations – those who love Yeshua our Messiah – to continue praying for their nations and leaders. To love and honor the Son. To understand why the nations rage and to anticipate God’s glorious reign over all the earth.



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War Update



By Leon Mazin

*“Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Yeshua the Messiah.”
(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)*

These words are a command – a direct “mitzvah” for us to obey even in hard times. As we express our thanks, the stream of God’s hope washes away darkness and restores us inside.

Allow me to shed some light on our current situation. Unfortunately, I cannot recall a more stressful and overwhelming period. We’ve been bombarded by a multitude of challenging events. However, it’s crucial not to lose heart and instead recognize that our Lord, has specially prepared our generation for this very moment. I distinctly remember conversations about the trials faced by previous generations, such as WWII. Many of us believed we would never be able to endure such hardships. Yet, here we are, traversing difficult times, despite considering ourselves weak.

It’s of the utmost importance that we rediscover our true identity, as we prayerfully move forward in confident faith. Only then can we understand and embrace God’s will for ourselves and others.

In today’s world we often hear tales about heroes, but for now let us focus on the ordinary individuals who grapple with fear, doubts and great personal struggles. For example those who are serving, or whose children are serving in the Israeli army, confronting danger every day and enduring harsh weather conditions – sleeping outdoors in cold and rain. And the ordinary folks who prepare delicious food for our soldiers. The soldiers are no longer just “my children” but “our children” whom we care for as a community.

Two times a week we deliver clothes, food and other items to various military bases, often close to the border. This is such a blessing for the givers and receivers!



Strangely enough, even in the middle of the war, immigration (Aliyah) continues. We are still serving new immigrants at the rate of 8 – 10 new families a week, and they are so thankful for the assistance.



We continue delivering hot meals to elderly people and those who are not able to fully meet their own needs. And this is a weekly blessing for 60 – 65 people.

We also reach out to families from the Former Soviet Union who bring their children for medical treatment in Israel. They are already in a lot of pain, and then they have to hear the Haifa war sirens. Our help at least makes their life a little easier.

Shavei Tzion’s humanitarian warehouse in Haifa is functioning as usual. We thank God for a few large humanitarian suppliers in the center of Israel who deliver goods to us every month, and we distribute them to dozens of families weekly.

Our congregations are located in Haifa, the Krayot (a Haifa suburb) and Upper Nazareth. We thank God for these vibrant and robust congregations where individuals of all ages glorify the Creator.

Witnessing the energy of the youth, we diligently plan for the future, developing programs that cater to teens, children and married couples. While weariness from the ongoing war permeates our community, it remains vital to focus on the days that lie beyond its conclusion.

I kindly ask you to pray for the 15 soldiers from our congregations who are serving in the IDF. Many of them are now in high-risk areas.

Pray for all the Messianic soldiers in the Israeli army – there are over 1000 of them. Pray for all soldiers and for the protection of God’s Angels for them. Pray for spiritual encouragement and for us to be able to shine His light on those we meet every day. And please pray for our youth!

Return to Zion Congregation

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Some photos from our December congregational women's gathering and a volunteering expedition to southern Israel, where congregants spent the day picking fruit, since there is a shortage of laborers caused by the war.



Seeing the *Light* of *His Love*

— a testimony

By Yechiel Aviv

I was 10 years old when the harsh reality of life hit me full force. That's when my very best friend died from a malignant brain tumor. I was already abused at home and had no way to cope with this great loss. I endured severe physical and emotional abuse throughout my entire childhood. Among other things, my mother would extinguish cigarettes on my skin. I was sent to a boarding school for troubled teens, but my life didn't improve. By age 19, I was using hard-core drugs and hallucinogens like LSD.

Then at age 25, the sky fell in on me. After medicating my pain for years, one day I got up and didn't recognize myself in the mirror. I didn't remember my name. I didn't know my family. I experienced a complete blackout, a complete disconnect from reality. Standing on the edge of insanity was a terrifying experience. I was faced with two options: *either commit suicide or fight for my life.*

I chose the hard battle for my life and sanity, and I somehow knew that there was Someone on the other side as I cried out, *"If you can hear me, I am begging for help! Save me because I am in complete darkness!"*

In response, God sent help. Over the years as I struggled back to life, three different people came to me with the Isaiah 53 prophecy about the Messiah. I rejected them and said, "Guys, this just isn't the direction." The one thing that I did know is that God speaks in the language of love and light. I searched everywhere for these. My search led to an ultra-Orthodox Yeshiva, then to Buddhism. You name it, I tried it.

The 4th emissary: One morning while waiting for a bus, I was approached by a woman who started sharing the gospel. She was an "energy bomb for Yeshua." My reaction was: *"Wait a minute. Slow down because you're coming on really strong here."* I rebuffed her, but also realized that this was the 4th time someone shared Isaiah 53 with me.



**"If you can hear me,
I am begging for help!
Save me because I am
in complete darkness!"**

God ambushes me: God heard me when I cried out to Him at age 25, and continued pursuing me with the answer. Not long after this "pushy" woman, Adriana from the bus stop, tried to share about Yeshua, I started a new job at a special education facility. On one of the first days on the job, I suddenly heard a loud, familiar voice saying, *"Shalom, good morning everyone!"* I turned around to find Adriana. *"What are you doing here?"* we asked each other in amused surprise. *"I think God is planning something here!"* she told me.

I finally read Isaiah 53 for the first time and prayed, *"I don't know who you are, who this Yeshua is, but I'm asking You, God, please, I need an answer."* I felt as if two hands were physically holding my own, and I began trembling all over. Then I started reading the New Testament and discovered Yeshua was the love and the light I had always been searching for. At Tiferet Yeshua while singing *"How good is your lovingkindness to me, O God of my salvation,"* suddenly I was standing in a waterfall of love. I began weeping like a baby. I had come home, and I gave my life to Yeshua.

Since then Yeshua has been performing miracles in my life. He has taught me to open up the darkest places to His love. After 12 years of not talking with my family, I got back in touch with them. I had cut the ties and blamed them for everything. I couldn't have imagined it in my wildest dreams, but now our broken relationship has been redeemed and restored.

Tiferet Yeshua Congregation in Tel Aviv

Connect with us at tiferetyeshua.org



Jan'24
07



Revealing the Heart of God in the Midst of Evil

By Neveen Bader

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We see throughout Scripture and history how God never abandoned His people Israel. He remained faithful to His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He led, provided for, and protected the children of Israel through tough times. God's faithfulness to Israel shows us that He keeps His promises.

At the same time, God's plan of salvation was not only for Israel – it was for the entire world. God promised that through Abraham's family, all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 22:18). This greater plan unfolded over time, leading to Yeshua coming into the world to show God's love by offering salvation to everyone. His plan from the beginning was to include all nations in His story of love, redemption, and purpose. It is a universal invitation for everyone to enter God's family (Genesis 12:3, 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14).

Since the onset of our present conflict in Israel, many have questioned why God allows war and bloodshed. We know that the "world lies in the power of the evil one" (1 John 5:19 ESV), and humans often choose the path of greed, violence, and bloodshed. God respects their freedom of choice and sometimes allows them to fulfill their evil desires, but God always has a greater purpose in mind. In the midst of the fighting and suffering, the ultimate goal of God remains salvation and extending His Kingdom.

"...Who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:4)

God allows **suffering** to lead people to repent, seek, and reach out to Him (Acts 17:27). As long as people choose **evil**, war and suffering will continue. But we can choose to see in the midst of pain a place where God's love is expressed (Hebrews 12:6), a chance to draw closer and "be conformed to the image of Yeshua" (Romans 8:29).

We encounter Yeshua as He declares His purpose in the synagogue in Nazareth, reading from Isaiah 61.

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 4:18-21 NIV)

This prophecy was fulfilled in Yeshua, revealing God's heart toward all mankind. In the following verses He illustrates this by recalling instances where God extended His grace beyond Israel. For example, Elijah being sent to help a Gentile woman; and Naaman, an Aramaic enemy of the Lord's people, being healed by Elisha (Luke 4:23-27).

We see the suffering of the Palestinians. *I believe God is inviting them to be part of His Covenant. He cares for them and loves them. On the cross, He died for their sins. They are called to be a part of the Kingdom of His beloved Son. God's desire for them is to be saved and free from Islamic oppression.*

Let's pray for God to give us His heart for the Arab and Palestinian people, just as He has a heart for the Jewish people. And that God would give the Jewish people the same heart towards the Palestinians that God demonstrated in the Old Testament towards the Gentiles.

"All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations." (Psalm 22:27-28)

