



THE SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL

THE PROMISE OF TOMORROW

ISRAEL'S PERPLEXITY

By Sam Stern

The mood among the Jewish people today can be described as perplexed, uncertain and bewildered. They feel as if they are standing on a volcano which is about to erupt and that this catastrophe will shatter, crumble and destroy all the tradition and culture that the Jewish people have built up during the 2000 years in the diaspora. This mood emerged after the October War of 1973 in which 3000 young Jewish soldiers were killed. Another loss of this war was their retreat from the Suez Canal and some parts of the vital Golan Heights as part of the cease-fire negotiations with the Syrians and Egyptians.

Before the October War the Jewish people in Israel and throughout the world considered the military establishment in Israel invincible. They believed that they were stronger than all the Arab countries. Some even believed that Israel was stronger than the Russians. This poor judgment of the ability and effectiveness of the Arab soldiers led the Jews to live in a world of overestimation while they held the illusion of underestimation of their enemy.

As a result of the shock of reality that the October War brought, the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) set up a special committee to investigate the reason that Israel was not prepared when Egypt attacked her on the Day of Atonement. The committee reported that Israel did not believe

that Egypt would start a war against such a strong defensive line as the Israeli Bar Lev Line at the Suez Canal. Yet the Bar Lev Line was totally destroyed in the first 24 hours of battle. Another defeat was cited when a cease-fire was ordered after ten days of battle, when the Israeli Army was on their way to Cairo and Damascus. Not only did Israel fail to enter Cairo and Damascus but they were forced to relinquish some of the territory they occupied in the previously successful Six Day War of June 1967.

Relinquishing territories won while receiving nothing in return from Syria or Egypt in a separation agreement arranged by the United States came as a great setback to the Israelis. Further, they realized that they are only a very small nation of less than three million people, living in an area smaller than the State of Rhode Island. They realized that they do not have the power to make an independent decision in such important matters as foreign policy and strategic agreements with their adversaries, without the initiation and intervention of Henry Kissinger and the United States. Many of the young people in Israel started asking the question: "Why should we give our lives for a war that we cannot win?" Many believe that Israel is unable to withstand the tremendous pressure from the Arabs and the communists without active American support, making Israel totally dependent

upon the United States. One of the strict Orthodox religious groups in Israel, called Neturei Karta, asked former President Nixon to make Israel the "52nd American State."

The Israeli press and periodicals are teeming with articles and letters expressing depression and disappointment in their leaders. The present Israeli government, whose Prime Minister is Gen. Itzhak Rabin, leans mainly upon the Labor Party and a small Arab group in the Knesset. Gen. Rabin's Cabinet has a majority of only one vote in the Knesset. The present government is being attacked by the rabbis who want to dominate the entire life of Jews in Israel. The main issue that they want to decide is "Who is a Jew?" They also want the right to outlaw all missionary activities in Israel. The leaders of these religious groups are Rabbi Avadia Joseph and Rabbi Shlomo Goren, who is also an army general.

On the other hand, the Israeli left-wing and communist groups want to make Israel a communist country under Arab and Russian rule. These two extreme movements are growing among the citizens. The head of the leftist group is Meyer Wilner who is known to take instructions directly from Moscow. As a result of the strong clashes between the extremists, the Israelis are confused and depressed and they try different ways to escape reality. Some emi-

THE POWER OF THE WORD

By Sam Stern

grate to the United States, some to West Germany and other European countries. The latest statistics signify that over 100,000 Israelis who now live in the United States have become American citizens and refuse to return to Israel.

One of the main reasons for the perplexity and confusion of the Israelis is the continuing attacks by Arab terrorists on civilians. Recently over 60 civilians were killed by the terrorists in a period of eight weeks. One survivor in Kiriat Shmonah told a reporter: "It is very bad when you don't know who is the one who knocks at your door any hour of the day or night. Is he a foe who came to kill you, or a friend? The Arabs look exactly like Jews. They speak perfect Hebrew, so who knows what to do? How can you sleep a peaceful night?"

The Jewish people are God's chosen people, not because they are strong militarily or because they are large in number. God has chosen them as a witness to all the nations of the world that He is the creator of heaven and earth. "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers . . ." (Deuteronomy 7:7-8). God has not changed. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. God is not interested in Israel's military status, but rather in their spiritual stature! God wants the Jews in Israel and all over the world to proclaim the gospel of peace to the entire world, including the Arab nations. God is waiting patiently for each and every Jew to accept His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, and become a testimony of peace to the nations of the world. Only Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, is able to bring peace and tranquility to the Middle East.

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"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Nothing could come into being without the Word. The Word was necessary for creation. Before anything was created God had to speak and say, "Let there be light," and there was light. God had to say, "Let us make man . . ." and man was created. God's plan is to invest power in the Word. The word of man also has some power, but it is used more to destroy than to build, and creates darkness. But the Word of God is a light that shines in that darkness. The sun was created by the Word of God and therefore the Word is more powerful than the sun. Man, who was created by God through His Word, is also subject to the Word. God created nature which cannot be changed.

In this atomic age with the threat of nuclear war, mankind faces suffering and destruction because he has tried to change the laws of nature. He has tried to create a world based on his own word and does not listen to the Word of God. "But the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

The Word of God created something from nothing. The Word of God created the first atom, and from that first atom, He made all the universe. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge" (Psalm 19:1-2). When God spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai it was so powerful that the people that were there said to Moses: "Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us lest we die" (Exodus 20:19). Moses said to the people: "Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not (Ex. 20:20). The

word came down with thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud so the people trembled. The same Word is God, from everlasting to everlasting. The Word stands before us today written in the Bible, but instead of thunders, lightnings and smoke that came to Israel on Mount Sinai, God speaks to us today in a still, small voice of comfort: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). The same Word that was strict and awesome when the law was given is kind and comforting when the new covenant was given to Jeremiah and grace replaced law.

Even though the Word of God is Almighty and victorious, there is also on earth the word of the adversary which originates from Satan. The word of Satan brought sin into the world by putting doubts in man's mind regarding the Word of God. The word of Satan also misinterpreted the Word of God. This doubt and misinterpretation led to misery and death (Genesis 3:1). On the contrary, the Word is for a good purpose: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

The Word of God in the person of Jesus Christ became flesh and dwelt among us and taught us to be right in the sight of God (John 1:14). He taught us how to please our creator and His words of instruction and example were presented in a simple way accompanied by miracles, expressed in parables in a manner that could be easily understood. Moses and the prophets and Jesus Christ all spoke in a simple way that even a child could understand them. "God who has in sundry times and in diverse manner spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things by whom also He made the world" (Hebrews 1:1).

The Word of God never changes. It means exactly what it says, and no one can make his own interpretation. The same God who said, "I am your God who took you out from Egypt" (Exodus 20:2), is the same God who said, "This is my beloved son . . ." (Matt. 3:17).

We live in a time when the voice of Satan is being heard but the Word of God is being repressed. The devil's words are being preached in many places. False prophets run rampant on every corner of the streets in large cities. The devil knows that his time is short and that he will soon be destroyed. Therefore he makes his words heard in pulpits of the anti-Christians. False doctrines, false interpretations of the Word of God, and false promises bring destruction, war, pestilence and sorrow. The Word of God tells us to believe in the Messiah Who gave His life for a world of sinners, but the worldly worshippers of hedonism and materialism deny the deity and the power of Christ. Mankind is following the words of Satan and plunging itself into wars all over and ultimately for total disaster. The threat of a hydrogen bomb war hangs over the head of humanity, bringing with it total annihilation. The only way to have a world of peace and happiness is for all mankind to come together in prayer and in supplication and to ask forgiveness of their sins. The voice of God calls without ceasing. The Word of God says: "Turn ye now every one from his evil way . . ." (Jeremiah 25:5). Repent and you shall live!

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THE PROMISE OF TOMORROW

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WHY A NEW COVENANT?

By Daniel Goldberg

Does Israel need a new covenant? There are seven covenants recorded in the Old Testament. The seventh covenant God made is in the form of a prophecy and was made with the nation of Israel and with individual members of that nation. It is to this seventh covenant that we wish to direct our attention. The Hebrew Bible calls this prophesied covenant a "new" covenant or new testament. Three major Old Testament prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, were employed to issue the promises of this covenant to Israel. What is the nature of this covenant?

First of all, according to Ezekiel 16:60, the new covenant is unconditional. The God of Israel says, "I will establish an everlasting covenant with you."

Secondly, the new covenant involves inward regeneration of the human spirit. Isaiah put it this way in 59:21, "And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says the Lord, my spirit which is upon you and my words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth nor from the mouth of your offspring . . . says the Lord, from now and forever."

Thirdly, Ezekiel informs us that the new covenant for Israel would involve a special ministry of the Holy Spirit, "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and you will be careful to observe my ordinances" (Ezekiel 36:27).

Fourthly, the new covenant includes great material blessing. We read in Jeremiah 33:40-41, "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them . . . and I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will faithfully plant them in this land with all my heart and with all my soul." Such a new covenant, according to Ezekiel 37:26-27 includes a rebuilt temple. We learn in Isaiah 61:8-9 that the new testament will last forever.

Jeremiah declares in 31:31-34, "Behold, days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not

like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, although I was an husband to them, declares the Lord, but this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days. . . . I will put my law within them and on their heart I will write it, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people; for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin will I remember no more."


Why does Israel need a new covenant? Obviously it is because they annulled and broke the covenant that God had made with them.

Isaiah pointed up the sin and iniquity of Israel in chapter 1:4-5, saying, "A lost sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly. They have abandoned the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel; they have turned away from Him." Ezra, the Jewish scribe, sums it up for all the prophets when he said in chapter 9, "Our iniquities have risen above our heads, and our guilt has grown even to the heavens; since the days of our fathers to this day we have been in great guilt, and on account of our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests, have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to plunder and to open shame as it is this day."

So you see, my Jewish friend, Israel has a desperate need for a new covenant. How marvelous that individual Jews can enter into the blessings of that new covenant through Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, who died for the iniquities of Israel and for the whole world. He validated the covenant by sealing it with His own blood, and God raised Him from the dead, thus establishing the new covenant with Israel forever.

Just as Moses was a faithful mediator of the old covenant, so Jesus the Messiah and Son of God, is the faithful mediator of the new covenant for Israel, and what a superior covenant this is! For the law came by Moses,

but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ!

As individual Jews, you and I, too, have sinned and broken the law of Moses, but with what compassion God has envisioned us when through the new covenant He invites us to come and place our trust in the Mediator of the new covenant—even Jesus. He is waiting for you to invite Him into your life, to ask His forgiveness on your soul and to claim the inward regeneration and purity which He has promised. Through the gracious stipulations of the new covenant you may have forgiveness for past iniquity, and power to live a life pleasing to God. *"Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord; though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool."* (Isaiah 1:18). Won't you enter into a living relationship with God through Messiah? 

OLD WINE OR THE BEST WINE? By Mimsy Kapell


When I came back from my three day "intensive" at the Yoga Ashram, Doug was sitting in my suite reading the Bible. He looked up, beamed at me and handed me a piece of paper with a poem on it about the Trinity. At first I read it with mild interest but almost gagged when I saw the words "Father, Son and Holy Spirit"—how goyish! (Here I was in my white Ashram attire.) I mean, it's fine

to get into the Bible if that's your path but not this church stuff. Doug told me he had accepted Jesus into his heart and that he had been born again. That's the first time I had ever heard that expression used and I had no idea what it meant. But this didn't seem like the Doug I knew, spaced out, running around. Here he had written me a poem and was speaking so gently but firmly to me about Jesus being the Jewish Messiah. Now, this might not strike you as strange, but for a woman who had gone out with him for two years and known him to be outwardly apathetic towards my feelings and generally harsh and crude with his words, I was practically floored.

Secondly, the fact that Doug was talking about the Jewish Messiah hit a spot in me not touched after years of drugs and sex and eastern mysticism. However, he convinced me that if I did believe that God was really there, that He would answer my question, "Is Jesus the Messiah and do I need Him in order to be right with God?" I asked and no bells went off and I didn't get any rushes up and down my back. So I figured, "Well, I guess it's not true." (The "Jews seek a sign" is right!)

But that weekend we went to Beth Sar Shalom in Manhattan to talk to Charlie Eisenberg. I was under the impression that Doug was going to talk with him and I was just going along for the ride. But I found myself in Charlie's study being asked questions and I myself had many

questions. "How do you know the Bible is the Word of God? How can God condemn to death people who have never heard about Jesus Christ? What about reincarnation?" etc. Little did I know how much I thirsted for the living God, the God of my Father, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I was so skeptical, so super-critical, but meanwhile my heart was melting. Charlie answered all of my questions with Scripture. This further frustrated me because I didn't know if I believed that the Bible was God's Word. I had no hang-ups about Jesus. It was the Bible which I could not believe in. Charlie asked me if I wanted to ask Jesus into my heart. Grudgingly I said, "Yes" (grumble, grumble). I prayed asking God to forgive me, for somehow I knew I was a sinner. I praise God for helping me rise above my fears and doubts and accept Him as my atonement for sin, my salvation.

Charlie gave me much to read. I didn't know what I had done. All I knew was that if God wasn't here, I was going to give up. This was two years ago and I could go on forever telling you what the Lord has wrought in my life since then. Doug and I are going to be married soon and this is only one aspect of the Lord's dealing with the old wine that was running low in our lives and giving us new wineskins and filling us with the best wine you could ever taste. Shalom! 

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