

## Bible Magazine Winter 2024 26-Dec-23 Aim 3500 words. Achieved 4370.

In our last update we looked at the growing hostility to Israel. Few of us imagined the storm that was about to break. October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 was indeed a turning point for the nation of Israel. It was their biggest loss of life in a single day since the Holocaust! Life can never go back to where it was before that fateful Shabbat. We can clearly discern the Hand of God working in His People in preparation for an even greater calamity that will result in their recognition of their long-rejected Messiah.

### Israel—a divided nation

When Hertzl championed the establishment of a homeland for the Jewish people, he was envisioning a secular state, like much of central Europe in his days. Zionism was a political movement. Many of the early settlers were from communist countries who set up Kibbutzim modelled on communist principals.

When the State of Israel was established in 1948, Ben Gurion, their first Prime Minister was the leader of the Socialist Party, however the Declaration of Independence opened with this statement:

“The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here, their spiritual, religious, and political identity was shaped.”

Freedom of religion was guaranteed. The first government was a mix of secular and religious parties

Israel's Jews are not divided into two groups but into four: ultra-Orthodox, religious Zionists, traditional Jews, and secular. Some 8 percent are ultra-Orthodox.

What is true is that **almost all the elites in Israeli society** - cultural, intellectual, political, and economic - are found within the **secular 20 percent**, so that they frame the picture that outsiders get of Israel. Moreover, that 20 percent is overwhelmingly Ashkenazi, either Jews from Eastern and Central Europe or descended from them, the ones who are most likely to know English, to have relatives in the diaspora, or to be contacted by journalists coming to the country, thus allowing this skewed picture to emerge. *How religious are Israeli Jews* jcpa.org. Accessed 22-Dec-23

The secular, left-wing Jews are deeply opposed to imposition of religious restrictions and also to displays of religious feelings. The religious, right-wing Jews, acknowledge that the State of Israel should be run for the benefit of Jewish needs. This left-wing/right-wing division has deeply divided the nation.

### Netanyahu's desire to reform the Supreme Court.

This split has been seen in the months of protests against proposed reforms to the Supreme Court. Huge crowds have assembled night after night, waving Israeli flags. There is more however than at first meets the eye!

These crowds had been bussed in and given flags in a well organised, left-wing display. They were being bankrolled by wealthy American Jews, who were deeply concerned at the growing power of the Israeli right-wing! For the first time, the Israeli government comprised of centre and right-wing parties. Normally the coalition governments were centre-left. With the steady change, especially among the younger generation for a greater belief in God—see [Far more Israelis believe in God today than in 1948, finds new survey](#) section of the Summer 2023 *Milestones Update* section—the left felt they were losing power.

The entire left-wing of Israel is genuinely fearful of a State of Israel that is run by religious Jews and right-wing Jews that the left sees as backward and non-progressive. But the fact of the matter is that more than 65% of Israeli Jews are opposed to progressive values, and support a more traditional or religious lifestyle.

The protesters don't care as much about democracy as they care about losing power. **They support a secular, non-Jewish country, and are willing to be violent and fight their own brethren in order to not lose control.** *Israel Unwired* 25-Jul-23

Why is Netanyahu wanting to reform the Supreme Court? Unlike the Supreme Court in the UK, US, Canada and Australia, its judges are not appointed by the government, but by the court itself! It is already left-wing and increasingly so. Whilst the governments were left-wing leaning this did not matter too much. Now there is a right-wing government this was a big problem for PM Netanyahu, as the Court has the power to overturn any legislation it was proposing.

### The left's aim to bring down PM Netanyahu's Government

As Melanie Phillips, a UK Jewish writer and panellist so elegantly put it, this was a clash of wills.

There can surely be no compromise with the organisers of the anti-reform protests, **because for them the real issue was never the reform itself.** As was stated explicitly from the start by former Prime Minister Yair Lapid and others, the aim was to bring down Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government.

One of the main leaders of the protests is another former prime minister, Ehud Barak. An astounding video clip has now surfaced showing Barak in March 2020 addressing a group of retired Israeli Air Force pilots and navigators.

Three years before judicial reform was even a twinkle in the Israeli government's eye, Barak detailed for this group a plan for a coup d'état that would overturn the Netanyahu government and install Barak himself as prime minister.

The plan involved inciting the civilian population to revolt **by falsely claiming that Israel's democracy was in danger and bankrolling protests that would manipulate popular patriotism by such measures as the mass purchase of Israeli flags.** Melanie Phillips 28-Jul-23

This is the blueprint the protestors have been following.

### **Israel's Military Leaders had gone "Woke"**

Another important factor in the October 7 massacre was the mindset of the Israeli military leaders. These too are mainly left-leaning and had absorbed the Frog-like spirit of the age as described in Revelation 16 as being the forces that would gather the nations to the Battle of Armageddon. The cry of the French Revolution against the Roman Catholic Church was *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*. This is the spirit that pervades the world's thinking, what we term the "woke" mentality. There is no "right" and "wrong" – you are at *liberty* to choose your own truth. We are all *equal*, so throw off the yoke of the "white supremacist". We are all *friends*, no longer must we distinguish between the sexes and races, we must see good in all!

So imbued with this spirit of "wokism" that a Spanish military observer who had visited Israel many times to study their conflict with Hamas, observed:

One of our last visits left us rather concerned, I have to say. In late 2021, under the then two-headed government of Bennet and Lapid, in all the presentations by senior operational commanders, the first item to be discussed in the threat arena was climate change. ... And why even consider that climate change should be the number one concern? Rafael Bardaji *Middle East Forum* 09-Oct-23

His great fear was that Israel's enemies would perceive just how weakened the army had become. They were convinced that Hamas had changed. Had they not refrained from firing rockets at Israeli in May 2023 when the Islamic Jihad had fired over 900 rockets at Israel? Hamas later gleefully explained that their deception worked misleading the army that Hamas had changed and could be negotiated with. Many more Gazan were allowed work permits to work in the many secular kibbutzim who welcomed the opportunities to show friendship to the Gazans. We now know from the maps that the terrorists carried of the specific Kibbutz that they were targeting that they knew in great detail the layout of the settlement, its schools, where the houses were, where the safe rooms were in each house, where their weapons were stored. All carried back to Hamas by these workers!

### **The Military Ignored the Signs**

Many on the left-wing were taken by surprise at the utter depravity of the Hamas terrorists who attacked on Oct. 7. Yet right-wing commentators such as Avi Abelow who lives on a settlement in Judea and Samaria, on his *Pulse of Israel* broadcasts said, "I have been saying this for years". The subtle difference was that in the past the attacks were on the right-wing settlers in Judea and Samaria—the so-called West Bank. True they were normally attacks on just a family at home, but the sadistic cruelty was there to be seen. The left-wing dismissed these attacks as they were bitterly opposed to Israelis living in Judea and Samaria. They reasoned that if only Israel would give up occupying "Palestinian" land, then their enemies would live peacefully with them. The folly of this thinking is illustrated in Gaza itself. The Jewish settlers in Gaza were forcibly evicted by their government in August 2005 from every part of Gaza. Many refused to leave and had to be physically carried away. Did it bring peace? Initially the Gaza Strip was put under Palestinian Authority control, but in elections in Jan 2006 Hamas sweep into power, and existing Fatah leaders were "eliminated", giving Hamas complete control over running the area.

There were many warnings that there was trouble brewing. But the signs were ignored because of this thinking that Hamas was changing and was willing to make compromises. The observers who watched the Gaza border fence passed many messages to their superiors that there was a build-up of activity on the Gaza side of the security barrier. This high-tech barrier was built in 2006 at a cost of some \$220 million. When it was found that Hamas were simply tunnelling under it, a new barrier was added in 2017, that extended deep underground with sensors that could detect tunnelling. It gave Israel a false sense of security—we saw how easily it was breached on Oct. 7. A mock Israeli Kibbutz was built in Gaza where Hamas practiced storming it. This wasn't hidden from the Israeli security forces, but its significance was ignored by the military as it didn't fit in with their thinking.

### **Iran's long-term plan – the elimination of Israel!**

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, wrote a book in 2011 entitled *Palestine from the Perspective of Ayatollah Khamenei*. It has been reprinted several times and an English translation from the original Persian was brought out in 2021. A review of the 2015 edition had these comments.

Khamenei makes his position clear from the start: Israel has no right to exist as a state.

He uses three words. One is "nabudi" which means "annihilation". The other is "imha" which means "fading out," and, finally, there is "zaval" meaning "effacement."

His position is based on "well-established Islamic principles", he claims.

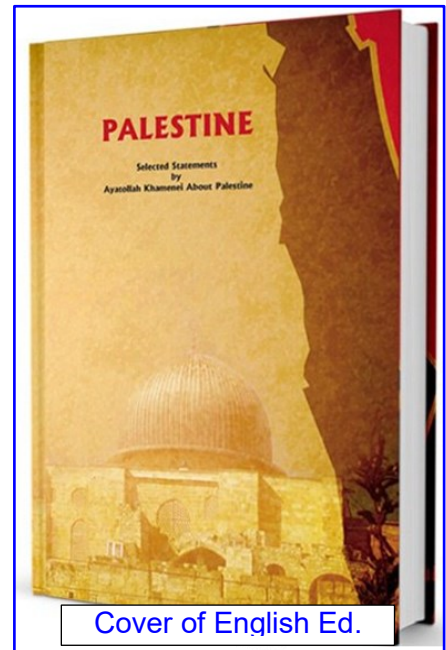
One such is that a land that falls under Muslim rule, even briefly, can never again be ceded to non-Muslims. What matters in Islam is control of a land's government, even if the majority of inhabitants are non-Muslims.

However, according to Khamenei, Israel, which he labels as “adou” and “doshman,” meaning “enemy” and “foe,” is a special case for three reasons. The first is that it is a loyal “ally of the American Great Satan” and a key element in its “evil scheme” to dominate “the heartland of the Ummah.”

The second reason is that Israel has waged war on Muslims on a number of occasions, thus becoming a “hostile infidel” (“kaffir al-harbi”).

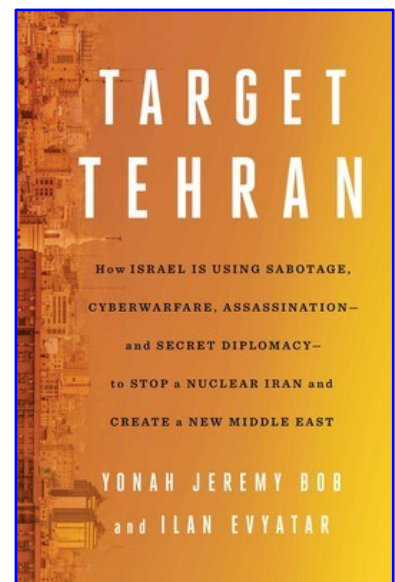
Finally, Israel is a special case because it occupies Jerusalem, which Khamenei describes as “Islam's third Holy City.” He intimates that one of his “most cherished wishes” is to one day pray in Jerusalem.

Khamenei insist that he is not recommending “classical wars” to wipe Israel off the map. Nor does he want to “massacre the Jews.” What he recommends is a long period of low-intensity warfare designed to make life unpleasant if not impossible for a majority of Israeli Jews so that they leave the country. Amir Taheri *Gatestone Institute* 31-Jul-2015



Cover of English Ed.

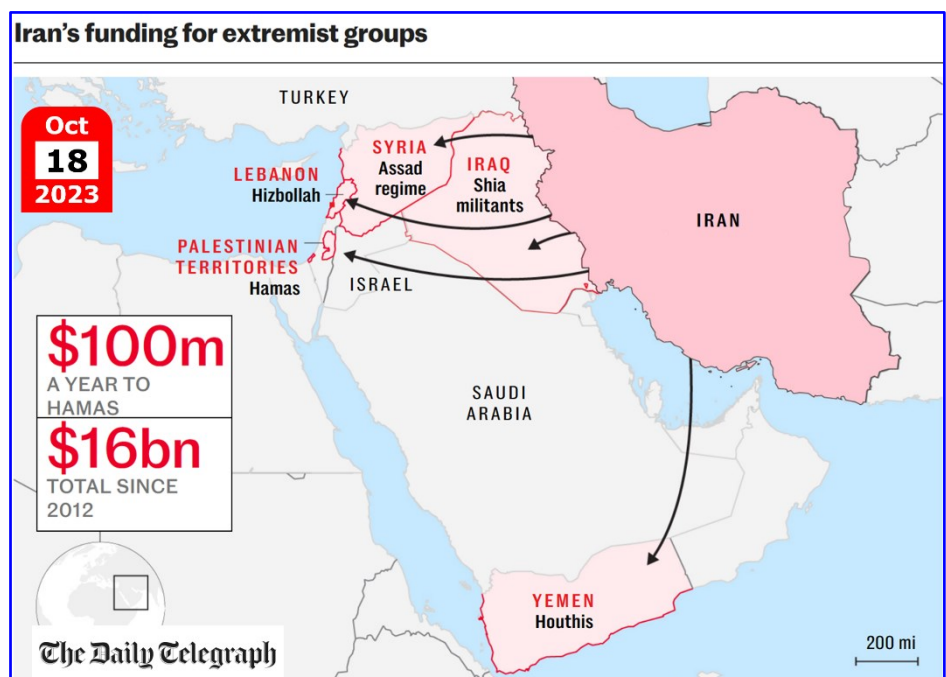
Israel has long battled against Iran’s desire to be the dominant power in the region. It is an open secret that Israel has nuclear bombs, hence Iran’s desire to be able to build her own nuclear weapons. The story of Israel’s Mossad’s battle to slow down Iran’s efforts has been well recounted in *Target Tehran: How Israel Is Using Sabotage, Cyberwarfare, Assassination – and Secret Diplomacy – to Stop a Nuclear Iran and Create a New Middle East* by Yonah Bob and Ilan Evyatar, published Sept. 2023. It has been a long-running battle, not only against Iran but also America’s desire under Obama and Biden to lift restraints on Iran’s ambitions. President Biden seems intent on allowing Iran to get away with its deceit and lies about its nuclear programme. Israel’s climax in her clandestine battle against Iran was a daring raid in May 2018 on a non-descript warehouse in Iran which housed the records of their nuclear programme. Half a tonne of documents, memory sticks and notebooks were smuggled out and brought back to Israel. It turned out to be a veritable goldmine of evidence of Iran’s clear intent to build nuclear weapons.



Until Iran has succeeded in becoming a nuclear power, she is reluctant to directly attack Israel. Instead, she has built up a network of proxies whom she funds and arms to carry out this work. Notable are the terrorist groups: the Houthis in Yemen, Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Fatah in the “West Bank”.

### What Starts in Gaza—and Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon—Starts in Iran

There should be little doubt that the war that began when Hamas terrorists attacked Israel on October 7, 2023, actually originated in Iran. The multi-pronged, highly coordinated and murderous attacks could not have happened without Iranian government assistance and approval.



Leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah, according to the Wall Street Journal, have acknowledged that the Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps has been working with Hamas since August in planning these attacks.

*Gatestone Institute* 11-Oct-23



It would appear that the long-term planning started about two years ago but was accelerated by Israel's plans to make peace with Saudi Arabia, even though "the Palestinian problem" had not been solved. Saudi Arabia was tired of its ambitions constantly being thwarted by the demands of the Palestinians. Iran and Russia were alarmed at these far-reaching changes where moderate Arab nations were working with Israel to bring peace and stability to the region to counter Iran's meddling. Hence by August 2023 the planning was stepped up. Training for Hamas to learn skills of paragliding and power gliding—which were used in the opening minutes of the Oct. 7 attack—were provided by Hezbollah in Lebanon. Training in the use of weaponised drones—again used in the opening minutes to knock out surveillance cameras and electrical substations in Israel—was provided by Russian Wagner troops in Africa. The target date for the attack was to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Yom Kippur War when Israel had been badly caught off guard when the surrounding Arab nations attacked. The Sabbath was chosen because it was a special Shabbat, where most Jews would be deeply involved in its celebration. Visits by Hamas leaders to both Iran and Russia, confirmed that all was set to go forward on this day.

It is not our purpose to cover the events of that fateful day and the subsequent months of war. We want to see the Hand of God working among His People to push them away from the slippery path they were following.

### **“The War Commences on Oct 7”**

Avi Abelow whom we have mentioned earlier was one of the many who is voluntarily serving in the reservists, being over the age for compulsory call up. One of his sons is a commando fighting in Gaza and another son is a reservist on duty. So he has an ear to the ground as to what is going on. He revealed that on Oct. 5 there was a big left-wing rally in Tel Aviv. During this, the speaker made this startling declaration: “The war commences on Oct 7.” That speaker had no knowledge of what Hamas was about to launch. So, what did he mean? It was that the left-wing activists were going to break up any demonstrations of religious displays on this forth coming Shabbat. As quoted earlier, they were prepared to attack their right-wing fellow Jews, such was their passion against Israel showing displays of being a religious nation!

Israel's God had other plans! The attack was going to come from Hamas and fall upon the largely left-wing inhabitants of the Gaza border settlements. There are just a few religious minded people there and Avi told the remarkable story of a Hamas terrorist checking their house number against his detailed planning map. He moved on and they were spared. Subsequently this terrorist was killed, and his battle map recovered. On it it said to the effect, “don't bother checking, they are never there on Shabbat”!

It was real shock to the ordinary left-leaning settlers to see the savagery of the Hamas attack, too harrowing to describe. They saw the folly of the left's stance. The ordinary people of Israel have realised that they are a special people, and their existence is under threat from Hamas' intention to attack again and again to free the land “from the River (Jordan) to the (Mediterranean) Sea” of Jews. As Avi put it “we are as lions, in spite of the folly of our leaders, we will win.” As Golda Meir was fond of saying: “we have nowhere else to go”.

### **Are secular Israelis becoming more religious since Oct. 7?**

Avi has spoken in several of his recent broadcasts of the changes that he has observed, a greater display of Jewishness, by wearing a Kippur and prayer shawl. We know these are just Jewish rituals, but it marks a change in heart, which has a long way to go, but hopefully marks the end of the left-wing folly.

The headline was to an opinion piece in *All Israel News* 24-Dec-23 by Cookie Schwaeber-Issan who made Aliyah in 1993.

It was just a few months ago that Israel's streets and highways were filled with everyday citizens protesting against the present government, its extreme ultra-Orthodox coalition, and its attempt to force their religious beliefs on everyone by changing existing laws.

Then Oct. 7 happened, causing the daily protests to be put on pause while everyone tried to digest the horrors of all that had occurred to the innocent citizens whose homes were within striking distance of savage butchers who perpetrated acts that still defy the human conscience.

The new interim Editor-in-Chief of *The Jerusalem Post*, Zvika Klein wrote: “During a broadcast on national television several weeks ago, members of Kibbutz Be'eri, where more than 130 people were killed on Oct. 7, were singing Jewish songs such as Am Israel Chai (the Nation of Israel Lives) and Shir La'Maalot (Song of Ascents) from the Psalms, normally not the songs they would be singing spontaneously. Although I haven't seen data to prove this assumption, many Israelis appear to have become somewhat more traditional than before. Many Jewish communities have reported that for the first time, a significant number of Israeli expats have asked to participate in services or Jewish activities.”

He is not alone in his observations. Rabbi Tuly Weisz in his article entitled, “Antisemitism's wake-up call,” also says that “Since Oct. 7, we have started to see the genesis of a religious revival in Israel. Secular IDF soldiers are asking for and wearing tzitzit (ritual fringe garment) for the first time in their lives, and restaurants in Tel Aviv are making their kitchens kosher. Israelis are coming together in unprecedented unity while repenting and turning to God with great faith in a way we have never experienced in all 75 years of statehood.”

Without God at the helm of our country, we are nothing more than a lost tribe, wandering in the wilderness of our own accomplishments which can only take us so far. But that is a long way off from our intended destiny which was to be a light to the nations and a praise in all the earth (Isaiah 62:7).

We see this as one step closer to the final catastrophe which will overwhelm the nation, prior to their acceptance of their long-rejected Messiah. Yet before then there has to be a time of peace!

### How can the US use the Gaza war to expand the Abraham Accords?

As we saw in the last Update, Israel was making big moves towards alliances with Saudi Arabia. The foundations had been laid by the secret friendships struck with Saudi Arabia over many, many years, as revealed in the *Target Tehran* book mentioned above. Has this all been destroyed by Hamas' Oct 7?

Clearly not. The moderate Arab nations have been very muted in their response. The headline is from a *Jerusalem Post* 15-Dec-23 opinion piece by Boaz Golany and Jacob Nagel

So, who will take the keys and run Gaza for a long enough horizon until some stability is achieved?

A promising option is a multi-national coalition, comprised of the Arab signatories of the Abraham Accords, with Saudi Arabia as a possible leader of this effort, with generous support from the US and the Europeans. Israel would agree to such a solution if it takes into account Israeli security considerations. First, Gaza must be totally demilitarized. And second, the IDF must be enabled to operate in Gaza when threats are identified (just as it currently operates in Judea and Samaria).

But such an effort cannot be limited to Gaza. This new coalition must block further expansion of the Iranian regime and its proxies. A coalition led by the Abraham Accords partners along with the Saudis, US, UK, and possibly other Western countries, could begin by removing the threat posed by the rough Houthi regime in Northern Yemen. Since the war in Gaza began, the Houthis have been firing armed UAVs and missiles towards Israel. In recent weeks, they have also struck a British cargo ship, took over another ship run by a Japanese crew, and fired at US Naval vessels. But Israel and international ships are only recent targets. In the last few years, they have fired rockets and missiles at Saudi Arabia and the UAE, causing some casualties and creating significant damage to strategic infrastructure. In other words, all parties involved want to eliminate this threat. After that, the coalition would need to determine which of Iran's other proxies must be targeted. The Iran-backed militias in Iraq and Syria are far less formidable than the Lebanese Hezbollah. But they must all be dealt with at some point.

We obviously don't have the benefit of hindsight, but this would seem a very reasonable solution, which we know has to be found for Israel to dwell securely on the mountains of Israel. God's Foreknowledge is such that He can obtain the solutions to several situations through one action!

### What is the Scriptural guidance on the outcome of Oct.7?

Oct 7 clearly is not the final Gogian invasion—that takes place after the Master has returned to his household and the resurrection and gathering to Sinai taken place. What is so interesting is to see the scene being set for that invasion! The contention will not be about Gaza, but Israel's occupation of *the mountains of Israel*—the so-called West Bank. Eze. 38:8 It involves not local attackers, but a wide confederation of mainly Christian countries. Eze. 38:3,5,6 Its aim is to take control of Jerusalem and eliminate Israel. Zech. 12-14. It takes place at a time when Israel is strong, and the Jews are dwelling securely. Eze. 38:11 This time of peace due to Israel's military might is described as a time of *trespass* in God's eyes. Eze. 39:26 It is at a time when Israel has friends who oppose Gog's invasion. Eze. 38:13

From these and other passages we have to conclude that Israel is not going to be wiped out by Hamas. They will succeed in breaking Hamas' power and will have to include dealing with Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen. They will make peace with the moderate Arab nations as *Sheba and Dedan* at the time of the Gogian invasion are friends of Israel. Eze. 38:13 We know Abraham's other sons will be blessed in the Kingdom. Isa. 60:6,7 The Houthi terrorists are based in Yemen, ancient Sheba. It is apparent that this threat must have been eliminated at this time.

It is fascinating to see that *the merchants of Tarshish and all her young lions* are already showing their support of Israel. Britain has been using her intelligence gathering bases in Cyprus and passing it on to Israel. She has sent war ships, aid, and ammunition to Israel, together with her commonwealth friends, foremost of which is America. The US has stationed two heavily armed aircraft carriers off the coast of Israel to defend her from attack. They lead a defence force to protect shipping from Houthi attacks in the Red Sea.



We can see that the current vociferous enemies of Israel will be among those that make up the future coalition against Israel. The countries of Nebuchadnezzar's Image (Dan. 2) join together to destroy Israel, only for themselves to be broken on the mountains of Israel. The same countries are mentioned in Rev. 16:13, the *Dragon*, the *Beast*, and the *False Prophet*—Russia, the EU, and the Vatican. What we have been witnessing has been God's overwhelming Mercy towards His people. It has been a severe blow to Israel's psyche, yet good can come from evil. All is under the Father's directive power. At the end of their long exile from favour, His people will indeed reflect glory to their God. As in the past the way has been hard and will get even harder when humbled before the armies of Christendom, seizing control of Jerusalem for one last, brief time. We see from the world's hostility to Israel, that this time of peace and security will probably be short-lived. Our Master's Return to call His household must be very near. It behoves us to ensure our lamps are filled with the Oil of God's Word. We know not how antisemitism will impinge on our lives if we are faithfully upholding the Hope of Israel. Our time of testing may also lie ahead.

