

## HUE AND CRY: Confessing Images

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The advent of digital cameras with the ability to transmit images without alteration, unimpeded around the globe, is unparalleled in the annals of human history. Now the adage that “a picture is worth a thousand words,” is compounded, as thousands of images of orange-clad protesting Jews, in various locations in the State of Israel, are being transmitted and received around the world. For those who have had the privilege of visiting the Holy Land in the past fifty-seven years, the background elicits tangible memories of spiritual connectivity beyond the text of Scriptural allusions.

Forget the estimated numbers of protesters. When one witnesses with his or her own eyes, the bearded, *kippah*-clad, huddled masses—cramped in the narrow streets or packing the Temple Mount plaza facing the Kotel (Western Wall) like sardines—one recognizes that something profound is occurring among the Jewish people gathered. While different garb reflects the reality that unanimity of thought and identical patterns for pursuing God are still lacking, the fact that the protesters are turning to Him for answers is readily apparent.



For lack of viable alternatives, the prayers of untold millions of Jews, with arms outstretched to the last place on Earth that the visible presence of God resided, I believe is a testimony to the long-suffering plans of our Creator. Down through the centuries, as the nations of the world have widely stood against the people of Israel, those who take His Word seriously have faithfully returned to the place where King Solomon dedicated the First Temple in Jerusalem nearly 3,000 years ago:

“Now Solomon had made a bronze platform, five cubits long, five cubits wide and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and he stood on it, knelt on his knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. He said, ‘O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no god like You in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and *showing* lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart; who has kept with Your servant David, my father, that which You have promised him; indeed You have spoken with Your mouth and have fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day. Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with Your servant David, my father, that which You have promised him, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way, to walk in My law as you have walked before Me. Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, let Your word be confirmed which You have spoken to Your servant David. **But will God indeed dwell with mankind on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You; how much less this house which I have built.** Yet have regard to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant prays before You; that Your eye may be open toward this house day and night, toward the place of which You have said that *You would* put Your name there, **to listen to the prayer which Your servant shall pray toward this place. Listen to the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel when they pray toward this place; hear from Your dwelling place, from heaven; hear and forgive.** If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath, and he comes *and* takes an oath before Your altar in this house, then hear from heaven and act and judge Your servants, punishing the wicked by bringing his way on his own head and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness. If Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You,

and they return to You and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication before You in this house, then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You have given to them and to their fathers. When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, and they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin when You afflict them; then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants and Your people Israel, indeed, teach them the good way in which they should walk. And send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people for an inheritance. If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence, if there is blight or mildew, if there is locust or grasshopper, if their enemies besiege them in the land of their cities, whatever plague or whatever sickness *there is*, whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man or by all Your people Israel, each knowing his own affliction and his own pain, and spreading his hands toward this house, then hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know for You alone know the hearts of the sons of men, that they may fear You, to walk in Your ways as long as they live in the land which You have given to our fathers. Also concerning the foreigner who is not from Your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Your great name's sake and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm, when they come and pray toward this house, then hear from heaven, from Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name, and fear You as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Your name. When Your people go out to battle against their enemies, by whatever way You shall send them, and they pray to You toward this city which You have chosen and the house which I have built for Your name, then hear from heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin) and You are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to a land far off or near, if they take thought in the land where they are taken captive, and repent and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, "We have sinned, we have committed iniquity and have acted wickedly"; if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, where they have been taken captive, and pray toward their land which You have given to their fathers and the city which You have chosen, and toward the house which I have built for Your name, then hear from heaven, from Your dwelling place, their prayer and supplications, and maintain their cause and forgive Your people who have sinned against You. Now, O my God, I pray, let Your eyes be open and Your ears attentive to the prayer offered in this place. Now therefore arise, O LORD God, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your might; let Your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation and let Your godly ones rejoice in what is good. O LORD God, do not turn away the face of Your anointed; remember Your lovingkindness to Your servant David" (2 Chronicles 6:13-42).

When you consider these words from the heart of Solomon, you will note that praying toward Israel, Jerusalem, or the Temple Mount—while appropriate—*must* also be accompanied by a repentant, confessing heart so that the Lord will perhaps listen and administer His righteous justice. The God of the Patriarchs is a forgiving and merciful Father, who desires His children to acknowledge their need of His protection in all the affairs of their lives. Whether it is breaking oaths, being defeated by one's enemies, droughts, famines, pestilences, plagues, blights, or sickness because of consequences of sin—the opportunity to turn back to God through prayer and supplication, as one cries out to Him for mercy, is always available for His people.

If you read closely, you will even note that there is a provision for the foreigner who desires to be a part of Israel. Solomon also makes an appeal for these prayers as they turn to the Temple Mount and offer up various supplications. Another provision actually forecasts the future expulsion of Israel itself from the Promised Land. Solomon pleads with the Almighty to listen to the prayers of those who realize that they have been banished, but through repentance will turn back to Him with all of their hearts, minds, souls, and strength.

As we have witnessed in the past century, the Father has heard many of the pleas of our more contemporary forefathers, and He has already returned home many of those pictured in these vivid images. This is a fulfillment of the prayer that Solomon had for the people of Israel who were going to be scattered to the nations of the world.

But as you can readily perceive, if you have been maintaining a vigilant watch on what is currently transpiring in the State of Israel, the restoration of the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has only begun—as the “tents of Judah” have gone up first to secure a foodhold, just as the Prophet Zechariah declared. Hopefully, as the Jewish people search their Scriptures for answers to what God is doing, they will look at some of the words that Zechariah declared and they will be quickened to the heart about their status before Him:

“Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, ‘A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the LORD of hosts, their God.’ In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem. **The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah.** In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David *will be* like God, like the angel of the LORD before them. And **in that day** I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. **I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.** In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo. The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves; all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves” (Zechariah 12:5-14).

The great unknown in this passage concerns what many have theorized about the phrase “in that day.” While I am not sure exactly how and when all of this prophecy will work out in regard to Judah, I am convinced that the “day of the LORD” needs to come to every individual in the world sooner than later. By this, I mean it is **absolutely imperative that you have a unique encounter with the God of Creation sometime before you depart your temporal tabernacle.** If you have not had an encounter with Him, you will subject to His eternal punishment. Whether you are Jewish or not, it is critical that you have a personal understanding that your sins have been atoned for by the shed blood of the only sacrifice that matters to our Sovereign Maker: the atoning work of His own Son.

Now that many thousands around the globe are starting to recognize our relationship to Israel, we see that our Jewish brethren are being positioned by the Lord to discover that the Messiah has indeed come to pay the penalty for their sins. However, the Scriptures also indicate unequivocally that the Messiah is going to come again in order to complete the redemption process—this time by establishing His Kingdom on Earth. While we do not know when that is going to occur, in the meantime we must pray that He would soften hearts to the truth of the gospel.

For those who are so inclined, I would suggest that you take the time in the coming days to lift up your hands toward Jerusalem and pray for our perplexed brethren who are beseeching the Holy One with all of their hearts. Of course, you can start by confessing your own sins, and by asking Him for discernment with how to precede in your encounters with our Jewish brethren. Due to the corruption of sin and some misunderstandings of the Scriptures that have been passed down through the ages, followers of the God of Israel continue to lack the unity that He so desperately desires.

Expect there to be many more images flooding your e-mail boxes and perhaps even making the screens of the television sets of the world, as the next few weeks generate the ire of a people who are turning to God and lifting their hands to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount for mercy and grace. As millions of Believers around the world join the Jewish people in their anguish, perhaps the Holy One will use this opportunity to not only bring many into a recognition of Messiah Yeshua, but also confirm with those drawn to the spiritual battle being manifested—in real time on your monitors—an understanding that we are all uniquely connected to one another. I believe that He desires to reveal Himself to His people, both individually and collectively, during these kinds of distresses.

Perhaps in His mercy to His people, as God Himself views images of confessing saints and broken spirits with broken and contrite hearts imploring Him, He will turn an attentive ear to our pleas—and perhaps again, turn His face upon us as His countenance is lifted high. Can you imagine your confession? How will it accomplish His redemption?

Only time will tell how, when, and what He will do with those who are actively involved in the struggle. My prayer is that everyone who is so led will make the effort!

Until the restoration of all things...

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