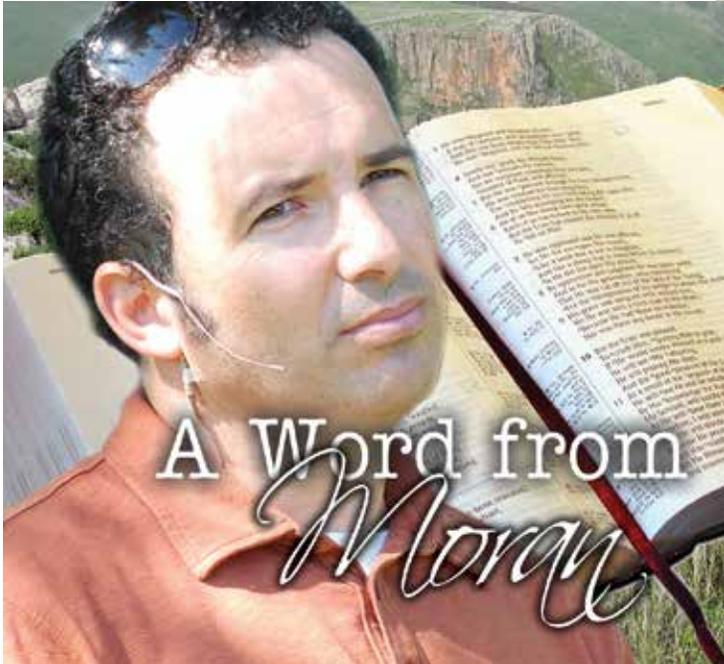




"O Israel put your hope in the LORD..." Psalm 130:7



"For the love of Messiah controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf." 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

Shalom from Jerusalem!

May the grace of our God strengthen you and give you peace in Messiah Yeshua until the day of His return. A very basic yet important principle for each of us called by His name is to understand that once we say "yes" to Him, we say "no" to ourselves. This applies to every area of our lives, including the way we form our worldview; our personal opinions matter little unless we base them on the truth of the Word.

We live in a society that is totally worldly

and anti-God. It is difficult not to allow the world to affect our thinking and stances; after all, we don't live in a vacuum, and there are influences – Godly and worldly, alike – all around us. The media is one example of a very powerful influence in our world; it affects the way we think and how we form our opinions regarding different issues happening in the world.

The thing is, though, that media – liberal and conservative alike – do not base their opinions and reporting on Scripture. And it is also true that people who favor liberal

news outlets tend to have more liberal worldviews. The converse is true of those who favor conservative news outlets. The great danger in both of these approaches is that we end up forming our thinking, decisions, and stances on a worldly point of view rather than on the truth of God's Word.

During the past few years, I have done teachings and presentations on current events in Israel and the Middle East, and how they affect people in America. I base my information on things that are taking place on the ground, while exploring what Scripture has to say about these events. My only "agenda" is to reveal how the Bible aligns with current events, and that we need to ready ourselves for what lies ahead.

In one Congregation at which I spoke, I opened with sharing what Scripture says regarding God's plan for Israel. All I did at that point was to read God's promises given to our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. By the time I was done, one person

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Becoming a Seeker of TRUTH

by T. Michelle

How does a small town girl from the Bible belt of America go from being pro-Palestinian and caring more about the “right of return” for the Palestinian refugees than for the rights of the Jewish people, to living in Israel and finding a new love for the people in the Land? The story is long and cannot be encapsulated in one essay, but there is one main theme throughout the entire story, and that is the search for Truth.

I, like many others in the United States, grew up in a traditional Christian home with limited to no influence from the Church or community around me about the role and significance of Israel in an historical, biblical or modern context, other than the stories of the ancient Hebrews and the patriarchs of the Old Testament that I learned about in Sunday school. Yet, there was no overt correlation drawn between the ancient peoples of old and the Jewish people today or the modern State of Israel.

In my early young adult years, I found a growing enthusiasm to explore the unknown world of diverse cultures, languages, and peoples. My attention gravitated towards the Middle East where eastern religion and thought had been flourishing for over a thousand years. In the midst of this vast region of history and rich cultures, was this tiny, new Jewish nation. According to modern history books, this young country was birthed out of the horrors of the Holocaust in World War II and became a place of refuge for the Jews who were fleeing death camps in Europe.

This is the framework of history that most people know and understand about the modern state of Israel. Within that framework entered the distressing story of what happened to the “natives” of the land when the Jews arrived. This was the narrative of the Palestinian people who were pushed, thrown out, or scared off the land that their ancestors had inhabited for centuries, or so the story went as told through mainstream textbooks and media outlets. The testimonies of those displaced families who suffered and how the generations after them continue to suffer until today broke my heart. Where was the justice? Who would do such an awful thing? No wonder there is war in the Land, the Palestinians are simply fighting their oppressors. Is that not justified in the eyes of the world? Bitterness and animosity took root in my heart and I spent years growing in enmity towards the State of Israel for the injustices they incurred

on the innocent Palestinian people. I blamed Israel for the struggles of the Palestinians – poverty, lack of education, unemployment, terrorism and more. Sadly, I was greatly misled from the truth.

My story is similar to an increasing number of people in the West who grow up learning and believing the same narrative that I was given and they continue down a path that leads them towards hatred. However, thanks to the grace of God, my story does not end with hatred. The narrative that I shared

before was what I followed throughout my young adult years and was fed to me by the academic elites at the university level in the United States. I am not saying that this narrative is completely false; it is true in many ways. The dilemma is that it is not the only narrative in the claim for this sacred piece of land. It was not until I traveled to Israel and spent a number of months volunteering on a small kibbutz that I heard another narrative for the first time. The story of the Jewish people is also full of injustices, oppression and exodus from the native land of their forefathers from centuries past. So who is right, who does the land belong to and who is to decide? Does the United Nations, the United States, or the United Arab Emirates determine the final status?

My next step changed my whole perspective. I began to pray and ask God to show me how to understand this complicated matter. I began to read the Scriptures in a renewed way; for the first time, I started to connect the dots between the covenants and promises God gave to the Hebrews of old to the descendants that live on today. This renewed understanding began to radically change my view of current events. How was I to deny the right of the Jewish people to the land that God had promised them after witnessing verse after verse that read like those found in Genesis 13:15, “...for all the land which you see I will give to you and your descendants forever,” or in Genesis 17:8 when God says, “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.” God entered into a covenant with Abraham that would be passed down to the generations after him, the Jewish people.

The following passage was one that helped me to understand the place of the people of Israel in proportion to the faithfulness of God as He carries out His will:

Moran's Blog - God's Word

Deuteronomy 7:6-9

For you are a holy and set-apart people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a special people to Himself out of all the peoples on the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you and choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the fewest of all people. But because the Lord loves you and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know, recognize, and understand therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, Who keeps covenant and steadfast love and mercy with those who love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations. . . ."

God anyone else, is not only a minds of people His mercies endure

As I began to people I still felt could I choose between were suffering and the were promised the Land?

In time I began to realize that it was not my place to choose sides or a people group. All people are beloved by their Creator and "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). However, it was my job to stand on the Word of God as my authority for Truth, Justice, and Love. I could no longer let the world define for me what justice and love is. Only God, the Giver of Life, has the authority to determine rights, execute justice perfectly, and do it from a heart of compassionate love. To let the Word of God be my complete guide for every area of life – politics, economics, religion, culture and the list goes on – I was to have to surrender everything the world offered me as truth and knowledge in exchange for growing in the Knowledge and Truth of the Kingdom of God.

My story is not unique unto me. It is a further testimony of God's faithfulness to bring us into His Truth. The situation on the ground remains difficult and can become a burden for those who fall into despair. I share my testimony as a form of encouragement to those who struggle with understanding the magnitude of the "Middle East conflict" in relation to Israel. If we walk with eyes focused on the understanding of the world, we will be left embittered, burdened and hopeless. If we choose to study God's word and seek His understanding, then we will be clothed with righteousness and eternal hope. 🙏

has brought the Jewish people back to the Land that He once promised to them, not because they are more special than but because He is faithful to keep His covenants. This battle over land, but it is a battle over the hearts and to know the One true God, who is faithful and forever.

embrace God's plan for the Jewish an internal struggle; how the Palestinians who Jewish people who

A few years ago, I became aware of a tragic occurrence that took place at a congregation led by a friend. My friend decided to start teaching from the book of Beginnings (Genesis), in order to understand the fullness of the Scriptures. Sadly, some of the members of this congregation were angry over the fact that they would be "forced" into reading and studying the "old testament". In fact, as a result, they left the fellowship!

Why is it tragic, one may ask?

In a recent teaching I gave about the importance of reading the entirety of God's Word, I read a letter that I had received to illustrate an important point. The letter said:

"Dear Moran,

I want you to know that you are a fool, and that you are really making me angry. I really don't like you and don't want you to be a part of my life."

When I looked at the faces of the people in the audience, I saw that they were shocked! I then read them the "real" letter in its entirety:

"Dear Moran,

I wanted you to know of a situation that happened to me today at school. I saw two kids arguing and one of them told the other "I want you to know that you are a fool and that you are really making me angry". I really don't like when things

like this happen and it made me sad. I want you to know that I really appreciate you, and all of the things and values I have learned from you. I don't want anything to happen to our friendship and want you to be part of my life."

They understood the point I was making: When one chooses to read only part of a letter, one will get a complete different

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Three-Fold Vision of Discipleship

One of the primary pillars to our ministry at Hope for Israel (HFI) is to build up disciples in the Body of Messiah in the Land of Israel. Our focus on discipleship is both internal and external. We believe strongly that we have to be equipping ourselves, individually and corporately as a staff, in order for the Lord to direct us personally, and to further His call for HFI. This is why our staff gathers together every morning for prayer and is encouraged to participate in a yearlong reading of the Bible together. Once a week, we also study the Scriptures and discuss the teachings with each other in order to grow in our faith and understanding.

One of our staff members of more than two years, who has joined the yearly reading plan, shared with great enthusiasm how the Word has helped her in her walk with God. In her words, she explains:

“Reading the Word helps to better understand and clarify my views of the Bible as one book, and to not only rely on one verse or a single story here and there. It also helped me to see and understand that God is much greater than what I thought or knew before. Today reading the Word has become a part of my daily life, and I am even adding more reading every day. I now find time to have an in-depth study of the Word of God and I know it was because of the challenge that Moran gave me two years ago with regard to reading the whole Bible in a year. Reading the Word clarifies the character of God – I better understand how He thinks, how He loves and works, and therefore I am able to discern more and more whether something is from God or from the enemy. When I am seeking for general wisdom in my day-to-day life, I run to the Word. When I am seeking for hope, I declare God’s promises for me. When I want to get a deeper perspective, I go to His Word. It is an amazing thing, but God’s Word is truly a light unto my path. For the first time in my life, I see that these are not just nice slogans but a true way of life. The reading not only helped me in my walk with the Lord, but it became my daily walk in itself. I can’t do it without the Word of God. . . and if you were to ask me the same question two years ago you wouldn’t get the same answer. Amazing!”

This is a testimony to how important discipleship is to us and is the reason why we intentionally make prayer and study of the Word a central part of the work we do. It equips us to be ready to equip others.

Much of our focus on discipleship is aimed at youth between the time they are in middle school until the years following their release from the army and are searching out which career

path they wish to take. The youth are the next generation of believers in the Land who were born and raised in Israel and will be leaders in the Body of Messiah; they will lead the next generation to be light in the darkness. Even the name Ner Yah means “Light of God” in Hebrew, reflecting that very vision. However, there are many challenges that young believers face, threatening their walk with God. This is why it is important that they be equipped to face the challenges that will come.



The Ner Yah youth group was birthed from recognizing the need for discipling youth in the Land. In the initial years, the group formed organically as a small group of students seeking to grow in their faith. In wisdom, these youth sought covering

for their group and approached Moran to be a spiritual guide. Now after eight years, God has helped us to grow in number and vision as we have seen the needs of the youth develop over time. He has provided the staff and means necessary to help support the youth through every season until they reach adulthood through what we call the “Three-Fold Vision of Discipleship.” The three-fold vision provides discipleship and support for youth in Ner Yah throughout three major stages of life: middle school/high school, 2-3 years of army service, and post-army life.

The first stage of youth discipleship begins at Ner Yah where 50-70 middle and high school aged youth, coming from various congregations in Jerusalem, meet weekly for fellowship, worship, and the study of God’s Word. Ner Yah offers an atmosphere surrounded by believers, and run by young adults who have transitioned through the same program in their own lives. This truly offers encouragement for the youngsters to see their leaders who have gone through high school and the army and still standing strong in their walk with God.

Beyond the weekly gatherings, over the years Ner Yah has developed a comprehensive program that aims to reach every member and help them grow in their faith, through one-on-one discipleship and in small group settings. It started a few years back when the boys began to gather outside of the Thursday meetings to talk and pray about issues relating to their lives. Then the leaders of Ner Yah began to meet once every two months with girls and boys the year prior to their enlistment into the army as practical preparation for everything they would face throughout their service. Even the method of teaching in Ner Yah has matured in recent years, where once it was topical based with no strong connection between each lesson to now strategically studying in-depth through books of the Bible with a systematic lesson plan throughout the year. Each week a summary of the previous

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Three-Fold Vision *continued from page 4*

Lesson is posted on the website in order for the teens to go back and study through. They also learn to put their faith into practice in organized volunteer service projects that the leaders arrange throughout the year.

A few years ago the second stage of the three-fold vision came into place to provide much needed support and love for the believers who are in their army service. The army is one of the most challenging seasons in the life of believers. Young boys and girls at the age of 18 are separated from their parents, friends, and congregations – the very support systems that encouraged them to walk in faith – and are left to tread water with the sharks, as the saying goes. The life for soldiers can be lonely and full of temptations from the much more secular lifestyle found in the army.

This is why we pay close attention to the believer soldiers and provide them with as much encouragement as possible. Every two weeks we host a meeting for the soldiers where they can come and worship, study the Word together, and find fellowship with others going through the same struggles. Some members of our staff regularly send notes of encouragement via text message and four times a year during the holiday season they receive care packages from us with a personal note and goodies to enjoy.

Approximately six months before the soldiers' release from the army, they begin to transition into the final stage of the three-fold vision, which focuses on helping believers to readjust back to civilian life again. This is an important element in our work because this is a stage of life when many of these young adults do not know what the next steps will be and often feel overwhelmed.

Around three years ago, when the third pillar of the three-fold vision started to take place, HFI began to offer scholarships to former Ner Yah members who needed the financial assistance to study for their future careers. This is continually growing and we are praying for God to pair us with the right people in this provision. From this place we began to see the need to not only invest in their lives financially, but also on a personal level; to that end, we began offering one-on-one counseling to believers after their release from the army. These counseling sessions between one of our staff members and a former soldier is meant to provide guidance to the individual in all areas of life – personal, spiritual and professional. Less than a year ago, we began to have a women's bible study for young adult women seeking fellowship and enrichment in their faith. You can see how in the past year, God has greatly expanded and developed this third pillar of the three-fold vision.

The purpose here of summarizing the elements of the three-fold vision is to demonstrate how critical discipleship and equipping the next generation in the Word of God is to us. We want to help them be grounded in the Scriptures and stand ready to face the challenges and trials that will surely intensify for believers in the Land of Israel. We have hope and are seeing tremendous fruit from the lives of these young believers, and we trust that God will continue to use us to make disciples in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. 

Moran's Blog *continued from page 3*

picture of the intended meaning, and will come to a totally different conclusion than the person who read the entire letter.

My brothers and sisters, there is no difference when it comes to God's Word. Sadly, many people today are being led astray in many areas of their spiritual life and walk with God, simply because they don't read the entire Scripture that God gave us.

When we don't read the Word, we can be led astray in a moment. The Word specifically warns us against false teachers, which means that there are many false teachings out there. How would you know to recognize them, unless you know the truth? How would you know the truth unless you take the time to read God's Word?

The Word is one of our greatest treasures; through it, God gives us every tool we need to live abundant and victorious lives, while combating our enemy, who seeks our total destruction. Let me encourage you to read it, to know it, and to live it.

This is one of Moran's blog in his most recent series about the significance of the Word of God in our lives. You can continue following Moran in this series every week by going to Hope for Israel's webpage. Find the link below.

<https://hope4israel.org/category/moran/> 

Word from Moran *continued from page 1*

in the audience whom I knew held the opinion that Israel is an Apartheid state that tortures Palestinians, stood up and walked out. That person is someone who considers himself a follower of God, yet the truth of God's Word was too much for him to handle.

At a different venue where I did exactly the same presentation, I received good feedback, including from the leadership of the Congregation. It was only later on that I got the news from them that I would not be invited back again to speak, due to the fact that my message was "too political". It is sad that even the Word of God has been distorted into politics, and people refuse to accept it in its purest form.

Where do you stand, dear reader? On what do you base your opinions and worldviews? Is the truth important to you? Is the truth of the Word too difficult for you to accept? After all, it was our Messiah Himself who told us in John 8:31b-32: "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

My dear co-worker in the Kingdom of God, I implore you to stand on the truth of God's Word alone! You and I have the great privilege and responsibility to be His Salt and Light on this earth, and the only way to do so effectively is by denying self and surrendering to Him. The only way to know His character and His will is by knowing the fullness of His Word.

May we set aside our personal feelings and opinions, and choose instead those of the Lord. As you read this newsletter, I pray that you will be encouraged to persevere and continue to run the race set before you. Choosing Him will never be the "easy way", but it will be the way to life everlasting.

Choose the world or choose God...

In His Service, *Moran*



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Final Word

In order to accomplish the great work the Lord has for us, we do need your prayer and financial support. Please prayerfully consider supporting the Hope for Israel ministry.

Please make all checks payable to Hope for Israel.