

**LANCE LAMBERT - Middle East Update**  
**September 2005**

So much is happening and with so much rapidity that it is almost impossible to keep abreast of it. As soon as we have done one Update it is more or less required to do another one because of the events that are taking place. It becomes more and more difficult to produce these Updates because of this complexity of our situation.

I am speaking now from a very sad, confused and divided nation. For nearly everybody it has been an incredibly emotional time - from the right wing even to the left wing - and it is not easy to put into words exactly what is the mood of the nation. But I believe the Lord will help me to at least give you some understanding of what has been happening. I am going to say something about the general situation in the world since I last gave an Update: the bombings in London; the bombings in Egypt – in Sharm el Sheikh; and the general trend of things in the world. Then I will say something about the withdrawal from Gaza.

First of all, I would like to read a number of scriptures, firstly from Psalm 115:1-3. *“Not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy name give glory for Thy loving kindness and for Thy truth’s sake. Wherefore should the nation say ‘Where is now their God?’ But our God is in the heavens. He has done whatsoever He pleased.”* I want to add to that in Psalm 79:10. *“Wherefore should the nations say ‘Where is their God?’ Let the avenging of the blood of Thy servants, which is shed, be known among the nations in our sight. Let the sighing of the prisoner come before Thee. According to the greatness of Thy power, preserve Thou those that are appointed to death and render unto our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom. Their approach wherewith they have approached Thee, O Lord, so we Thy people and sheep of Thy pasture will give thanks forever. We will show forth Thy praise to all generations.”*

Ps 74:1-2: *“O God, why hast Thou cast us off forever? Why doth Thine anger smoke against the sheep of Thy pasture? Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast gotten of old, which Thou hast redeemed to be the tribe of Thine inheritance and Mount Zion wherein Thou hast dwelt.”* Verse 8: *“They said in their heart ‘let us make havoc of them altogether – they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land. We see not our signs. There is no more any prophet, neither is there among us any that knoweth ‘how long?’ How long O God shall the adversary reproach – shall the enemy blaspheme Thy name forever? Why doest Thou back Thy hand, even Thy right hand? Pluck it out of Thy bosom and consume them. Yet God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.”* Verse 18: *“Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached Thee O Lord, and that a foolish people have blasphemed Thy name. O deliver not the soul of Thy turtledove unto the wild beast. Forget not the life of Thy poor forever. Have respect unto the covenant for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of violence. O let not the oppressed return ashamed. Let the poor and needy praise Thy name. Arise, O God, plead Thine own cause. Remember how the foolish man reproacheth Thee all the day. Forget not the voice of Thine adversaries. The tumult of those that rise up against Thee, assendeth continually.”*

Ps 42: *“As the heart panteth after the water brooks so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night while they continually say unto me ‘where is Thy God?’ These things I remember and pour out my soul within me. How I went with the throng and led them to the house of God with the voice of joy and praise. A multitude keeping holyday. Why art Thou cast down O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance. O my God, my soul is cast down within me. Therefore do I remember Thee from the land of the Jordan, and the Hermons, from the hill of Mitzar. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts: “all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me, even a prayer unto the God of my life. I will say unto God my rock, ‘Why has Thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they continually say unto me, ‘Where is Thy God?’”*

*Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God for I shall yet praise Him, who is the help of my countenance, and my God?"*

It is well worth pointing out in these wonderful, but somewhat plaintive, scriptures a certain refrain. You have probably picked it up already. One is to do with 'wherefore should the nations say where is now thy God?' The exact thing we have heard again and again. I heard people on CNN saying, "They are all praying to God, but obviously He doesn't hear them." It's the kind of refrain that you've heard again and again from different people. The reproach – reproaching God almost. We've got it in Ps 115:2, we have it again in Ps 79:10, again in Ps 42:3;10, and then in Ps 74:18;20;22.

As you know, these tapes are not just for information. Basically they began as a ministry to help those who really pray for this nation and for the fulfillment of the purpose of God in this nation and this land. There are one or two wonderful words here that you can take up in prayer, especially this one in Ps 74 – have respect unto the covenant. God does not break covenants and pacts that He makes. When they are conditional, of course there has to be a condition, and then the promise is fulfilled. When they are unconditional, that is: made by grace, lovingkindness, by steadfast love; then of course the Lord keeps those covenants and it is well worth pleading the covenant God made with Abraham, and confirmed it with Isaac and confirmed it again with Jacob. It is well worth pleading that and this other wonderful word in verse 22, "Plead Thine own cause." Frankly, this is God's cause. We wouldn't have this problem if it wasn't for His own word and for the covenants He has made with us. We need, as we consider some of the things in the world and then here in the land, to remember these scriptures.

Since my last Update in June of this year, there have been the bombings in London on July 7 with 54 dead; and on July 21 another more attempted bombings; there has been the Sharm el Sheikh hotel blown up – all of these by suicide bombers with 80 dead. In Iraq the bombings have almost been daily – murder, assassination, and all this apart from 9/11 with the 3000 dead in New York, Madrid with 136 dead, and Bali and Indonesia with the many dead there. It's a world that seems to go from bombing to bombing, from outrage to outrage, terrorist attack to terrorist attack.

If the world had only dealt with Yasser Arafat in the 1960's when he first hijacked aircraft and killed innocent passengers, when he took schools and kindergartens and murdered children and teachers, busses with children and women upon them, we would not have this present situation. If the world had acted in a united way – if only just the United States and the United Kingdom alone had acted in concert we would not have this situation we have today. But Yasser Arafat was considered the victim of aggression, and many of the world media, including of course the BBC and other media held him up as the victim of brutal aggression and injustice by the Israelis. And the world therefore kept silent – the world even supported Yasser Arafat. If the world had acted with firmness, we would not have this situation today with so much more to come.

Now, instead, people of all ethnic backgrounds, innocent civilians going about their normal tasks, are murdered. Now suicide bombers hit New York, Madrid, London and so on. Now Muslim even murders Muslim with savagery. The other day, two suicide bombs went off at a crowded – the busiest – bus station in Baghdad, killing a number of people. But the most extraordinary thing was another suicide bomb was detonated – timed deliberately – at the entrance to the emergency of the big hospital in Baghdad, to kill the surviving wounded from the earlier two bombs. I call that unmitigated savagery! All the chickens have come home to roost and everyone suffers.

It was a Pandora's box that was opened by Arafat in the 1960's and nobody had the perception, the discernment, to understand it. Today no one is truly secure from the threat. It was once only Israel. That is true no longer. What next? In Ps 126:6, the psalmist calls on us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and adds 'they shall prosper that love thee.' It is of course natural for the Christian church (since there was nothing going on in Jerusalem and since Jerusalem was the capital of nothing) to have understood this - not wrongly - as having to do with the spiritual Jerusalem, which is above, which is the mother of us all, and which the Bible ends with the wonderful vision of the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven, having the glory of God. And to pray for the church – for its unity, up-building, progress, purity, and so on and so forth.

But of course when the psalmist issued that command to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, he was thinking of *this* Jerusalem and he understood it to be a central and pivotal point in the purpose of God for the nations. In calling upon us to pray for Jerusalem, he was really saying to us to pray that the purpose of God for the nations be fulfilled. Truly, if there is no peace in Jerusalem, there will be no peace in the world. I find it interesting that we have come full circle now. Here we are, back again. Jerusalem is the capital of a state today – contested – the focal point of conflict, debate, hatred, misrepresentation and so much more. But what the Psalmist said is still true now, truer than ever – if there is no peace in Jerusalem, there will be no peace anywhere else. If there are suicide bombers in Jerusalem, there will be suicide bombers in the world, because when God chose the Jewish people He chose them to be as it says in Numbers 23:9 – a people dwelling alone, not to be reckoned with the nations. In other words, there was something unique about this people. Not because they are in themselves special but because of God's choice. He chose them. And He chose them in a very special way, to be a sign and a witness whether negatively or positively to the nations of the world. It is so interesting to trace through history how the Jewish people have been that witness and that sign. Whether negatively or positively; in exile or regathering; in preservation according to the word of the prophet Jeremiah – *"Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations. Declare it in the isles that are afar off. He that has scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd does his flock."*

We ought also to note another marvelous thing, and that is this little word – *"They shall prosper that love thee."* There is no doubt that those who understand the purpose of God enshrined and defined and expressed in Jerusalem, that they prosper when they are faithful to what they see. And the word that God spoke to Abraham – *"Those that bless thee I will bless, and those that curse thee I will curse,"* contains and defines a time-lasting principle. It is not merely in Gen 12:3 we discover this word, which some could restrict to Abraham's son Isaac and grandson Jacob. For example in Gen 27:29 that's exactly what Isaac said to Jacob when he gave him the blessing that should have gone originally to Esau. Those that bless thee shall be blessed, and those that curse thee, he said, shall be cursed. Even more interesting, in Numbers 24:9, it says, *"Blessed be everyone that blesses thee, and cursed be everyone that curses thee."* These are the prophetic words of Balaam when he was hired to curse the Jewish people and instead said 'I cannot do it because if the Lord has blessed them, I cannot curse them.' And he says here – *"Blessed be everyone that blesses you, and cursed be everyone that curses you."*

Those nations that harm Israel will themselves be harmed. Those nations, including any superpower, that seeks to meddle with the divine purpose for this nation and this land, will find it boomeranging back on them in curse. There are many ways to curse. This does not bode well with the European Union, the United Kingdom, or even for the United States.

I won't say anymore about the general situation in the world. It is not over - this war on terror is progressing. The war on Iraq becomes more violent day by day even though there are some hopeful things about it. In my estimation, Iraq will fall apart. Unless they have a federation, there is no way that I can see any means by which they can maintain the unity of Iraq. It was an artificial bringing together of quite different tribes. That is my own feelings about that. I believe we are in for very rocky, difficult, storm-ridden months ahead. I am sorry to be so Jeremiah in my prediction, but it has to be said that it is utterly false to talk about booms, and prosperity, and all wonderful things happening when in fact we are facing the anger and the wrath of God upon injustice, wickedness, and the contradiction of His purpose and of the covenants that He has made.

### **The Withdrawal**

Now concerning the withdrawal. I have already said what a sad, confused and divided nation Israel is at present, and I can well understand why so many of you are perplexed why a man such as Sharon – such a pioneer for the fulfillment in many ways of the purpose of God for the Jewish people – should now somehow become the detractor, devaluer and divider of this nation. I have to say that it cannot be coincidence that all this has taken place almost within a day of Tisha B'Av. Tisha B'Av – the ninth of Av by the Jewish lunar calendar – is the day, the solemn day, in which the destruction of the temples took place. One in the time of Nebuchadnezzar in 6 B.C., and then again by Titus in 70 A.D. It is also the date when Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain expelled the Jews from Spain. There are a whole number of other things

that have happened – minor, less important things – on that day. I think it is extraordinary that this date should be associated now with the destruction of the Jewish settlements in Gaza and in northern Samaria. As one Rabbi put it – “Now, Sharon, you have added one more date, one more event, to the terrible events that have taken place on this day.” It was, in my estimation, an incredible decision that even though the date was moved in order not to coincide, it was one day - 24 hours - of difference. It has to have significance.

Let me say something about the actual withdrawal. I am taking a number of these facts from the Israel Project (a national non-profit organization that gives information that is accurate).

This withdrawal covered 21 settlements in Gaza and 4 in northern Samaria that are so often called the West Bank, with a population of all, of 9,000 people, consisting of 1,700 families.

**Within this area there were:**

38 synagogues

42 day centers

36 kindergartens

7 elementary schools

3 high schools

1 cemetery in Gush Katif containing 48 graves

The second largest dairy herd in Israel consisting of 800 cows

166 active farmers

1 zoo housing hundreds of animals.

**Here are some further facts:**

10,000 were employed in agriculture in the Gaza settlements alone, and 5,000 of those employed were Palestinians.

US \$120 million in flowers and produce went out of that area each year.

60% of Israel's cherry tomato exports once came from these settlements.

70% of Israel's organic produce came from them.

60% of Israel's exported herbs came from them.

These settlements account for 15% of Israel's total agricultural export.

1000 acres (or 3500 sq meters) of greenhouses will have to be abandoned

It will cost the Israeli government US \$1.7 billion.

One further noteworthy fact – Israel has become the first country in modern history to give up land acquired in a defensive war. A war that she did not seek but which was forced upon her by Syria, Egypt and Jordan.

In the actual withdrawal there was some resistance by the settlers. It was not at all bad. The whole thing was completed without a gun being fired or any bloodshed, in that sense. There were some injuries, there was real resistance, but nevertheless we have to say that both the Israel Defence Forces and the Israeli police acted with great sensitivity and care, even when covered with paint and sand. Sometimes, and not just a few times, soldiers - both men and women – and police officers, were seen praying with those evicted, and often crying. Nevertheless it is the first time since the Nazi era that Jews have been thrown out of their homes and synagogues, except for Yamit – that is the first time ever that Jews have evicted Jews from their homes and synagogues.

Those evicted have left pets – chickens, rabbits, cows, even goats. So fast did it happen that everything had to be left behind so that the animal welfare people have had to go in to try to find pet dogs, cats and parrots. Clothing was left behind – even clothing on washing lines - and bicycles, etc. Normally such events occur in a totalitarian state, not a democracy. It is even more disturbing that the Prime Minister and others have hailed the good character and the nobility of these settlers. When you realize that these people were there because of government policy, supported by the government and at times even subsidized by the government, to be then evicted and placed in hotel rooms all over the country, is a policy that leaves one almost speechless. All the villas, houses, greenhouses, will be blown up in the next few days before the land is given over to the Palestinians.

It was called by the newspapers, TV and radio, 'historic'. Or they have used another term – 'a defining moment in history.' What do they mean by this? Do they mean the end of Zionism? Certainly they see it as the end of the Biblical idea of the Promised Land being repossessed and have said so much. Again and again we have heard the commentators on CNN, Sky and BBC referring to it as the end of an era, the end of the greater Israel idea. What they mean, of course, is the repossession of the Promised Land. The Arabs most certainly see it as historic. They believe Israel is on the run, exhausted by the consistent and continual violence of Hamas, El Jihad, El Aksa Martyrs Brigade, and by Hizbollah. Their hope to liquidate Israel is now, they believe, within actual realization and many of them are exalting over it.

What is the outlook? Well of course, the thing we hear from all the media and from our own government and from many in the left wing, is that peace will now descend upon the Middle East and upon Israel and the Palestinians in particular. The idea that peace will descend upon this whole area is ludicrous in the extreme. It is a fallacy and will be proved wrong by events to come.

Already Hamas and El Jihad have declared that they will now move their operations to the West Bank. In an interview that was given by the pan-Arab Saudi daily *Asharq Al-Awsat* published in London, with the leader of Hamas, Mahmoud Azahar, he was asked "Will Hamas continue the resistance after the disengagement plan is implemented?" and he said "We will not take over the Gaza strip and live there peacefully while the Zionist enemy is detaining thousands of our sons and occupying the West Bank. The resistance must move to the West Bank to expel the occupation." Again, he was asked, "Will Hamas resume its operations in Israeli towns after the withdrawal?" Firstly he said, "There are no Israeli towns – I wish to underline this – there are no Israeli towns, these are settlements." Again he was asked about Israeli's fear that Gaza could become *Hamasland* after the withdrawal. "Let Israel die," Mahmoud Azahar answered. Then he was asked, "Have you prepared to enter the settlements?" He answered "We will enter the settlements and sully the dignity of Israel with our feet. We will stand on the ruins of the Israeli settlements and tell our people we have prevailed. This is non-negotiable. We will secure the Gaza strip and prevent anyone from occupying it again."

Ahmed Qurei said "Now Gaza, tomorrow the West Bank and Jerusalem." Mahmoud Abbas followed him with much the same kind of statement, adding that not only must the whole of the West Bank be given back to them, with all its settlements – hundreds of thousands of people this time – but also Jerusalem must return to them. And he added to that, "And the Palestinian refugees must have the right to return to Israel proper." And then Khaled Mashaal deputy leader of Hamas said, "This is the beginning of the end of Israel." There is no doubt about the feeling in the whole of the Palestinian community and indeed in the Arab countries around us. Their moral has risen as a result of this, and they believe that they are now on a winning ticket.

The Prime Minister (Arik Sharon) said, "We have removed a source of continual friction between the two communities." I consider it wishful thinking. I do not believe they have removed a source of friction. The friction will now go on, and as Netanyahu said, "Gaza will become a terrorist base in the whole area." On the contrary, it is also hard to see how the government can hang on to the many settlements in the West Bank, and certainly to Jerusalem. If they seek to, I can see only much more and severe violence under a renewed *Intifada* of much greater intensity - even war. Hamas, El Jihad, El Aksa Martyrs Brigade – they will all launch this new *Intifada*.

We should note very carefully the words of President George W. Bush, insisting on what he calls 'contiguity of Palestinian lands'. That is, there must be a link between Hebron and Bethlehem in the south; Ramallah and Nablus in the north of the West Bank; and a link between Gaza and the West Bank. Only recently, according to certain sources, Condoleezza Rice became very excited with Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz when he questioned seriously the idea of a land/road link between Gaza and the West Bank. Their conversation, apparently, became very heated, when Shaul Mofaz raised the serious issue of security, which he considered to be very dangerous.

The fact of the matter is simple: Gaza will become a huge terror base, bringing in arms by air and sea, and then in some manner, smuggling those weapons into the West Bank. If that is the case, no Israeli city or town will be safe from rockets and lethal violence. **So much for peace descending on this area!**

Another very serious factor in this whole equation is the fact of Iran. One must remember that Iran, with Syria and Hizbullah in Lebanon, are a triumvirate energized by hatred of both Israel and the USA and the Western nations. I have no doubt about Iran's determination to achieve a nuclear breakthrough. Unfortunately because they never found weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, this whole matter now has a smoke screen. People almost feel, 'Well, are they going to try and say the same thing about Iran?' But the Iranian situation is totally different – there are facts on the ground. Both China, North Korea and particularly Dr. Q.C.Han, the so-called father of the Pakistani nuclear bomb, have been involved in seeking to enable Iran to achieve this breakthrough. If Iran does succeed in this, the world situation – listen to me – will **dramatically** change and those western countries dealing with Iran, wearing kid gloves, will rue the day. Then the chickens will come home with a vengeance.

We must remember that the teachings of the Ayatollah Kumeini – 'ayatollah' means 'oracle of God,' or 'word of God' – are standard and foundational principles for Iran for its government and its national policy. He taught, when questioned as to how, in the predestinating will of *allah*, Israel could have arisen a Jewish state in the Middle East. He taught that *allah* allowed the creation of Israel as a judgment on the lukewarmness of the Islamic masses. In order to energize them to become devoted – to become *shahids*, that is martyrs – when they became such, then *allah* would give them the power to annihilate the Jews, liberate Jerusalem and go on using Israel's destruction as the stepping stone for the conquest of the world, and the USA in particular. He always called Israel the 'little satan' and the United States the 'great satan', and to this day that is the way that the so-called moderates name us, including Rafsanjani and Hatami (they're supposed to be moderates, especially Hatami) but still that is how they refer to the United States and to Israel. Although there are different denominations within Islam, particularly the Shia on the one side and the Sunni on the other, they are often united when it comes to action. It has been a fallacy that they are so bitter in their attitude towards one another that they could under no circumstances unite, but the facts on the ground are very simple. Osama Bin Laden looks upon himself as a disciple of the Ayatollah Kumeini. Osama Bin Laden was a Wahabi (that is a Saudi) of the most extreme sect of Sunni Islam. Osama looks upon himself as a disciple of the Ayatollah Kumeini who is a Shia. Iran of course is Shia and the whole government is Shia. El Quaida is Sunni. They have been co-operating all the way through – it is a fallacy that these two cannot unite in action.

The western world ignores all this at its serious peril. There is no doubt that many of the Muslims in the western nations – and particularly in the European nations – are decent, hardworking people who just want to get on with their lives raising their families in a stable and peaceful environment. Nevertheless, within those communities are buried the militants, those who represent the original agenda laid out in the Koran. It is those nuclei of militant Muslims that are the Trojan horse within European and British society, and I think, even American society. From them have come the so-called suicide bombers who have left their trail of death in so many western nations. It is utterly stupid and irresponsible not to recognize this simple truth. Islam – original Islam; fundamentalist Islam; primitive Islam, whatever you call it, and however you describe it - cannot accept a Jewish state in the Middle East and still be true to itself. For such, it is an obscenity and a contradiction of Islamic theology.

To accept Jerusalem, even part of it, as a Jewish capital is to add fuel to the fire. Nor can it countenance any change in the status of the Temple Mount. At present, neither Jew nor Christian is permitted to pray there – not even to read their Bible. So much for peace descending on the Middle East! Those two mosques on the Temple Mount: the mosque of Omar, (a perambulatory in actual fact), stands on the place where the House of God once stood and its significance is that Islam has triumphed over Judaism. The El Aqsa mosque, which is a real mosque on the southern end of the Temple Mount, is actually more sacred in Islam's eyes than the mosque of Omar and stands on the place where the church was born on the day of Pentecost. Those two mosques have tremendous importance and significance for militant Muslims. It is impossible if Islam is to be true to Islam, to concede in any way to Judaism or to Christianity (which they call Crusaders). It could only accept Israel as a stage in its ultimate liquidation and disappearance in negotiations.

It is also as true that Islam, to be faithful to the Koran, to its creed, cannot forgo the simple fact that the whole world has to be conquered by it and become Muslim. We often hear how peaceful Islam is, although the present world situation does not present any evidence for that. Everywhere it is Muslims killing – not only non-Muslims, but Muslims. However, one has to recognize the Islamic teaching that there is a house of peace (*dar al salam*) and a house of war (*dar al harb*). In the house of peace are all who are Muslim and faithful. In the house of war are found the rest of us, and the unfaithful, even the unfaithful Muslims. The fact of the matter is simple: both the Ayatollah Kumeini and Osama Bin Laden believed we have entered the last days and are within that war in which all who are not Muslim or refuse to become Muslims, will be killed. Whether deceived or knowing, witting or unwitting, the western nations, in the interests of globalization, have introduced Islam into their national societies and will pay the price.

Those dark shadowy, but powerfully influential, world figures who have conceived of a one-world society – multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religion – will now have to face the painful truth. They have sought to revive and renew Babel (or Babylon) and will suffer the consequences of their folly.

It is interesting to note the phrase ‘the mystery of lawlessness’ as it is recorded in 2 Thess 2. Lawlessness is to reject, to ignore, or to live without the revelation of God and truth – in our Jewish terms, ‘without Torah’. Not meaning regulations or laws, but the whole revelation of the character and purpose and mind and heart of God. To live without it, to reject it, that in the New Testament is what is called lawlessness. It is not gangsterism – a kind of mixture of mafia and triad and other gangster groups. It is to live without the word of God, to not recognize the principles of God’s word. But why should it be called the ‘mystery’ of lawlessness? There is nothing mysterious about people wanting to live without the word of God – without His revelation. So what is mysterious about it? It simply means that the mastermind of this lawlessness – the supervisor of it, the energy and power behind it, are not human but spiritual and invisible. It is that one called satan, in the Bible, described variously as the deceiver, the old serpent, the great dragon. It is all to do with his last attempt to take the world and all within it. To take the nations for himself. In this he will fail, and the kingdom of this world will become the kingdom of our God and of His Messiah and He shall reign forever and ever (Revelation 11:15). Then will be finished the mystery of God, according to the Good News – the Gospel – which He declared to His servants the prophets (Rev 10:7).

Can Arik Sharon survive this action of total withdrawal from Gaza, making Gaza *Judenrein* (free of Jews), which he has successfully implemented? In my estimation, I think not. The Likud party is in shambles. The Labor Party may well pull out of the coalition government as it has already said it would, once the withdrawal is complete. In a recent walkabout poll in Tel Aviv conducted by CNN, not one person asked (even those who supported the withdrawal policy of Sharon) believes that he will survive politically. I feel the same. I believe that the grass roots Israeli public have been deeply moved and troubled by what they have watched. Our television has been almost continuous coverage of this whole thing, and I think to see what has happened (even those who are secular and actually left wing and in many ways believe we shouldn’t have been in Gaza) is something deeply troubling.

It is very interesting about our people – I think there is a deep spiritual intuition. I cannot put it in any other words. Even when we are lost, even when we are disobedient there is some kind of deep spiritual intuition of what is right and what is wrong, and I think that a lot of people in Israeli public are deeply moved by what has happened – to tears! And beyond that, I think they feel a sense of darkness about this thing. It is not right. And although they will argue for it (now they are saying that the healing process must begin – you can say that having wounded the nation like this!) It is very easy to say now the healing process must begin – now we have a new era. What new era have we got? It’s dreadful to have to say it, but I see nothing but rockets and violence and trouble. Can Arik Sharon survive this thing? I don’t think so. I have supported Sharon for many years and have respected his often misrepresented character. When he was elected in a landslide I said that he could well be the Churchill of Israel. But I cannot say that I feel that today, having witnessed what has happened and being confused by the whole thing.

In my view, the withdrawal from Gaza is a **colossal** (and I use the word advisedly) and disastrous mistake. The wound inflicted upon Israel will take years to heal. It has brought only division, confusion and demoralization in its wake. The fact that the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union,

the United Nations all look favorably on Israel because of this action, *an action that very few of them would ever countenance for themselves and their own nations*, means absolutely nothing! Within months they will return to their normally negative view of us and their support of everything that would weaken us, even that which threatens our very survival. I have no doubt that once their favor has lasted long enough, they will begin agitating for our complete withdrawal from the West Bank and our withdrawal from Jerusalem. I have no doubt that they will start their old clamor for Jerusalem to become an international city.

Whatever led Sharon to this disastrous, even catastrophic, point in Israel's modern history - the rumor mills always present in the Middle East, I might say, are suggesting corruption (naming a number of high officials in Sharon's administration who will financially benefit from this withdrawal). Naming for instance Eyal Giladi, the official Public Policy Coordinator who was to watch over the whole of this withdrawal to see it through to its full implementation. And then Dov Weisglass, believed by most in the know to be the real architect of this so-called disengagement policy. Both of these figures, it is claimed, have shadowy links with certain men interested in casinos in Palestinian areas, such as Cyril Kern, Samuel Flatto-Sharon (whom the French have wanted convicted for several years of embezzlement in two countries, and who fled here to Israel under the law that a Jew could be protected here in Israel), and Martin Schlaff, the Austrian financier. Can this be true? It is hardly creditable, yet it is a fact that the last mentioned three gentlemen have big investments in the Palestinian areas and Dov Weisglass's law firm actually acted for Yasser Arafat and for Jibril Rajoub - both Palestinian leaders - for their investment and financial interests. If it is true, I pray (and I call upon you all to join me in prayer) that it will all become public knowledge. Not just rumor, but it will absolutely established what is the truth behind this thing - however shocking the facts may prove to be.

Then there is a much more creditable idea, that this whole disengagement policy, whilst suggested by Sharon, is basically an American idea. When asked by Haifa's chief Rabbi, Shaar Yashuv Cohen why Sharon was following such a policy of retreat in Gaza and Northern Samaria, Arik Sharon said, "This is what the U.S. State Department is demanding that I do, and I must do it." Certainly the United States State Department made it abundantly clear that it wanted all Jews out of Gaza by August 15. I can hardly believe that another nation should say they want all Jews out of somebody else's land, but that's the case. Danny Ayalon, the Israeli Ambassador to the United States, has stated clearly that the disengagement policy was part of an overall Israeli/American agreement. How much Omri Sharon has had to play in this casino business, we presently do not know.

Whether the truth will ever finally surface we shall see, but let me go on with this matter. Both Binyamin Netanyahu and Natan Sharansky believe that it is an American imposition upon Israel. Netanyahu actually indicated when he resigned, that the present policy of the Israeli government is a threat to United States security and most western countries. I agree. Because what the present American and United Kingdom policy is doing is weakening and demoralizing Israel, to the point where they are going to suffer for it in days to come. Sharansky has questioned, in his own inimitable way, why the United States and its allies are so keen to back the creation of yet another anti-democratic, anti-American, anti-Western Islamic state in the Middle East. Has the American administration any idea what it is getting into?

There is no doubt that President Bush is a truly born of God believer and that Condoleezza Rice, daughter of a Christian pastor, has faith. They have courageously stood up for Christian values and principles, e.g. regarding abortion, euthanasia and same-sex marriages. But do they realize that in dividing the Promised Land they are dividing land apportioned by God Himself, to a particular people? To divide what He gives in its entirety and solemnized the gift in what He called 'an Everlasting Covenant' or pact, is to put the nation on a direct collision course with the Almighty. It is interesting that in Genesis 17 it actually not only speaks of an everlasting covenant but of the Land of Canaan of being an everlasting possession. Now everlasting has to mean everlasting, otherwise what is the meaning of language? If it is temporal, why isn't it called temporal? If it is time-lasting, let it be called time-lasting, at least that could have a limit to it - although we are still in time now. But to say everlasting and eternal, in human language, simply means something that cannot be abrogated, or cancelled, or shelved, or put away. The consequences of meddling with this matter, to do with the land and this nation, because it is a unique nation - I know many people will say this is a fairy story, what is he talking about? - but the fact of the



matter is that God chose this nation as a testimony to the nations. The church is a testimony in the unseen - to principalities and powers. But He chose this people. It looks like any other nation. It has the same crime, immorality, faults and good points that other nations have – but God chose this nation to be a sign. One of the signs is the land. It is interesting that 13 times God speaks in His Word of this land being “His” land, or “My” land and even in Joel 3:2 speaks of the judgment of the nations “because they divided my land.”

I say this because I think this is of **tremendous** importance. Is the United States actually going to place itself - the leadership of the United States going to place itself – on a collision course with God Himself, the Almighty Himself? Just as the British Empire did in 1945. Unwittingly maybe, I don't know, or deliberately, they put themselves on a collision course with the Almighty. Maybe they thought, “Well, who are these people anyway – they are just the remnants of the Holocaust. They're just a lot of very ordinary people, they're nothing special and all this is past anyway, the church has taken the place of all these people, God has rejected this people because they rejected Jesus.” I mean, that's the normal idea and it has permeated the whole of society in so-called Christian countries. But all I can say is, here you have something of tremendous importance, I think. And often people think I am nuts to talk about the land as if it is so important. But the fact of the matter is, it goes back to a covenant God Himself made with the forefathers, and anyone who argues with me, there is one scripture in the New Testament, in the Roman letter – the greatest exposition of the Gospel in the Bible - and this is what it says in Romans 11:27: “*As touching the election, the Jewish people are beloved for the patriarchs' sake.*” That goes straight back to this covenant that God made. If all this is true, it bodes badly for the United States. I would go further – I would predict that the United States will fall from her superpower status with the most disastrous consequences for the free world and indeed for the work of the Gospel as well.

Some will laugh at me, deriding what I say but time will tell. God is absolutely righteous, just and faithful to the covenants He makes. What can we say to all of this? “Where is Thy God?” Oh, how we've heard it coming through in the interviewers, anchormen and the various TV personalities. How we've heard it among some of our own leftwingers. How we've heard it all over the world, especially from the Arabs. “Where is their God?” Obviously they need to know *allah*, not the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. “Where is He?” They all prayed, they all wept, they all called upon God. They traversed their kibbutzim, their settlements, round with the Torah scrolls and still God didn't appear. But people said the same thing about the Holocaust – “Where was God?” But out of the Holocaust came Israel. And somehow out of this tragedy, worked by our own people upon our own people, will come something of enduring and everlasting worth. “Where is Thy God?” It seems that He is very hidden at present, but when He finally arises and manifests His presence, His enemies will be scattered. And when He arises concerning Israel's present position, the whole world will know it. This battle is not ours – it is His. We must be careful not to shoulder too much of the load. The government after all, in this matter, is upon His shoulders. The way ahead may be difficult, it may be dangerous and full of sorrow at present, but we can be more than conquerors in and through Him who loved us. Pray then, for the peace of Jerusalem “*for they shall prosper that love her.*”