

Shalom in Yeshua, the Sar Shalom!

All Eyes on Iraq

As we write this letter during the month of April, the eyes of the world are focused on Iraq, the site of ancient Babylon, the home of a revived Haman spirit of genocide that defies logical explanation. The entire world is able to SEE WAR because of modern technology and television. It is one thing to hear the sound of bombings and quite another to see American POWs, or troops struggling against blinding dust, or murdered U.S. soldiers.

The Lord has been speaking to us about **our** EYES, and **your** EYES and the power of the eye gate. It is estimated by educators that human beings remember 30% of what they hear and 70% of what they see. That's why television and the Internet are so potentially dangerous for children (and adults!). We must agree with what King David said in Psalm 101:3: *"I will set nothing wicked before my eyes."*

Our hearts go out to those of you who have loved ones in Iraq. It must be so hard for you not to keep your eyes fixed on the TV set, just in case you get a glimpse of your dear ones. Although we know no one personally on the front lines, our eyes have already taken in so much that we feel as if we are in the war ourselves and even dream of it at night. In the midst of all this, God has spoken to us to encourage you to **look to Him**. Lift up your eyes! **His eyes** are upon each one of you (as well as on your children, husbands, fathers, brothers, cousins, nephews, etc. in the Middle East).

The Eyes of God

Be assured that God sees all; He is omnipresent. *"For His eyes are on the ways of man, and He sees all his steps"* (Job 34:21). *"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He ponders all his paths"* (Proverbs 5:21). God knows where our soldiers are, and He knows where Saddam Hussein is. *"For the eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good"* (Psalm 15:3). How does God feel about this evil and good?

"The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry. The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth" (Psalm 34:15-16).

We wonder why some people do not understand that our President and government are trying to protect **us** from a very great evil. It is the same evil that Israel has been facing for years. Please don't be deceived by the images of pitiful Palestinians, Iraqis or Arab children that the press thrusts before your eyes. There are men behind these images that use these children and their mothers as tools for their own evil purposes. We value those lives. Radical Islam does not. The average American would never dream of strapping a bomb to his ten year old and sending him out to blow himself up. We are dealing with a very different mentality in this war. The eyes of God see the truth; our eyes can be fooled unless we ask the Lord to help us see things as He does. God values all lives. Remember it was Hagar an Egyptian mother in distress who cried out in gratitude: *"Thou God seest me"* (Genesis 16:13 KJV).

God sees **you**. Be encouraged and claim this promise from the Word of God for yourselves and your families: *"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself **strong** on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him"* (2 Chronicles 16:9).

The Apple of God's Eye

The Bible tells us that the Jewish people are the **apple** of God's eye (Deuteronomy 32:10). The word apple here is not the fruit apple, but rather the pupil of the eye, literally the little man of the eye (Hebrew: ee-SHOWN). Since the eyes of the Lord are on the land of Israel from the beginning of the year to the end (Deuteronomy 11:12), Israel appears as the reflected image in the center of God's pupil.

The Lord warns those who come against the apple of His eye that He will shake His hand against them. A day of judgment is coming. The Holy One of Israel says that, *"...he who touches you touches the apple of His eye"* (Zechariah 2:8). Read Zechariah chapter 2 and see how the Lord will again choose Jerusalem. God is not through with His Jewish people nor with their Promised Land!

Our Eyes

The way to peace that passes all understanding in these trying times is to turn our eyes upon God. We must look up! So many scriptures, both in the Tanach and the Brit Hadasha exhort us to do just that. *"My eyes are ever toward the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net"* (Psalm 25:15). *"I will lift up my eyes to the hills—from whence comes my help? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth"* (Psalm 121:1-2). *"But my eyes are upon You, O God the Lord; In You I take refuge; Do not leave my soul destitute. Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and from the traps of the workers of iniquity. Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I escape safely"* (Psalm 141:8-10).

A.W. Tozer, a famous 20th century evangelical mystic, wrote about some beautiful deep truths in his **Pursuit of God** with reference to the eyes of the believer. Tozer talks about the "gaze of the soul," and defines faith as the gaze of a soul upon a saving God. Faith, then, is a "redirecting of our sight, a getting out of the focus of our own vision and getting God into focus." Tozer explains how sin twists our vision inward; unbelief puts self where God should be. Faith looks out instead of in. Faith also looks up!

The New Covenant scriptures encourage believers to look to the person of Yeshua HaMashiach. *"Looking unto Yeshua the author and finisher of our faith."* (Hebrews 12:2 JNT) We must lift our inward eyes to gaze upon the Messiah. This focuses our eyes on the solution to all of life's problems. As we turn our eyes upon Yeshua, He gazes lovingly back at us. As Tozer puts it, "When the eyes of the soul looking out meet the eyes of God looking in, heaven has begun right here on this earth." AMEN.

Over 20 years ago, Jamie wrote a song titled "Look Up and Live!" We are reprinting the lyrics here because in a far less poetic and more down to earth way, they reinforce Tozer's beautiful teaching.

Look Up and Live!

Verse 1: Look DOWN and you'll see dirt and troubles abound.

There's no solution down on the ground. A downward glance will do you in!

Verse 2: Look AROUND and you'll say: "Lord, just look at him!"

That's where real trouble begins. Comparing leads to sin.

Verse 3: Look IN too much and all you'll see is yourself.

Your reaching out will stay on the shelf, when you concentrate on YOU.

Verse 4: Look UP and you'll discover who you are.

You'll see that God has brought you this far, and has a perfect plan for you.

Chorus: Look UP! Let faith arise within you.

Look UP! for God is reaching towards you

Look UP! for your redemption's coming.

Look UP and LIVE!

The Eyes of the Jewish People

The prophet Isaiah said: *"He[God] has blinded their[Israel's] eyes and hardened their heart, lest they should see with their eyes and understand with their heart, lest they should turn, so that I should heal them"* (Isaiah 6:9-10). This verse is repeated twice in the New Covenant (Matthew 13:14, John 12:40). Has God Himself blinded the eyes of His people? Yes. In fact God has given them a *"spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see..."* (Romans 11:8). What could possibly be the reason for this?

One reason is Israel's rebellion. God expressed this truth to the prophet Ezekiel in chapter 12 verse 2: *"...Son of man, you dwell in the midst of a rebellious house, which has eyes to see but does not see, and ears to hear but does not hear; for they are a rebellious house."* The other reason for Israel's blindness is the salvation of the gentiles... *"blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in"* (Romans 11:15).

For the sake of the non-Jews, Jewish eyes have been blinded for a season. However, that season is rapidly drawing to a close. The Jewish people, beloved for the sake of the fathers (Romans 11:28) are "seeing" their Messiah. The eyes of their understanding are being opened. Scales are falling from their eyes. Many Jewish people are receiving a revelation of Yeshua as the Promised One of God. We were so blessed recently during one of the interviews for our upcoming "Fitness" program as we heard for the first time the testimonies of Greg and Bernadette Hershberg. They both had supernatural encounters with Yeshua in Israel. Yeshua appeared to Greg on Mt. Tabor and to Bernadette in the ruins of the synagogue at Capernaum.

Their eyes were opened to see Him in all His glory. They are no longer personal trainers, but rather spiritual trainers, as they lead a Messianic synagogue in Macon, Georgia. Halleluyah!

Our Eyes

All of us, Jew and non-Jew alike, are spiritually blind before we meet the Messiah. We have eyes but we don't see because our hearts are hardened and our spiritual understanding is clouded. We don't realize that we are **lost**, walking in darkness, and actually belong to satan's kingdom where we live as slaves to sin and self. Perhaps **you** are still there. Ask God to open your eyes to the sin in your life and how it separates you from God. Ask God to show you the truth of Messiah and His death for your sin. Complete forgiveness awaits you as you repent and turn from sin to the Holy One of Israel. May your eyes be opened **right now** in Yeshua's Name. Pray with us:

"God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, I want to see you. I want to know you. I acknowledge that my sin separates me from you. Please open my eyes to see the salvation that you promised in Your Word. If Yeshua (Jesus) really is the Messiah, I want to receive Him today. I repent of my sin. I need atonement, forgiveness, relationship and a new beginning. I welcome Your Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh) into my heart. In Yeshua's Name, Amen."

And now our prayer for you: *"May the God of our Lord Yeshua HaMashiach, the Father of glory, give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints..."* (Ephesians 1:17-18).

Yeshua heals eyes

The Lord actually led us to focus on eyes this month as a result of the unusually large number of prayer requests for eyes that came into our office, from poor eyesight, to cataracts, macular degeneration, night blindness, partial blindness, eye infections, etc. As we researched all the Biblical references to eyes (*A-yeen*) we noticed how often Yeshua healed blind eyes. This should not surprise us since He did call Himself the light of the World (John 9:5). We believe that Yeshua still heals eyes today. If you are suffering from an eye illness, we ask our Messiah to touch you right now with the same healing hand that touched the two blind men who followed Him shouting *"Son of David! Take pity on us"* (Matthew 9:27). May your eyes be healed and your vision restored in Yeshua's name!

The Good Eye

A scripture about eyes in the New Covenant is often misunderstood by modern readers. Matthew 6:22-23 says, *"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness."* "Good eye" (*ayin tovah*) and "bad eye" (*ayin ra'ah*) were popular terms in ancient Judaism. If a person had a "good eye," he was generous. If he had a "bad eye," he was stingy. We want to thank you ahead of time for your "good eyes" concerning this ministry. May your generosity result in great light emanating from your life, bringing glory to our Father in Heaven. We have stepped out in faith to produce new *Jewish Jewels* programs, and are believing God to speak to your heart this month to help us as He directs. God bless you!

P.S.

- "Through His Eyes" (CD or Tape) by Messianic vocalist Jonathan Settel will usher you into the presence of our Messiah. Anointed.
- The Pursuit of God by A. W. Tozer is a classic that we have read more than once. The large print version is a blessing. Deep, profound truths abound.
- A 12-month subscription to our newsletter can be your gift to someone who might be blessed by it. Let us know and we'll send a gift card.

Love in Yeshua,

Neil and Jamie