



# ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS

**“WEEPING MAY ENDURE FOR A NIGHT, BUT JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING.” PSALMS 30:5**

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## God’s “Roadmap” for the Middle East & the World

The Middle East cannot afford any more “band aid” solutions. “The Quartet” which includes—the European Union, Russia and the U.N.—have bought Mr. Bush’s “roadmap” as a final solution for Middle East peace. Judging by past record, any “roadmap” they draw likely will be very generous to the Arabs and very demanding of Israel. What will “The Quartet” want? What damaging surgery to the Land of Israel will satisfy them? Time will tell to what lengths God’s People living in God’s Land will be pressed to conform to the world’s vision of peace.

No “roadmap” for regional or world peace will ever compare with the one revealed in the Bible. Yes, it’s for everybody! God’s “Roadmap” for Israel and the whole world is incomparable because there never was nor will be a planner, strategist, architect so wise as our great Creator—the LORD our God.

### **A Highway in the Day of the Lord**

The prophet Isaiah speaking of the Day of the LORD wrote: “In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria....In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless....” (Isaiah 19:23-25)

When Isaiah wrote, Israel had been abused like a doormat between Egypt and As-

syria. But Isaiah the prophet, guided by the Divine Hand, showed us God’s resolution of international conflicts. They would be resolved by God’s providences—not by man’s agreements on paper—not even with handshakes. It is comforting to know that in spite of the scheming of the nations, the destiny of Israel and the world is in God’s hands.

### **The First Peace Plan**

When was the “Good News” for everybody first announced? The Gospel was NOT first preached by the angels to the shepherds when Jesus Christ was born. It was first announced to Abraham. “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘All the nations shall be blessed in you’” (Gal. 3:8 NIV). Yes, Abraham in good faith received God’s commitment to bless all the nations through him and his posterity. “That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore...in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed....” (Gen 22:17-18). The blessing of the seed of Abraham is unalterably linked to the blessing of the all the nations of the earth.

Furthermore, this commitment was renewed by God with Abraham’s son Isaac and grandson Jacob—and was tied in with a Land

agreement. “And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land” (Gen 35:12). Moses spoke to Israel in these same terms: “Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them” (Deut 1:8).

But are the Jewish people now disqualified from this contract promise to Abraham? No, the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were not made on a whim. Apostle Paul affirms that Israel is still “beloved for their fathers’ sakes” (Rom. 11:28). God does not make promises and then renege on those promises as man does. Furthermore, if we as Christians expect God to keep His promises to us, we had best affirm that He intends to keep his promises to the Children of Israel. But when? Christ’s disciples asked their risen Lord, “Will thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6) He did not say, “To Israel? Why them? They rejected me, they are cast off and have no future hope.” No, rather he did say, “It is not for you to know the times and seasons which the Father has put into His power.” He thus clearly indicated that such a restoration was still ahead for Israel—even though it be almost 2,000 years away.

### **Prophetic Time Schedule**

During the recent march of history God has been gathering His ancient people from all over the world to His Land—Israel. Although it has been through “travail” of trouble, the Scriptures reveal how God feels about planting Israel in its own Land again. “Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul....Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them” (Jer. 32:41,42).

Some depict the Israelis as conquering the Land and wresting it from a Palestinian nation. Actually there never was a Palestinian nation. What was there was virtually a barren wasteland

under Ottoman Turkish control until the Jewish people bought land with money and cultivated laboriously. “And fields shall be bought in this land of which you say, 'It is a desolation, without man or beast....Men shall buy fields for money, sign and seal deeds, and call in witnesses in the land of Benjamin...Jerusalem...Judah, in...the hill country, in the...lowland, and in...the Negev; for I will restore their fortunes,' declares the LORD” (Jer. 32:43, 44 NAS). God’s prophetic time schedule is right on time:

- 1878 Peta Tikva—First settlement when Jews allowed to own land again (Isa. 40:1,2; Hos. 2:14,15)
- 1917 Balfour Declaration—Called for creation of a Jewish National Homeland (Luke 21:24)
- 1948 Formation of the modern State of Israel (Amos 9:14,15)
- 1967 Jerusalem’s “Old City” returned to Jewish control (Jer. 30:18)

Now that His people are back in His Land, the nations are again trying to divide it. But God will soon take issue with those nations: “I will enter into judgment against them concerning my inheritance, my people Israel, for they scattered my people among the nations and divided up my land” (Joel 3:2). The Gentile nations which want to divide and partition the inheritance of Israel will be on a collision course according to God’s Roadmap!

### **God’s “Marshall Plan”**

World leaders have proposed many fixes for world crises. Some are noble. Some selfishly motivated. All are inadequate. After the devastation of Europe in World War II, U. S. Secretary of State, George Marshall revealed a Plan to save the wrecked economies of Europe. Marshall understood the connection between economic frustration and explosive discontent. The Marshall Plan actually was somewhat successful in building up Western Europe by dealing with “hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos.” *Somewhat.*

Recently President Bush and his advisors considered a “Marshall Plan” strategy in the “war

on terrorism” and now a similar aid effort for Iraq. What could be done with some of the proposed military budget of almost \$400 billion dollars if it were allocated to improve the health, nutrition, education, child mortality, clean water, etc., etc.? Such a plan might go a long way towards securing the peace and safety of the world community. Yes, this plan *might*....

But only God’s Plan for peace through Christ’s Kingdom will work because it deals not with the symptoms—but wisely with the causes of inequality, greed, suffering and violence. His loving plan will change hearts of stone, to hearts of flesh (Ezek. 11:19). He also has the power and means to implement His plan for peace on earth. Peace on earth will begin with peace in Jerusalem. So God’s people are encouraged to pray for the peace of Jerusalem—as well as for the time when Jerusalem is established in the earth. “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee....I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night....And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth” (Psa. 122:6; .Isa 62:6-7).

### Not Just a Road, but a Highway

God’s road to peace is actually a highway. “And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness” (Isa. 35:8). The health programs on this “highway” will not just be excellent medical care—but will actually restore limbs...eyes...speech. “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of

the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert” (Isa 35:5-6). As far as child mortality—or anybody’s mortality and sorrow for that matter—“The ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa 35:10). Where are the ransomed coming from? “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death....” (Hos. 13:14).

In practical terms, Jerusalem will be the capital of this Kingdom on Earth. All nations—including their kings, presidents, dictators, prime ministers—will have to acknowledge the government in Jerusalem and learn about the God of Jacob. “And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths” (Isa. 2:3). Resources devoted to armaments will be transferred to agriculture. “They shall beat their swords into plowshares...” (Isa. 2:4). God’s Roadmap as described in His Word will lead to a glorious and wonderful destiny for all of earth’s billions. Yes, God’s Roadmap is the solution.



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