



"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."
—Proverbs 14:34

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The Wars of Israel and Judah

The war between Israel and Hezbollah has rolled on for nearly four weeks, and regardless of the proclamations of international politicians, there does not seem to be an end in sight. The nation of Israel cannot afford, from either a humanitarian or geopolitical perspective, to agree to a ceasefire or withdrawal while Hezbollah is still viable. The Iranian- and Syrian-supplied missiles threaten the lives and livelihood of all those in the north, and it is rumored that Hezbollah possesses missiles that can reach to Tel Aviv—Israel's largest population center.

More than that, for decades Israel has fostered the belief among its neighbors that the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) is essentially invincible. The nations that have attacked Israel in the past were soundly repelled, and Israel's historical military success has proved a great deterrent to further military aggression from its neighbors. For Israel to fail in completely demolishing Hezbollah would prove to be a geopolitical disaster and could encourage musings from its "moderate" Arab neighbors that perhaps Israel is not as fearsome as previously believed.

However, leaving present-day geopolitics aside, let us shift our focus to the more accurate lens of biblical history and prophecy. That is, the State of Israel is actually only *part* of Israel—the remains of the southern Kingdom of Judah, to be precise. The Kingdom of Israel—the northern ten tribes—has been scattered throughout Western Europe, North America, South Africa, and Australia. But there is a commonality—a shared foe—throughout the [nations of Israel](#) and Judah: radical Islam. Is it coincidental that the modern descendants of the Israelites are all facing the same enemy?

The modern Israelitish nations are not experiencing total war, nor do they see any real possibility of defeat. Indeed, much of the population of these nations does not even recognize that there *is* a threat (with the exception of modern day-Judah, which has essentially been fighting for its existence since 1947). The nations of Israel, on the whole, do not see a threat from radical Islam. Their dedication to pluralism and multiculturalism welcomes with open arms the very elements that desire to destroy the descendants of God's chosen people, and are now just working out the means.

Who will prevail? [God](#) will, of course. We know from various prophecies that scattered [Israel will be regathered](#) in the Promised Land, and that Israel and Judah—whatever is left of them—will be joined

together once again, and have true worship of God restored to them. The big question, though, is what happens in the meantime.

The record of biblical history underscores the fact that, where God's people are concerned, military might is far less of a factor in the outcome of a war than morality. This is not to say that it is a contest of which nation is "better," but that, when the Israelites are essentially obedient, they fare far better in battles. When Israel's level of morality slips, it is not long before they are defeated in war—sometimes by a nation whose morality is even worse!

This should give us pause as we consider what is presently going on in the nations of Lebanon, Iraq, and Afghanistan, as well as the streets and cities of Europe and Canada that have experienced Islamist violence. On the surface, it does not appear that military defeat is a question in Judah's mind, any more than military defeat of Manasseh—America—seems possible. But how does God look upon His people—these nations that He has divorced but not forgotten? Comparing Israel and Judah with the depravity of Muslim extremists conveniently overlooks what is truly important. The relevant comparison is between the conduct of God's people and God's own law. How do we fare?

There are glimmers of [hope](#) that basic morality may be regaining a few inches of lost ground. The annual "gay pride" parade was cancelled in Jerusalem. At least twenty U.S. states have constitutional amendments to protect traditional marriage, and more than three dozen states have passed laws banning homosexual "marriage." Abortion is on the decline, and more young people are remaining virgins until marriage. Nevertheless, the fact that such ground was lost in the first place, and that traditional morality is now fighting an uphill battle, is what should be keeping the citizens of these nations up at night. Do we still have God's favor? Or will this war between the nations of Israel and militant Islam be the one where, because of our moral decline, God determines that our enemy will win—at least on the battlefield?

God will not allow His people to be entirely destroyed, Iranian and Palestinian desires notwithstanding. A remnant *will* be saved and brought through the time of Jacob's Trouble ([Jeremiah 30:7](#)). The ones who are spared will be those who turn to God and repent. However, the fact that those who survive are referred to as a *remnant* indicates that not many will see the need for [repentance](#). Some have estimated from the prophecies that perhaps only ten percent of greater Israel will be spared. God will determine what the exact number will be, for only He knows the hearts and works of His people, but the thought is—or should be—sobering nonetheless.

The current war in Lebanon may be finished in a few weeks, or it may roll into a regional conflict. It is not inconceivable that the U.S. and Britain could become involved. The cycles of history indicate that the time is ripe for these "Joseph" tribes to undergo their next crisis. Yet, whether the crisis is survived by any or all of the nations of Israel and Judah will not be determined by the number of bombs, tanks, or fighter jets, but by how God judges the spiritual condition of the nations with whom He is still working.

- David C. Grabbe

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by John W. Ritenbaugh

Malachi Martin's book, *The Final Conclave*, claims that, not only are 60% of the College of Cardinals not firm believers, but that 27% are functional but prudent agnostics, hedging their bets. Some of us, facing the stress and uncertainties of the time, may also be going through the motions but losing every vestige of faith. The Day of the Lord, like a claw hammer, has both a business end (return of Christ) and a wrecking end (destruction, mayhem, and tribulation). In this stressful time, we had better have our convictions in order, realizing that not only is God preparing a place for us, He is also preparing us to be conformed to the image of His Son.

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by Charles Whitaker

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