

Light will Overcome the Darkness

The sun rises over Masada

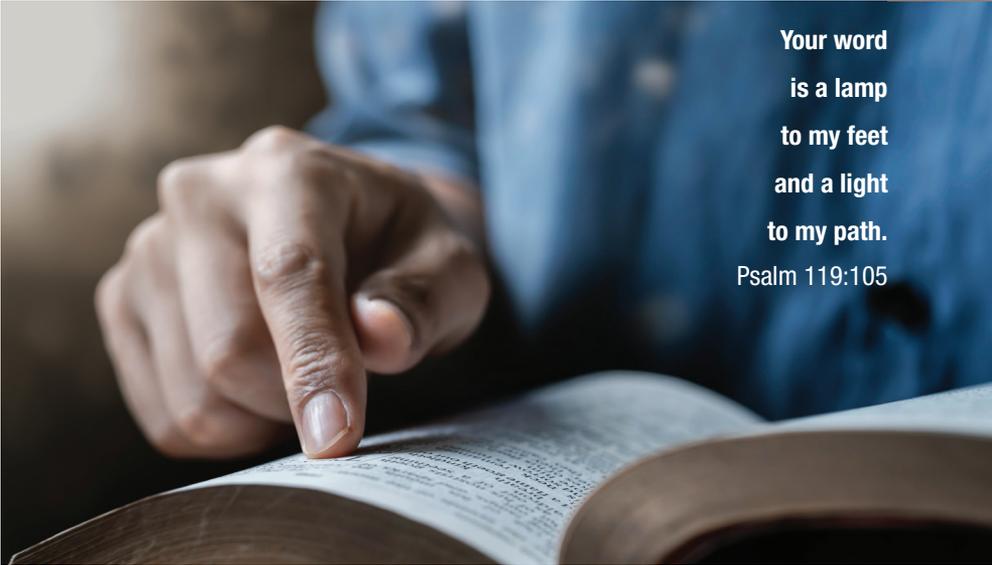
By: Rev. Peter Fast, *International CEO*
Bridges for Peace...Your Israel Connection®

WHAT IS LIGHT? ESSENTIALLY, LIGHT IS THE ABSENCE OF DARKNESS.

Light is a thing, a source, but it becomes noticeable due to the action of pushing back darkness. In classic literature, light is often associated with truth, wisdom, correctness, morality, justice and ethics. Darkness, on the other hand, is equated to evil, wickedness, lewdness, corruption, death and judgment. Good versus evil; order versus chaos. The Bible has much to say about light and darkness. Simply put, God is compared to light. Fire is also a strong biblical motif, both for God's presence and nature, but also for His judgment.

God appeared to Abraham as a smoking oven and burning torch (Gen. 15) to cement His unconditional covenant with the father of the Jews and his descendants—based on God's very character—by passing between the animal parts. Centuries later, God led the Children of Israel in the wilderness as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exod. 13:21). He then descended with fire upon Mount Sinai (Exod. 19:18) in an act of steadfast love (*chesed*) and grace to confirm His covenant with Israel by giving His *Torah* (instructions, contained in Gen.–Deut.) to the nation.

God also used fire to show that He alone is God and cannot be taken lightly. Recall the fire of God which consumed Nadab and Abihu when they offered of strange fire (Lev. 10:1–2) or the Mount Carmel showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:38–40). God sent fire from heaven and ended the competition with judgment and the execution of the 400 Baal prophets. Then there is Revelation 11:5, a prominent passage from the New Testament, which provides an end-times

A close-up photograph of a person's hand pointing to a page in an open book. The hand is in the foreground, and the book is open, showing text on the page. The background is blurred, showing a blue shirt.

**Your word
is a lamp
to my feet
and a light
to my path.**
Psalm 119:105



**“I am
the Light
of the
world...”**

John 8:12a

image of the two witnesses sent by God to preach repentance, who destroy their enemies with fire from their mouths.

From Genesis to Revelation

Genesis 1 opens with God creating the world and pushing back darkness (*choshech*) “over the surface of the deep” (v. 2), which covered a formless, void world. Breaking apart this chaos, God then called forth light (*or*) to appear. The imagery is pregnant with meaning. This was light from the source of God, as the sun had not yet been created. *Or* is special in that it points to linear time where God placed His *moedim* (appointed times or feasts) for His people to gather and meet with Him.

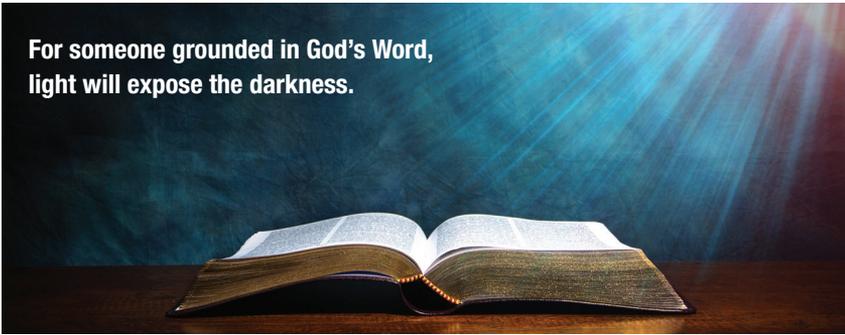
The pattern of light continues in the Bible and Jewish history. There’s the *menorah* (seven-branched candelabra), which lit the Temple, or the story of *Hanukkah* (Festival of Light) with the lampstand burning miraculously for eight days until more sacred oil could be provided. In both instances, light and flame are interwoven with themes such as God who illuminates our world or good triumphing over evil. Fire represented the presence of God, the eternal flame and His dwelling among His people. “*For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God*”

(Deut. 4:24). For Christians, thinking of light stirs up the words of Jesus (Yeshua) in John 8:12b, “*I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.*”

The Psalms are full of light imagery. We can take great comfort in God and His Word being a light in our lives, especially during these dark days as evil swirls about, seemingly unchecked. Psalm 18:28 states, “*For You light my lamp; the LORD my God illumines my darkness.*” Psalm 27:1 says, “*The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the defense of my life; whom shall I dread?*” Psalm 112:4 declares, “*Light arises in the darkness for the upright; He is gracious and compassionate and righteous.*” God’s Word is also seen as a torch, “*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*” (Ps. 119:105).

Psalm 139:11–12 reveals an interesting twist. “*If I say, ‘Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, and the light around me will be night,’ even the darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.*”

**For someone grounded in God's Word,
light will expose the darkness.**



Although we may at times feel overwhelmed by darkness and the toils it brings, God is not confined to the effects of darkness. In fact, His nature penetrates it. He cannot be overwhelmed or conquered by darkness. On the contrary, His supremacy and sovereignty essentially counter any form of darkness so that it has absolutely no effect.

In the New Testament, the theme of light and darkness is a constant pattern. From Matthew to Revelation, the symbolism of light is driven home with the truth that we serve an eternal God and that in Him is perfection, holiness and purity, which carries forward the Hebraic understanding of light and fire from the *Tanakh* (Gen.–Mal.).

Matthew 6:22–23 states, *“The eye is the lamp of the body; so then, if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!”* Read together with the following verse, the analogy is that one cannot serve two masters. In this context, it is either God (light) or wealth (darkness). 1 Peter 2:9b declares that believers have been called *“out of darkness into His [God’s] marvelous light.”* 1 John 1:5b states, *“God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.”* John also warns, *“The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now”* (1 John 2:9).

Paul cautioned the believers in Corinth, *“Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men’s hearts; and then each man’s praise will come to him from God”* (1 Cor. 4:5). In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul reminded them to beware of *“false apostles”* and *“deceitful workers”* whose disguise and deception came from evil often masquerading as light. *“No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light”* (2 Cor. 11:14).

To spot and discern evil can sometimes be complicated, but for someone grounded in God’s Word, light will expose the darkness. *“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that*

is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success” (Josh. 1:8).

Seekers of the Light

To love and follow God means we should be seekers of the light. We do not compromise and give a foothold to the darkness. We do not base our faith on what’s popular but on God’s Word and His holy nature and character of faithfully keeping covenant with Israel and with us.

One of the most sobering experiences of darkness and evil I’ve ever witnessed occurred on October 7, 2023. On that day, all hell was unleashed as Hamas, the terrorist organization ruling the Gaza Strip, attacked Israel on *Simchat Torah* (Rejoicing in God’s Word). On that day—while my family huddled in a bomb shelter along with the rest of Israel as thousands of rockets rained down on communities, towns and cities—over 1,200 people in Israel were brutally murdered in the most demonic, torturous and bloodthirsty way. Moreover, 240 people, including infants, toddlers, children and the elderly, were kidnapped and dragged into Gaza as captives.



October 7, 2023 (Black Sabbath)

October 7 sparked a war against Hamas that is ongoing as I’m writing this teaching letter. However, the brutal attack also set off a chain reaction of deplorable hatred for Jews and Israel around the world. Although anti-Semitism has existed ever since God established His covenant with Abraham and his descendants, this time it felt different.

Hatred of the Jewish people is pulsating at a level I’ve never experienced. One could argue that the brazen animosity and hostility on social media and college campuses have been growing worse in recent years, but now things seem to be boiling over. Jew hatred is rife on the streets of New York, Paris, London, Toronto and other major cities across the world in a frightening way. The darkness is trying to swallow these cities whole.

People shouted, “Gas the Jews!” in Sydney, Australia, and at the University of New York, Jewish students were forced to barricade themselves in a library in terror from seething mobs baying for their blood. In Los Angeles, a pro-Palestinian rioter beat an elderly Jewish man over the head with a megaphone at a Israel rally. The man later succumbed to his wounds. Israeli flags are burned or torn down at the UN headquarters, while Hamas and Hezbollah flags are flown proudly. Over 300,000 people recently marched in London, swarming over the Thames and surrounding the palace of West Minster, carrying hideous anti-Semitic signs and chanting, “From the river (the Jordan River) to the sea (the Mediterranean Sea), Palestine will be free!” This is a war cry to murder all Jews and destroy the State of Israel.

I have spent my life repeatedly hearing, “How could so many Christians remain silent during the Holocaust?” or “Why didn’t the Church do more to help the Jews during the 1930s and 40s?” For decades, people have declared in solidarity with the Jewish people, “Never Again!” And now, I have watched in real-time as much of the Western Church has chosen to embrace self-censorship, indifference and the excuse, “We must remain neutral!” The grim reality of the “neutrality” excuse is that when confronted by evil, it reduces the neutral party to being insignificant and unable to change anything. Choosing neutrality when we are called to take a stand, squelches the light. It is the enemy of the call for just action and paves way for darkness to grow. The “silent majority” did nothing to stop

Over 300,000 pro-Palestinian protesters march in London



Pro-Israel demonstration in Warsaw, Poland

Bridges for Peace donated four bomb shelters to a community in the south to keep civilians safe.





or slow down the rise of Nazi Germany and it will do nothing to reduce the fomenting hatred of the anti-Israel mob and the barbarism of Hamas. Neutrality only beckons to Hamas to commit more October 7 attacks, which it has already proudly stated to be its future goal. An attributed, yet disputed quote of Edmund Burke rings true: “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing!”

We cannot be neutral in the face of evil. Is God neutral? No! He opposes evil and vows to destroy it. We must oppose it, fight it and stand against it. This is not a call for anarchy or to stoop to the level of the enemies of God (Ps. 83). We must seek truth and justice—by God’s standards—and live it.

We must be a light wherever we go. However, light also goes on the offensive to dispel darkness. A neutral person is a stunted, dwindling light that in the delusional effort of not rocking the boat, buries his or her head in the sand while the world burns around them.

I am proud to stand with Bridges for Peace in our practical expression of seeking the light, pouring love into the shattered lives of Israelis and bringing healing. I am proud to count myself among the millions of Christians all over the world who stand with Israel because they want to love what God loves. I am proud to stand with Christians who recognize evil and speak up with a loud voice to counter Jew hatred. I am proud to stand with Christians who count the cost and live out every aspect of their faith instead of deluding themselves with the lie, “It will all blow over” or “It isn’t my fight.” I am proud to stand with Christians who link arms with their Jewish brothers and sisters in the face of people who spit on them and curse them. We need to push back the darkness. We must understand and join in God’s plans and purposes for Israel, for they are intertwined with His calling on our lives. Let’s continue to be seekers of the light!

“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!” (Isa. 5:20).



“Never Again” is NOW!

“The only thing
necessary for
the triumph of evil
is for good men
to do nothing!”

—Edmund Burke

Scripture from New American Standard Bible

TERMINOLOGY:

Many of our readers are seasoned supporters of Israel while others are just beginning to understand the importance of standing with God's chosen nation; some prefer the use of Hebrew names and terms, while others are comfortable with more traditional Christian terminology. Because we want to show respect to all of our readers while providing an enjoyable educational experience, we are making every effort to use both terms whenever possible. The following are some of the most common examples:

- Jesus (Yeshua)
- *Tanakh* (Old Testament or OT)—*Tanakh* is an acronym used in Judaism which stands for *Torah*, *Neviim* or Prophets and *Ketuvim* or Writings.
- *Torah* (Gen.—Deut.)

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A higher purpose.*

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