

The Final Stretch – A Line in the Sand – Who Will Cross?

As I write this, there are eight days until the “Stand with Israel” rally. It has been quite an effort to shape this into a cohesive and effective event. Therefore, I want to reflect a bit and make a final “appeal” to those who might read this but are still skeptical as to the rally’s intent or content.

First - a news flash - it has been just announced that the Palestinian leader(s) are going to submit a resolution calling for the establishment of a “Palestinian State” around the 20 September period. What will happen as a result can only be guessed by even the finest minds. Many knew this was coming but now it is official.

In light of this, the time is even more urgent to declare publically that the Jewish people have a biblical and historical right to live in The Land promised to them. This must be made absolutely clear to all. With that right comes the need to live there in peace. Read the words of our own Constitution:

*“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable **rights** that among these are **Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.**”*

This is what this rally is all about! If we believe what is written above then why does it not also apply to Israel?

Rumors that the “rally” is linked to events that Glenn Beck is having are simply not true. The day was chosen because of a week of heightened interest about Israel throughout the world! The “viewing” from Jerusalem by the Glenn Beck organization will be seen all over the earth on that same day but is in no way connected with our rally!

Let me ask you this. If your house is burning down and your family is trapped inside and Glenn Beck drives up with an entire fire department and says, “My fire engine can put those flames out in one minute” would you turn to him and say, “thanks, but no thanks” because of his politics or view? Of course you would not! If Glenn Beck wants to go to Israel and publically proclaim the right of Israel to live in their land in peace then I say, “Thank you Mr. Beck!” Does Israel have that many friends that so many can be so choosy? If they are for us then we need to simply say thank you to them!

What about the “Christians” you might be asking yourself? After all, they are only doing this because they want to “convert” the Jews or maybe it is something about their “eschatological views.” Again, these are rumors that are not founded on truth. I would be the first to agree that “Christians” have a horrible history toward the Jews in the last 2000 years. However, that is changing! If you want to know if the “Christian” members of VISION are genuine, ask any Jewish member of VISION. For instance, the organization CUFI (Christians United for Israel) now has 800,000 members standing tall and publically supporting Israel. Do you happen to know of any other pro-Israel organization that size? For sure Israel’s opponents are large in number and well organized!

Maybe it is about politics. However, VISION is non-political and does not endorse any politician or political view. You might be surprised that we have a multiplicity of political views. These we set aside to come together. Nevertheless – why then are politicians coming to speak at the “rally?” We sent out requests to all the politicians – left, right, upside-down, etc. – if they will publically announce their support for Israel then so be it! Big names attract media and people. This results in more hearing the message!

Another statement – VISION intentionally invited certain leaders and snubbed others! We only have 2.5 hours once the introduction and music presentation is done and frankly, there is not time to have everyone speak. The rally is more than just speeches. There are also numerous organizations represented. The task of making it all click together is difficult. There was never any intention of slighting anyone of importance.

To quote famous saying from Rabbi Hillel:

*“If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am for myself, what am I? **And, if not now, when?** (Pirkei Avot 1:15)*

This is not about individuals but about Israel. So if you feel slighted – show up anyway and stand and make your **“yes to Israel”** voice heard! **If not now, when?**

A famous American write and philosopher, Edmund Burke, is attributed with saying:

*“All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men **to do nothing**”*

Having said this I would like to close with a short story. My first visit to Yad Va’shem (Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem) was in the late 70’s. The effect of one’s journey through the museum leaves one almost breathless – the extent and tragedy of the Shoah is of epic proportions that cannot be describe in words. When I finished my visit, I went outside to compose myself and to recount on what I had just witnessed. There I encountered an elderly man sitting on a bench. His face was swollen with tears. I ask him if he was OK? Fortunately, he spoke English but his accent I recognized as German. He began to tell about living in Munich during *“Kristallnacht”* in 1938. He went on saying how his life-long, best friend was his neighbor and Jewish. That night the thugs came for his neighbor and hauled him and his family off to never be heard of again. I asked him, *“What did you do?”* The man responded, as a copious gush of tears cascaded off his cheek to the ground, and said these words that are etched in my mind forever:

*“I shut the window-blind, turned around and **DID NOTHING!**”*

Please join us. Step across the line! If you love The Land of Israel and the right of the Jewish people to have it as their homeland and to live in that land in peace - lay down our differences and declare with us in ONE VOICE:

“NEVER AGAIN – NOT ON MY WATCH!”



“am yisrael chai”