

Anne Graham Lotz: Through My Cancer, God Is Giving Me a Message for Israel

"The word of the Lord came to me again: 'What do you see?'" (Jer. 1:13).

I'm sitting here in a snowstorm two weeks before Christmas, in between back-to-back chemo treatments, wondering ... what do I "see"?

At 70 years of age, why did I come down with cancer? My cancer is potentially fatal. It struck swiftly and unexpectedly. It required immediate, prompt, drastic surgery and follow-up treatments that include chemotherapy and radiation. Through our prayers and God's answers, I believe I will be victorious over it. But the word of the Lord has come to me, "Anne, what do you see?"

As I have contemplated the answer in light of my present circumstances, I have wondered ... *Could it be there is more to my cancer at the age of 70 than just a random coincidence?*

In the Bible, God often had His spokespersons live out the message He gave them ... *before* they delivered the message to the people. For example:

—Hosea was instructed to marry a woman who then became unfaithful to him as he lived out in a very personal way the broken heart of God over unfaithful Israel (Hos. 1:11-14).

—Jeremiah was told to purchase a linen belt, wear it, bury it, then dig it up when it was ruined and useless to live out a demonstration that God had bound Jerusalem to Himself, but she would not listen to Him, so He would ruin her and render her useless (Jer. 13:1-11).

–Isaiah lived out his own vision of the Lord, high and seated on the throne (Isa. 6:1) before he revealed that God’s people would also see the Lord. “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light has shined” (Isa. 9:2). “For unto us a child is born ... And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6).

For years, I have believed that my life was entwined with the nation of Israel. I was born one week to the day after her rebirth. We are both 70 years old. Could it be that God has given me a message for her that I am living out in my own experience? This is what I seem to see.

In Israel’s 70th year:

–Just as my cancer is a potentially fatal disease, is Israel also in danger of being attacked in a potentially fatal way?

–Just as my cancer struck suddenly and unexpectedly through no fault of my own, will Israel also be struck by her enemies suddenly and unexpectedly through no fault of her own?

–Just as I have not been immediately and quickly delivered from cancer, will Israel also not be quickly delivered from her enemies as she was in the 1967 war?

–Just as I am having to fight the cancer with chemotherapy cell by cell, will Israel also have to fight her enemies region by region, village by village, street by street, house by house?

–Just as I have had to turn to God to be my defender, refuge and strength throughout this cancer journey, is it time also for Israel to turn to the God of her fathers, to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? The God of Moses and Joshua and David? Now, before it’s too late.

The warning I feel deep within is that Israel is in danger of a surprise attack in this, her 70th year. This is the message God has placed on my heart for her:

*Yet even now, declares the Lord, return to Me with all your heart,
and with fasting and with weeping and with mourning. Rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and He relents from punishing. Who knows? He might turn aside and relent, and He might leave behind a blessing (Joel 2:12-14a).*

And this is the message God has placed on my heart for you and me, for God's people. It's time, once again, to: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'May they prosper who love you! Peace be within your walls and security within your towers!'" (Ps. 122:6-7).

It's time to pray for Jerusalem and for the whole house of Israel. If you agree, please join me in prayer:

Our Father in heaven. God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are the eternal I AM. The one who is age to age the same. There is no shadow of turning with You. You are fully present in every generation—past, present and future. You are the Almighty. Your power has not been deleted or depleted over the millennia of human history.

We know that You so loved the world that You gave us heaven's treasure when You sent Your only Son to die, so that anyone and everyone who places their faith in Him will not perish but have everlasting life. Yet we also know that Your great heart of love still longs to pour out Your blessing on the city and the people that You have uniquely chosen as Your own: Jerusalem. The house of Israel. The Jews.

Your people and the city that bears Your name are surrounded

by a vast multitude of hostile, evil men seeking to kill and destroy. Men who behead those who refuse to embrace their evil dogma, who bury alive those who refuse to submit to their will, who crucify those who are identified with Your Son. And now these demonic forces are on the verge of being equipped with nuclear weapons and with WMDs. They are tunneling under Israel's borders, funneling in their weapons and terrorists, ready to rise up and slaughter the innocent. Your people are subjected to the continuing barrage of enemy missiles and fiery parachutes that destroy farms and families, communities and children, while shattering peace and serenity.

One ceasefire after another promises peace, but when Israel's land is divided and surrendered for peace, when people cry out for peace, peace—there is no peace. Are You not the God who rules over all the nations? Power and might are in Your hand, and no one can withstand You. You are the defender of the weak. You are our refuge and strength. An ever-present help in times of trouble (Ps. 46:1).

Hear us, great Jehovah God. We are compelled to pray for Your people because they are facing their enemies without the strength, wisdom, peace, comfort, security and hope that You reserve for those who are indwelt by Your Spirit through faith in Your Son, Jesus. They have no deep, blessed assurance that their sins are forgiven, that eternal life is theirs and that a heavenly home is waiting to welcome them. We are compelled to pray because:

—You have promised that You will give Your people a new heart and put a new spirit within them; that You will remove their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh (Ezek. 11:19).

—You have promised that in the very last days, You will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication (Zech. 12:10-12).

–You have promised that You will open the eyes of the spiritually blind, and they would look on You, the One they have pierced (Acts 26:18, Zech. 12:10).

–You have promised that all of Israel, tribe by tribe, clan by clan, family by family, will mourn for their sin of rebellion and rejection of their Messiah (Zech. 12:11-14).

–You have promised that on that day of national mourning and repentance, all of Israel will be saved. That the deliverer will come from Zion; that You will turn godlessness away from Jacob (Rom. 11:26-27).

–You have promised that You will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and You will cleanse them (Hos. 14:4).

–You have promised that they will be Your people, and You will be their God (Ezek. 37:23).

–You have promised that You will make an everlasting covenant of peace with them (Ezek. 37:26).

–You have promised that one day, and we believe soon, You will set aside 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel who have been redeemed and on whose foreheads You write Your name, to be proclaimers of the gospel to the whole world (Rev. 7:1-4, 14:1-5).

–You have promised that You will go out and fight against the nations that come against Your people, that You will set Your feet on the Mount of Olives once again, that You will be King over the whole earth (Zech. 14:3-4, 9).

O Abba Father! We do not ask for what we want or what we hope. We are asking You to do what You have said! You are a great covenant-keeping God. You do not mock Your children. You keep Your word. So, be a wall of fire around Jerusalem. Cause Your power and glory in her midst to return her to You with all her heart. For the glory of Your great name, the

Prince of Peace, Yeshua the Messiah, Amen. {eoa}

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