

The Red Sea Covenant

THE CONTEXT FOR THE RED SEA COVENANT

In April of 1992, about a dozen YWAM leaders, forming the International Executive Committee, gathered together in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. At that time YWAM had only a limited ministry among Muslims. A year earlier at the International Strategy Conference in Iguazu Falls, Argentina, God had birthed in Lynn Green’s heart the vision for a Reconciliation Walk which would retrace the route of the First Crusade, asking forgiveness for wrongs committed against Jews and Muslims in the name of Christianity during the Crusades, and for misrepresenting Jesus and the Cross.

Just a few weeks before this meeting in the Middle East, Gary Tissingh had an accident which resulted in the loss of sight in one eye. Tom Hallas – who also has sight in only one eye – was also present at these meetings. These personal physical needs caught the attention of the group in the place of prayer. The Spirit led them to reflect on the fact that many have come into that part of the world with only one eye for the Jews or only one eye for the Arabs. But if we wanted to reflect His heart of unconditional love for all peoples we needed to pray that we would have a two-eyed approach, a healthy, wholesome, inclusive approach, that would not exclude anyone from God’s purposes. He underlined in prayer that any love that is limited by some human divide is not God’s love. His love is limitless.

Although the words of the document do not reflect a direct commitment to the first element of our foundational covenant, the Vision of the Waves, the fruit of what emerged from this time certainly was evidence of new missional innovations. One of the concrete initiatives that was pioneered as a result of this covenant was the launch of the [30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World](#) movement. Another was the Reconciliation Walk, a three-year trek from Cologne, Germany to Jerusalem which began in 1996. Both Jewish and Muslim communities were touched in extraordinary ways through this act of contrition.

The document’s call “to keep our vision whole, seeing both Jews and Arabs as God’s beloved creation” was exemplary of how we must embrace all peoples on every side of historic divides. What was true of this particular divide in the Middle East would serve to inform our attitude as we approached other binary conflicts: Japanese-Korean; Armenian-Turkish; Hutu-Tutsi, etc. Instead of siding with any one side of an ethnic, national or linguistic divide, we were to embrace the attitude of all and every, seeking to be God’s agents of reconciliation and redemption across every line that would otherwise separate us and limit our vision.

THE RED SEA COVENANT (April, 1992)

The International Executive Committee of Youth With A Mission met in the Middle East in April of 1992. The Lord spoke forcefully to us that He wanted us as a mission to be more involved in the Muslim world. In one prayer time, God broke into our time of intercession with unexpected direction to call together the leaders of the mission so that we might humble ourselves before the Lord. This came to us so unexpectedly, and with such a sense of God’s presence, that we felt we were to “drive a stake in the ground” to claim what God had done in our hearts. We decided to give no room to the enemy to undermine God’s direction to us or to place doubts in our hearts. We called this response to the Lord our Red Sea Covenant.

While we gathered in several prayer times for the Muslim world, God spoke to us (through Ezekiel 47) of new depths of anointing He wants to bestow upon us, giving the clear impression that this is but a first step in an era-defining outpouring of His spirit on our mission.

He galvanized us with Isaiah 19, which seemed to indicate that at least one aspect of His dealing with our mission was to happen in the city of Jerusalem. A strong sense of our deep need of spiritual preparation was expressed in our meeting. God spoke to us about our need to see clearly, with both eyes so to speak. It became obvious that we were not to participate in the acrimony that exists between Christians, Arabs, and Jews.

God spoke to us to call a time of thirty days of focused fasting and prayer for the Muslim world. He emphasized to us the importance of public repentance for the Crusades and the great offense they have caused.

In order to seal what God spoke to us as a mission on behalf of the Muslim world, we felt it was appropriate to make a formal commitment to God to be known as the Red Sea Covenant, and to invite all who will to sign this covenant.

We therefore do solemnly resolve before God that we will:

- Actively pursue the new level of anointing and enabling which God wants to pour out upon us.
- Submit to any spiritual discipline He might require of us, such as fasting, prayer, and repentance.
- Gather at the times and in the places which He indicates in order to seek Him together toward these purposes.
- Be careful to keep our vision whole, seeing both Jews and Arabs as God’s beloved creation.
- Embrace the vast Muslim world in our hearts, seeking from God the anointing, wisdom, power, and strategies needed to carry our part of His great plan of redemption for those under the influence of Islam.
- Believe God for the establishment of His kingdom throughout the world of peoples under the influence of Islam, and be more impressed with God than the difficulties involved.
- Exercise leadership in calling and mobilizing our organization to receive God’s anointing and enabling power to reach the Muslim peoples of the world.

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