

# Exile & the Prophetic: Images from the New Diaspora

Marc H. Ellis

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I have been traveling to Cape Canaveral and taking photographs on the beach since I was a child. So when I returned to the Cape to live a few years ago, I resumed my avocation. In the intervening years I have been a theologian and a public spokesperson for the renewal of Jewish ethical life in the face of the challenges presented by Jewish behavior in Israel, especially toward the Palestinians. For most of my life I balanced my avocation and vocation but then, lo and behold, the ever-infamous Ken Starr became president of my university. What this says about the future of Higher Education is obvious. The result was predictable. Thus I retired early and began to live fulltime at the Cape. These last years have been a time of soul-searching, reevaluation and growth. Seeking justice and standing in the line of the prophetic tradition I inherit as a Jew is, for me, a no-brainer. Where else can a Jew stand? Still the consequences of speaking truth to power are difficult to live with. Though known for their thundering judgments, the Biblical prophets were individuals with feelings and needs. Today we are witnessing an explosion of the prophetic in our time. We experience the prophets as living breathing individuals who, like other human beings, want justice and peace, beauty and harmony, love and affection. Wherever we live, whatever faith or culture we come from, to embody the prophetic means exile. My story is part of a larger story. If you're reading these words, no doubt this is part of your story, too. Exiles usually think they are alone but I envision exiles as part of an evolving global community, the New Diaspora. The New Diaspora is the community exiles around the world are part of. For even if the exile's home is no longer the mainstream of their religious communities, cultures and nations, exiles aren't homeless. Our exilic home is with one another. Though taken only with an iPhone and for my own enjoyment, others have encouraged me to publish my photographs.

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