

Standing with Israel

What Does It Mean to Stand with Israel?

We live in a sobering moment in history. It calls us, as believers in Jesus Christ, to take a stand with Israel. The war in 2023, provoked by the deadly October 7 terror attack on Israel, continues to escalate to multi-fronts in Israel and throughout the region. While the global media assaults readers with reports of dangerous Jewish-Palestinian relations, antisemitism is on the rise globally.

Israel's very existence symbolizes the dichotomy of "possessing the land" amid jaundiced neighbors. Several years ago, the West heralded the Arab Spring as the dawning of democracy in nations ruled by tyrannous dictators. Nevertheless, the fruit of those political uprisings has been anything but freedom and stability.

For Israel, it simply increased the shared nightmare most Jews live with each day. That they are staring down the barrel of a gun, no matter which direction they turn.

Tragically, we'd prefer to argue over the differences between supporting Israel as a state versus supporting the Jewish people, rather than stand up for those whom God has called His people (Joel 2:18; 3:2; Jer. 50:6-7).

Joel 2:18 AMPC

18 Then was the Lord jealous for His land and had pity on His people.

Joel 3:2 AMPC

2 I will gather all nations and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and there will I deal with and execute judgment upon them for [their treatment of] My people and of My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations and [because] they have divided My land.

Jeremiah 50:6-7 AMPC

6 My people have been lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray [to favorite places of idolatry] on mountains [that seduce]. They have gone from [one sin to another] mountain to hill; they have forgotten their [own] resting-place.

7 All who found them devoured them; and their adversaries said, We are not guilty, because they have sinned against the Lord [and are no longer holy to Him], their true habitation of righteousness and justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers.

Why Standing with Israel Matters So Much

As Christians, we know who will return to reign physically over this global focal point. Even though this region has been dominated with strife and violence since the days of Abraham. Why, then, should believers be so concerned over such a tiny speck of land? What does it really matter? What does the Bible say about standing with Israel?

One of Satan's greatest tools is to minimize or negate the role Israel plays today. It keeps the Western church in the dark concerning God's end-time plan for our world.

Some within the church disregard Israel's crisis in favor of the Palestinian plight (whom they argue have equal rights as "sons of Abraham"). Meanwhile, others have gone so far as to adopt a replacement theology perspective.

Replacement theology believes that the church, through Jesus Christ, has replaced Israel when it comes God's purpose, plan and promises. But followers of this theory disregard much of what the Bible says about standing with Israel.

So, Why Stand with Israel Today?

All of these viewpoints are not only misguided. They also come at the expense of Israel at a time when the church is called to be her strongest ally amid an emergence of nations possessing a demonically driven desire to see the Jewish people eradicated.

Given this, let's get a few foundational things straight. Let's look at what the Bible says about standing with Israel.

Israel is a land about which God says uniquely, prophetically and repeatedly in the Bible, "This is Mine". (Joel 1:6; Zech. 2:5-7; Gen. 35:10-15). Also, God refers to Israel as He does to no other land on earth – He raises Israel to be a light to the Gentiles.

Joel 1:6 AMPC

6 For a [heathen and hostile] nation [of locusts, illustrative of a human foe] has invaded My land, mighty and without number; its teeth are the teeth of a lion, and it has the jaw teeth of a lioness.

Zechariah 2:5-7 AMPC

5 For I, says the Lord, will be to her a wall of fire round about, and I will be the glory in the midst of her.

6 Ho! ho! [Hear and] flee from the land of the north, says the Lord, and from the four winds of the heavens, for to them have I scattered you, says the Lord.

7 Ho! Escape to Zion, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon!

Genesis 35:10-15 AMPC

10 Again God said to him, Your name is Jacob [supplanter]; you shall not be called Jacob any longer, but Israel shall be your name. So He called him Israel [contender with God].

11 And God said to him, I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall come from you and kings shall be born of your stock;

12 The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and to your descendants after you I will give the land.

13 Then God ascended from him in the place where He talked with him.

14 And Jacob set up a pillar (monument) in the place where he talked with [God], a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink offering on it and he poured oil on it.

15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God had talked with him Bethel [house of God].

In the Words of Jesus

What does the Bible say about standing with Israel in the New Testament? Perhaps the most pointed statement regarding the importance of the Jews is from the lips of our Lord and Savior Himself. In His conversation with the Samaritan woman, recorded in John 4:1-26, Jesus is very definitive: “Salvation is of the Jews” (v. 22).

John 4:22 AMPC

22 You [Samaritans] do not know what you are worshiping [you worship what you do not comprehend]. We do know what we are worshiping [we worship what we have knowledge of and understand], for [after all] salvation comes from [among] the Jews.

With these words He categorically points to the pathway which brings to earth the entirety of God’s program of redemption. His Person’s presence becomes this ultimate path.

Further, the church at its inception was virtually entirely Jewish. And it remained so until the gospel began to spread. Ultimately the gospel spread to Antioch, where the first Gentile congregation began. From there, the gospel spread into all the world.

Israel, Gentiles, and the Church

In Romans 9-11, the apostle Paul deals specifically with the question of the Jews’ role in God’s providence and purpose.

Within the whole of the Bible, these three chapters virtually stand alone as an elaboration of the theology of God's dealing with Jews.

The Jews were the first fruit, the first people (through Abraham) to understand a covenant God. Then, they relayed the riches of that truth to the world, and through their agency the Messiah came into the world.

The Word of God calls Jews the "root" and Gentiles the "branches" (Rom. 11:16-27). We're reminded that while "because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith," we are not to become haughty but to fear: "For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either" (vv. 20-21).

When the fullness of the Gentiles is completed, "all Israel will be saved" (v. 26)—that is, the present Church Age, for those who have the obedience/faith of Abraham. Yet, we are not to be passive in the face of prophecy. Our calling is to pray with passion, to intercede and to minister according to the words of the Savior. Who also said it is not our task to speculate when the end will be. It is our responsibility to do "kingdom business" until He comes (Luke 19:13).

Eight Biblical Reasons to Stand With Israel

This is not about politics; this is about the Word of God. This is what the Bible says about standing with Israel. But the political ramifications are extremely dramatic. Accordingly, it is critical that believers understand the specific reasons for why we should stand with Israel today.

1) Divine Order

Understanding the basis of the attention we give to the Jews has to do with understanding God's divine order and things He has said. This involves both a people and a land (the latter of which we will cover shortly in another reason).

Abraham and the Beginning

Remember, the Lord first selected a people. He began by selecting a man named Abraham. The Lord said that through Abraham's seed (in relationship with his wife, Sarah, giving birth to the promised child, Isaac), all the nations would be blessed. Through this people, every human being would have access to the divine blessing of Almighty God (Genesis 12:3).

Genesis 12:3 AMPC

3 And I will bless those who bless you [who confer prosperity or happiness upon you] and [a]curse him who curses or uses insolent language toward you; in you will all the families and kindred of the earth be blessed [and by you they will bless themselves].

Upon Jesus' return to earth, the Lord will judge nations and deal with them for their decisions, just as He does individuals. Yet He makes a specific promise of judgment, of being either blessed or cursed, related to Abraham's seed. It's vital that we see this relates not only to a people (Jews), but also to a land (Israel).

What the Bible Says about Standing with Israel

God chose the Israelites to be the vessels for four overarching things:

i. The Adoption

God's divine choice of the seed of Abraham as a people (Romans 9:4-5).

ii. The Glory

The manifest presence of God revealing Himself.

iii. The Covenants

The commitments that God makes. These are evident in three forms through Scripture:

The Abrahamic Covenant. In this foundational covenant, God essentially told Abraham, “I will give you a people and a land, and through this seed the nations of the earth will be blessed” (Gen. 17:2-8).

The Mosaic Covenant. Through Moses, God offered the revelation of the Law, given as a teaching means to lead us to Christ: redemption through the blood of the Lamb (Gal. 3:19-29).

The New Covenant. In Jeremiah and Ezekiel, God says in words almost parallel: “For the time will come that I will take My Law and I will make a new covenant with you, and I will put My Spirit within you” (Jer. 31:31-33; Ezek. 36:27).

iv. The Greatest Gift

The wonder of the gift of Jesus to mankind. John 3:16 explains that “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” He gave Him through the Jews, and He came as a Jew. Jesus Himself, speaking to the woman of Samaria, said, “Salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22). Scripture speaks to us very clearly: We’re dealing with the root of everything that has to do with the revelation of God to humankind. Today’s proof exists today in the Jews as a people and in the fact of their national recovery (Ezek. 37).

2) Spiritual Link

Our place in God’s present order inextricably links us with the Jews as a people. And thereby also to the land of Israel, according to God’s Word. When we put our faith in the Redeemer who came through the Jews, we enter into a line of those who have trusted God according to His revealed grace and purpose.

Scripture declares that, spiritually speaking, when you receive the Lord, you inherit the Jewish legacy (Rom. 2:28-29, Gal. 3:26-29). If you are a believer, you cannot be consistent with the whole of Scripture and take a passive position toward the Jews and Israel.

As Christians, we stand with Israel, because they are forever linked with the spiritual promises of God. We have been grafted in and our Messiah brought us closer to Israel, for His name sake.

3) God's Promises Over the Land

When we talk about Israel, we are dealing with two aspects of it. It is a piece of property that God has made pronouncements about. This is God's people, and He gave the land to them.

God has made unique declarations regarding the land of Israel:

Leviticus 25:23—The land is the Lord's land, and it is His to assign and dispose of.

Deuteronomy 32:43—"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people ... He will provide atonement for His land and His people."

2 Chronicles 7:20—God says, "[If the people violate Me], I will uproot them from My land which I have given them."

Psalms 85:1-2— The Psalmist says the Lord has been favorable to Israel's land, He has forgiven the iniquity of the people and covered all their sin.

Isaiah 8:8—This land belongs to Father God, and it is the land of His Messiah.

Jeremiah 2:7—The Lord tells the people there will come the loss—the destruction—of Jerusalem, because the people defiled the land and made God's heritage an abomination.

Ezekiel 38:16—God is speaking to people in the end times who rise up against Israel, and He is speaking of a confrontation that will take place in His land.

Joel 1:6; 2:18; 3:2—Three times in this book, the land is referred to as belonging to the Lord.

Hosea 9:3—The prophet speaks of the scattering of Israel.

Zechariah 9:16—God promises to “save them [Israel] in that day.”

Not only does this land belong to God, but also, He has committed it to Abraham and his offspring via Isaac forever (Gen. 17:7-8). Additionally, Isaiah 54:8-10 reaffirms this. The loss of governance by Israel through sin and dispersion has not altered God’s announced commitment to make it theirs forever. If you doubt this, read Ezekiel 37.

4) Media Misrepresentation

Virtually every news report on the conflict involving Israel today presents Israel as the aggressor, notwithstanding the fact that Palestinian or Hamas rocket fire provoked the hostilities. Still, the media reports consistently assign responsibility to Israel as the initiator of aggression.

In 2005, Israel gave Gaza back to the Palestinian people as an effort to establish grounds for advancing the peace process. Within months, the same area became a staging ground for new unprovoked attacks on Israel. This represents the futile efforts Israel has faced at every turn when attempting to negotiate peace.

The general attitude of the world today regards the Palestinians as the underdog and the victim. But Israel defends the land covenanted to her in 1917 and that the United Nations Assembly established in 1948. There is no expansionism or racism on the part of Israel, just efforts to defend her citizens.

The Palestinian goal is not to secure a homeland but to drive Israel out altogether. Meanwhile, for the sake of mounting public opinion against Israel, the surrounding well-resourced Arab nations have never offered refuge to the Palestinians.

5) Arab Rights

Standing for Israel does not require an anti-Arab stance and doesn't require us to be loveless toward other people. We do not oppose the Arab people as an entity. Nor do we oppose the rights of Arabs living in Israel to a peaceful, politically secure and prosperous life.

Remember, this is not about politics, yet the ramifications of this struggle inevitably involve governments. They, governments should represent people groups, and among Christians, this is where we often confuse the matter—which is why it's crucial that we understand the full picture.

God has no disposition against any human being. Certainly not Arabs, who are the offspring of Ishmael, the other son of His chosen leader, Abraham. Though the world may not understand this stance, we can defy their logic through Christ. As Jesus said, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

6) Spiritual Warfare

The relentless animosities of sectors of the Arab world are not merely political causes. Spiritual powers drive these causes. They will not be satisfied until Israel ceases to exist. Even unbelievers recognize the uncanny patterns of vehement anti-Semitic rhetoric. The likes of Adolf Hitler and modern-day Arab leaders such as Ahmadinejad, Khamenei and their successors share this. The forces opposed to Israel are not simply those of people who don't like Jews. We are caught in the stream of spiritual forces greater than humanity. In other words, forces that cannot be overthrown politically or by the power of persuasion.

7) Shared Persecution

If we think Israelis are the only ones in the line of fire in this conflict, we're deceived. The same spirit driving these animosities equally opposes Christians and Jews, and in time will eventually bring persecution to both.

The Scripture describes two witnesses that will be put to death in Jerusalem at the very end of time (Rev. 11). Generally the "two witnesses" that have stood for the living God throughout history have been the Jews and the Christians.

The presence of the entire Judeo-Christian ethic, values and testimony is the most assailed spiritual testimony in today's world and it is allowed to be persecuted with impunity. Too often we hear incidents where such "witness" exists, and the violated rights or outright brutality finds only a silent response from the U.N. or the world press.

The hostilities and animosities are just as leveled at believers as they are at Israel. Because there is a spirit of the world that is against "all that is called God" (2 Thes. 2:4) and all things testifying to His existence, love, worth and glory.

8) God's Summoning to Stand with Israel

A Biblical assignment and a divine promise summon our stand in faith, our intercession with expectancy and our support with promise (Eph. 6:10-20).

Scripture declares there will come a time when all the nations of the world will turn against Israel (Zech. 12:1-14). Ongoing developments in the Middle East inescapably demonstrate the present moment and make it highly conceivable that this could happen in our time. What the Bible says about standing with Israel is not always simple.

Our calling is to stand with Israel today because we could be people of the last hour. The Lord has called us to be people with moral and Biblical conviction, walking wisely and knowing His Word. He honors those who make an abiding commitment to stand with the land He calls uniquely His.

Standing with Israel in the 20th and 21st Century

This miraculous era that has seen the Jewish people regain political control of their own land. Which they were without for more than 2,300 years, but once again they became an official nation. Meanwhile, we could be people of the last hour, as they once again face global hostility.

The modern-day struggle is over Jerusalem, over Israel and over the presence of Jews and their right to have a land. Almost every nation refuses to make an abiding commitment to stand by the Jews and Israel. Only a few remain, but the Bible says God will honor those who do.

Every believer is charged to make the Jews a priority in his or her value system. Why? Because God has. As a result, we are to render thanksgiving for God's work via them as a people.

Genesis 12:3 AMPC

3 And I will bless those who bless you [who confer prosperity or happiness upon you] and [a]curse him who curses or uses insolent language toward you; in you will all the families and kindred of the earth be blessed [and by you they will bless themselves].